

Vineland Environmental Commission
Virtual meeting
January 11, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:13 p.m. by Chairperson Diane Amico. The public notice was read into record. Present were: Diane Amico, Sue Fenili, David Lowenstern, John Pedersen, and guest Jay Hares, Public Works Director. John Casadia entered the meeting later.

A motion to approve the minutes from the November 9, 2020 meeting was made by Sue Fenili and seconded by David Lowenstern. All were in favor.

A motion to approve the 2021 meeting schedule was made by John Pedersen and seconded by David Lowenstern. All were in favor.

John Pedersen gave an update to Jay Hares on the Commission's activities around the City, including at Giampietro Park, Willow Oak issues, and tree plantings. He did run into some NJDEP staff near Willow Oak. The requirements of the Frank H. Stewart Trust, and the background of the field restoration were discussed. There are trees coming up in the field that currently need to be removed. Security issues and downed trees were also discussed. Litter at the bus stop near the homeless shelter is something Public Works is aware of and will try to get more trucks out there to pick up trash. Pesticide spraying around the City was discussed. Jay Hares said the City has one person now with a license to spray, which is Jeff Bordley. Diane asked what is being sprayed and where. Jay said there is a list and he will ask for the information. He does not think any spraying has taken place near guardrails or water. Any spraying there may have been done by Cumberland County. Diane and talked about the wildflower / milkweed areas that the Commission where spraying is not desired. John Pedersen said he has spoken to John Knoop from the County regarding these areas. John Pedersen said there is bamboo beginning to spread in Giampietro that should be removed. Jay said Public Works is trying to set up a full-time tree crew for pruning. The riparian buffer at Giampietro was discussed as well as the need to maintain the stakes/mesh, and it was requested that Public Works not mow between the small trees right now until they get larger. John Pedersen said there are some vines/invasives to be removed and it would be good to make a walking path through it. Drainage issues at Giampietro were discussed and the need for aeration and creation of trenches as recommended by the Cumberland County Mosquito Commission.

John Casadia entered the meeting.

There is no budget report, as it is a new fiscal year and all line items will be reset when the City approves the budget. We do still have some open purchase orders from last year. A motion to approve an open purchase order for \$300 for Reuben's Hardware was made by John Pedersen and seconded by Sue Fenili. All were in favor.

The Disc Golf Club that plays at S. Vineland Park did help John Pedersen with the tree planting at Pilla School on S. Lincoln Avenue. They had previously requested to remove some trees at the park and in lieu of planting at the park, they volunteered their time to help plant trees at the school. John Casadia

spoke to Paul Farrinachio from the Board of Education. They are happy with the tree planting at the school and is agreeable to having more dead trees replaced. We may have more trees available this spring, as it is not looking likely that the schools will be doing Arbor Day Ceremonies in 2021.

Education signage will be coming for Giampietro after Diane gets together with Michelle from Market Fuel on the design.

Diane said the VMEU quarterly newsletter for Fall of 2020 had a small article on our seedling giveaway.

Diane said that ANJEC contacted her regarding extra money from the Green Infrastructure grant that they would like to use to send brochures about septic systems to Vineland residents. She connected them with Gary Lugiano from the Health Department, and the Environmental Commission was mentioned in the brochure as a partner. The brochure was mailed out about a month ago.

John Casadia gave an update on the birdhouses he constructed. He build about 14 or 15 that are ready to go. There are now 6 at Pilla School, with room for a few more. Giampietro Park is being considered as a possible site to place a few. It was noted that the duck box at Willow Oak's vernal pond needs to be stood back up and may possibly need a new post. There are a few extra posts in the office closet.

There are no site plans to review since Diane has not been in the office for several weeks to get mail. John Casadia said he knows of 4 plans coming before the Planning Board. He will review them when he gets them. He said that a recurring problem is that applicants take trees out but don't want to put any back.

Diane said next month's, and future meetings, will be a hybrid of in-person and virtual. The site plans can be reviewed in the conference room, and Diane will be there for any visitors from the public, and anyone wanting to join virtually can do so.

Diane said we still need to work on tree guidelines for the City Engineering Department. A committee should meet to do this and then bring something to a full meeting. She also said we should be doing a report to City Council.

Diane thanked Jay for attending. John Casadia made a motion to adjourn. All were in favor.