

**Minutes of the Environmental Commission
City of Cape May
May 27, 2014**

Attending Members: Evelyn Lovitz, Heather Bruno, Rachel Palermo, Jessie Weeks, Terry Swain, Linda Steenrod, John Bilotta

Absent: Bea Pessagno

After the pledge to the flag, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Items discussed:

1. The Rain Barrel Workshop this past Saturday in West Cape May was attended by Rachel and Evelyn. They reported that there was an interesting demonstration on how to make rain barrels using recycled materials. As a commission we agreed that this joint venture between the three environmental commissions was very beneficial. We look forward to working to with the other commissions again on future projects. It was suggested that for future workshops or demonstrations, we carefully consider the timing as to solicit the best turn out. There will be another rain barrel demonstration at the Cape May County Library on July 1st from 10-11, please see link for further information
<http://events.cmclibrary.org/events/signup.asp?ID=30029&rts=&disptype=info&ret=eventcalendar.asp&pointer=&returnToSearch=&num=0&ad=&dt=mo&mo=7/1/2014&df=calendar&EventType=ALL&Lib=ALL&AgeGroup=ALL&LangType=0&WindowMode=&noheader=&lad=&pub=1&nopub=&page=&pgdisp=>
2. At our last meeting the question was raised about what is our current mission statement. Evelyn reviewed the statement as it is currently on our website:

Environmental Commission Mission Statement:

The Environmental Commission shall have the powers enumerated in N.J.S.A. 40:56A-1 et seq., specifically the power to study and make recommendations concerning open space preservation, water resources management, air pollution control, solid waste management, noise control, soil and landscape protection, environmental appearance, marine resources and protection of flora and fauna.

The Commission may also conduct research into the use and possible use of the open land areas of the City. It shall keep an index of all open areas, publicly or

privately owned, including open marshlands, swamps and other wetlands, in order to obtain information on the proper use of the areas, and may recommend to the Planning Board plans and programs for inclusion in the City Master Plan and the development and use of the areas.

3. We then discussed our individual interpretation of what this statement means to us. John shared with us his interpretation:
 - *To have impact into maintaining and protecting local human environment and ecology*
 - *To help guide responsible development with minimal environmental impact*
 - *To limit and/or prevent pollution of local environments*
 - *To assist with resource management*
 - *To provide a balance between development and maintain local ecosystems*
 - *To remain non political*
4. We all discussed his interpretation and agreed that it was an excellent summary of the main areas of the commission work that we strive to implement.
5. Evelyn discussed ordinances and how we could better use them as substantiation of items that we comment on in various plans.
6. The question was raised about having a Shade Tree representative at our meeting to answer and assist with relevant issues that come up in plan discussions.
7. We discussed open space within the city and what properties are still available for application on future open space grants.
8. The question was raised about having legal counsel representation for questions that come up during our meeting. Heather is going to follow-up on this.
9. We discussed having the Environmental Commission better visible to the community. The suggestion was made to list environmentally friendly reminders in the local papers regarding trash, recycling, water conservations, permits for tree removals etc. Linda is going to follow-up on this.
10. We discussed designing our banner for use that varies activities and festivals around town. Heather is going to work with Dawn Austin who has graciously volunteered to design it.

11. We discussed the Cape Island bike path project that Cape May Point was working on. Jon Safritt is taking over for Marguerite on this project. Our commission would like to work with them on this project. John is going to follow-up on this.
12. We discussed participating with other environmental commissions at the West Cape May Farmers Market.
13. Jessie brought up the topic of social media for Environmental Commissions. She has volunteered to take an ANJEC webinar about it. The Webinar will discuss “how to connect with more people in more ways through social networking. Communication is key to accomplishing the goals of any environmental commission. You need to inform, educate, and engage the public. You must build support for your initiatives, recruit new members, attract volunteers, and motivate local residents and businesses to get involved and behave in ways that protect the environment.” Jessie will report back to the commission on this topic.

If any other members are interested in taking this webinar here is the information:

Thursday, June 26

7:00pm - 8:00pm

Via Webinar

Registration Fees:

ANJEC Members \$10

Non-members \$15

If your commission is on the ANJEC Workshop Plan, there is no charge to attend.

To register or for additional information, email ANJEC or call, 973-539-7547.

14. Evelyn suggested that all members take the following webinar on June 4th:

- Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions

Via Webinar

Wednesday, June 4

7:00pm - 8:00pm

How to be part of an Effective Environmental Commission

Powers & duties

Building support through education, outreach and collaboration

Examples of commission projects

Please save your confirmation and Heather will make sure you get reimbursed.

To register: To register, email or call ANJEC at 973-539-7547.

Login instructions will be emailed before sessions.

Next Meeting, Tuesday, June 24th at 10:30.

**Thank you,
Heather Bruno, Environmental Commission Secretary**