

Avalon Environmental Commission
October 19, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 pm by Chairwoman Rothman.

Pledge of allegiance.

Chairwoman Rothman read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

Roll call: **Present:** Dave Coskey, Kevin Coyle, Claire Driscoll, Joe Dvorak, Steve Malyszka, Brian Reynolds, Donna Rothman
 Absent: Beth Tipping

A motion to approve the minutes from the September 21, 2021 meeting was made by Steve Malyszka and seconded by Brian Reynolds. Approved by all.

Review of Website under development: Donna Rothman reported the new Environmental Commission website development is still ongoing. A new reimagined colored Environmental Commission logo designed by Dave Coskey was added to the website. The new website as well as all links were reviewed in their entirety.

While reviewing the plant lists, Brian Reynolds pointed out the invasive plant list was incorporated as a section of the acceptable plant list with the intention that all plant lists could be viewed in one comprehensive document. He recommended the website reflect these appropriate lists. Dave Coskey suggested developing and publishing a brochure with all plant list information. The printed version could be distributed to the public, realtors, and developers; and a pdf version could be deployed to the website for easy reading. The document could also explain why the plants on the invasive plant list are troublesome. Joe Dvorak agreed with this suggestion and noted the codified version of the list could have a footnote referencing the other lists to show that multiple lists exist. Donna Rothman expressed the opinion that having clear and separate lists has other educational benefits but we can add the invasive statement to the acceptable plant list and keep a separate invasive list as well.

Discussion took place regarding educating landscapers about the different plant lists, the limited availability of acceptable plants, potential solutions to availability issues, and promoting education of the plant lists with realtors, homeowners and other individuals.

During the review of the Programming/Events page, Donna Rothman thanked Dave Coskey for the video showcasing the lecture series at the Pollinator Garden held during the summer months. Donna expressed interest at scheduling a similar lecture series at the Pollinator Garden for the 2022 season. Claire Driscoll suggested information concerning the Grasses in Classes educational sessions could be featured in the website. Those sessions will have a total of 33 students in participation, where the students will be taught how to plant dune grass, watch it grow, and plant the dune grass in the dunes when ready. Donna Rothman added the dune grasses grown by the students will be planted in the dunes on or around Earth Day. Donna also mentioned the potential development of a memorial tree program where donors could sponsor the planting of a tree within potential locations throughout Avalon with a plaque near the tree remembering a loved one. Dave Coskey noted the Goshen Recreation Center has a similar program and mentioned they could be spoken with when trying to formulate a model for the program.

Donna Rothman suggested including information concerning the Beachside Science lecture series held at Surfside Park. She announced the Avalon Environmental Commission has been chosen to receive a 2021 ANJEC Environmental Achievement Award for the Pollinator Garden and Beachside Science and Surfside Park Lecture Series. The awards will be given Friday, October 22, 2021 at 12:00 noon.

Donna Rothman asked for volunteers to help write to help writing descriptions for each concept on the Keeping Avalon Green page. When reviewing the Renewable Energy page, Donna suggested exploring the option of solar energy for public buildings. Dave Coskey noted the goal to build the website with imagery and useful information to engage and educate visitors to the website.

Offshore Windfarm Forum: Donna Rothman announced the Offshore Windfarm Forum will be holding virtual scoping meetings October 19, 2021, October 21, 2021, and October 25, 2021 and encouraged all Environmental Commission members to attend. She reported the recent forum held at Stockton was very interesting.

Discussion ensued regarding testing boats for the wind farm in Avalon, a recent article in The Press of Atlantic City in connection with the proposed wind farm, and what options would be available or explored if the testing or data shows certain areas originally chosen for windmills are not optimal.

Master Plan Discussion – Avalon Green Master Plan Addendum IV: The members of the Environmental Commission reviewed the Avalon Green Master Plan Addendum, and had brief discussions about the following topics: an environmental resource inventory, its importance, and potential volunteers; the goals within the plan that are easily obtainable; natural resources; recent articles regarding barrier islands; the potential development of a landscaping contest for incorporating native and ornamental plants for new homes; and planning a Green Fair as part of Community Connections, and potential topics for those events.

Dune Grass Planting October 23, 2021: Donna Rothman announced the fall dune grass planting is scheduled to take place Saturday, October 23, 2021 and encouraged participation.

Programs for 2022: Donna Rothman expressed the intent to continue the Beachside Science program at Surfside Park in 2022 and voiced the opinion that the series should begin in June, rather than May in 2022. Other programs suggested for 2022 included a salt marsh tour as well as the landscaping contest discussed earlier in the meeting.

Budget for 2022: Donna Rothman reported she compiled a budget, which has been reviewed and approved by the Mayor, with Council's approval pending. Some items included in the 2022 budget are as follows: the Pollinator Garden lecture series, Beachside Science at Surfside Park, salt marsh tour, landscaping contest, Environmental Resources Inventory, and Community Connections.

Tree Committee: Joe Dvorak reported preparations are underway for a fall tree planting. The list of desired trees has been finalized, and bids have been requested from nurseries for fulfillment. The ongoing tree inventory is nearing completion. Joe thanked Craig Rothman and the three volunteers for their hard work and diligence in compiling the inventory. A plan will be formulated to address how updates to the inventory will be processed as trees are replaced and new trees are planted. The committee is working to decide how to best use the data from the inventory as well.

Steve Malyszka suggested buying trees in bulk for use in public and private lands if the desired trees are not readily available, with Joe Dvorak responding the trees are being bought locally at a size of approximately two to two-and-a-half inches in diameter. The Tree Committee is brainstorming the development of a program to encourage homeowners to contribute to a fund which would plant trees in the areas between the sidewalks and the street.

Armacost Park: Steve Malyszka announced he recently attended a meeting with Donna Rothman, Joe Lomax and Public Works to discuss the implementation of an increase in the size of the pipe at Armacost Park from 8 inches to 24 inches in diameter, while expressing concerns about controlling the flooding in the park for phragmite control. A letter to that effect was sent to Scott Wahl, and a meeting will be held with the Engineer to answer these concerns in the near future.

Bay Issues: Kevin Coyle indicated the permitting process has begun for the upcoming project at Bay Park Marina. The project is expected to begin sometime in 2022.

Review of Meeting dates for 2022: Donna Rothman distributed a list of potential meeting dates for 2022, and made note that no meeting will be scheduled for the month of December 2022. After review and brief discussion, all members agreed to proceed with the meeting dates as proposed.

Adjournment at 5:28 pm.