

Avalon Environmental Commission
January 18, 2022

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

A motion to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2021 meeting was made by Brian Reynolds and seconded by Kevin Coyle. Approved by all.

Review of 2021 DVMP Monitoring Reports: Aaron Baker reported the project at 3105 Avalon Avenue saw its first full growing season in 2021, which was very successful, as everything responded well, culminating to a very successful first year. The project at South 70th Street was in its second year during 2021. After two full growing seasons, the threshold of an 85% success rate has been reached. This year, there is good ground covering growing. Some vines and sumac were cleaned up from the property during this monitoring year. There will be one more monitoring year for this project. The North 9th Street project consisted of a more robust planting than usual, which has done well during this first year. Brian Reynolds asked if any new Japanese Black Pine shoots were found in the project area after the trees were removed, with Aaron Baker responding that none were found. The project at 4369 Dune Drive consisted of one of the most robust plantings through the DVMP program to date, with a very varied list of vegetation. Some different plants were planted in low areas in an effort to take advantage of the terrain in this very large project area, which was difficult to irrigate. The project continues to do well, and much volunteer vegetation has been found in the project area, as well. The project at South 63rd Street was in its final year in 2021, which has an 85% survival rate and 95% ground coverage. The cedars in this project area were replaced many times. There are hopes these trees will not need replacement and the project can be decommissioned. Mr. Baker asked the Environmental Commission to approve the issuance of the decommission letter for this project. All members voted in the affirmative.

Aaron Baker informed the Environmental Commission of upcoming pruning projects, including one located near Community Hall and on Bayberry Drive. A pruning project from 27th Street to 39th Street had a DVMP in approximately 2014, and maintenance prunings have been done over the years. This pruning project will be reactivated, subject to the approval of the Environmental Commission. All members voted in the affirmative.

Donna Rothman inquired if the DVMP in general is nearing completion, with Aaron Baker replying there are still more properties to be addressed. Over half of the dunes have been involved in DVMP's over time, and the Japanese population has significantly declined. Donna Rothman mentioned the importance of activating or reactivating interest in this program while the population of Japanese Black Pines is low. Aaron Baker noted many landscapers and builders bring most projects to the Borough.

Review of the Avalon Environmental Website: The drafted new website was reviewed, with minor corrections being suggested. The acceptable plant list was reviewed, along with the allowance of trees planted in unpaved areas less than four feet wide between the curb and the sidewalk.

Alternates for Avalon Environmental Commission: Donna Rothman mentioned the addition of Alternate members to the Environmental Commission could help when member attendance is low, as well as with big projects. According to New Jersey statute, the Borough of Avalon would need to amend the current Ordinance governing the Avalon Environmental Commission to make such an allowance. She asked for suggestions for members and/or volunteers.

Pollinator Garden: Donna Rothman indicated Pat Sutton has advised that the invasive plants be removed from the Pollinator Garden. Those invasive plants have been identified, and Bayshore Landscaping has agreed to remove the plants in question. A meeting will be held to educate Bayshore Landscaping as to what plants should be removed. Recently, a suggestion was made to mow a walking path through the Pollinator Garden in aid of the lecture series. The Borough has agreed with that suggestion, and a path has been staked out.

Tree Committee: Joe Dvorak announced a Memorial Tree Program is under development, planning stages are in progress for a spring tree planting, and volunteers are currently working on the next phase of the Community Forestry Management Plan.

Armacost Park: Donna Rothman reported a meeting will be scheduled with Dr. Tedesco of The Wetlands Institute to discuss the successes and failures of the Stone Harbor Bird Sanctuary Vegetation Plan which Dr. Tedesco oversees. She invited the Environmental Commission members to attend, once it is scheduled.

Ordinances: Brian Reynolds suggested a more in depth look at the tree planting list and the allowance of planting trees in areas less than four feet in width.

Adjournment at 5:16 pm.