



Environmental Commission

November 20, 2012

(Notes)

Prepared by:

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Councilman Kashwick announced a quorum would not be established and, therefore, called to order, at 8:07pm, an unofficial gathering of the Environmental Commission for the Borough of Closter, New Jersey, on Tuesday, November 20, 2012 at Borough Hall.

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Attendance

Present

Keith Scholz- Shade Tree Commission Liaison
John Kashwick- Council Liaison
Mary Mayer- Alternate #1
Bobbie Bouton-Goldberg- Associate Member/Historic Preservation Commission Liaison
Jaewook Jun- Associate Member

Absent

Paul MacDonald- Chairman
Steven Isaacson
Brenda Cummings
Robert Di Dio- Planning Board Liaison
VACANT- Full Member
VACANT- Alternate #2
Arthur Goldberg, MD- Associate Member

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Miscellaneous

In lieu of the absent Chairman MacDonald, Councilman Kashwick chaired the gathering.

In the absence of a quorum, the Commission postponed a vote to approve the minutes for the October 16, 2012 meeting to the yet to be determined 1st meeting in 2013; Ms. Bouton-Goldberg noted a correction to be made in time for said vote.

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Old Business

Mac Bain Farm

Ms. Mayer informed that the quarterly report, past due as of August 10th, was recently received from John Mc Caffrey, caretaker and resident of the Farm; she noted that previous reports would be forwarded to the Governing Body as had been prior practice. She revealed Mr. Mc Caffrey has spent \$142,000.00 since of August 1, 2010, representing the 1st 2 years of his 10-year contract renewal with the Borough; she indicated said agreement requires that he expend \$25,000.00 annually towards the Farm and retain the parcel's agricultural use in exchange for he and his family residing on-site free of charge. Ms. Mayer stated that while he will, at this pace, meet his financial commitment within 5 years, it is still slower than the 1st 2 years of his

initial contract signed in 2001 during which time extensive renovations were made to the house on-site.

Ms. Mayer said Mr. Mc Caffrey has been seeking funds for 1.5 years to reconstruct an existing porch attached to the residence; she noted the Borough had previously awarded jobs for said project as well as the replacement of the house's roof to separate contractors, of which the latter project was completed. She believed miscommunication between the contractor and the Borough has led to the delay in rehabilitating the porch; she said Mr. Mc Caffrey has inquired about such to the Borough Administrator, Richard Sheola.

119 Hickory Lane

Councilman Kashwick stated there was no update to report on the future site of Metropolitan Farm. Ms. Mayer questioned if the parcel's principal owner-in-fee (Frank Vastano) intends to have a retail operation on-site in the form of a farm stand; Councilman Kashwick replied in the affirmative and said the only unknown is what size it would be. He said apparently the farm stand would be open to the public for 5 months out of the year, unlike Mr. Vastano's year-round facilities in the Boroughs of Fort Lee and Paramus.

2013 Commission Meeting Schedule

Councilman Kashwick stated that although the Commission tentatively-agreed to convene its 2013 meetings on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:30pm during the October 16, 2012 meeting, he said it has since been discovered such would conflict with several holidays as well as a few dates in which the Historic Preservation Commission normally gathers in the Council Chambers of Borough Hall; he believed the current schedule (3rd Wednesday of each month except December at 8:00pm) should be continued in 2013, especially since there is no portable recording equipment available to allow for convening outside of the Council Chambers.



Liaison Reports

Governing Body

Councilman Kashwick revealed Peter Hosek, 16 Cross Street, Closter, New Jersey, recently spoke of his concern regarding the rampant influx of the deer and wild rabbit populations in the region and the related public health concerns during a recent Mayor and Council meeting, a repeat of his presentation to the Commission at its October 16, 2012 meeting; Councilman Kashwick stated the Governing Body informed Mr. Hosek the Borough would be in no position to take action unless Bergen County's other municipalities agreed on a course of action. Ms. Bouton-Goldberg said the Borough of Norwood is taking measures to curtail its rat population. Ms. Mayer asked if there are options, other than the use of sharpshooters, that the Borough would be inclined to embrace; Councilman Kashwick suggested the Commission research such and make official recommendations to the Mayor and Council keeping in mind a large contingency of the citizenry is against reducing the deer population by any means, citing an unknown municipality whose recent petition garnered 1,000 signatures in favor of reduction and 2,000 against.

Councilman Kashwick stated the Borough has gone out to bid on privatizing garbage and trash collection (recycling is already privatized). He asked if the Commission would be satisfied with a 1-day per week pick-up schedule for garbage, trash and recycling; he said the intent of such is

to encourage residents to recycle; he said, for example, it is hoped residents who would normally discard cardboard and paper with trash would now place them with recyclables since such collection would occur weekly, not monthly. He noted there was discussion on having bi-weekly

pick-up from Memorial Day to Labor Day (to quell odor/sanitary concerns during warm weather), but it was believed more than 1 schedule would cause confusion. Councilman Kashwick indicated the Borough would see significant monetary savings as a result. Ultimately, he said a decision to privatize is still not final nor is whether the Department of Public Works (DPW) would retain some role in garbage and trash collection. Ms. Mayer questioned if the Borough senses its recycling efforts are being seen to fruition; Councilman Kashwick said it would be senseless for the hauling company not to do so, noting the Borough is not being charged gate fees (tipping fees) for dumping at waste processing facilities. Ms. Bouton-Goldberg believed more public awareness is necessary on what can or cannot be recycled (compact disc plastic cases, plastic flower pots, ceramic plates, etc.); Councilman Kashwick added that the numeric sequence on an item is often an indication of whether it is recyclable. He further noted that if an item is not specifically listed by a municipality, there most likely is not a market and/or enough volume for it to be recycled. Ms. Bouton-Goldberg commended the Borough's recycling efforts, specifically, discarding of expired/unwanted medication with the Police Department and the stationing of a paper shredder at Borough Hall; she hoped State of New Jersey could follow the precedent set by Oregon, whose efforts are more inclusive and focused.

Councilman Kashwick informed the Governing Body recently adopted an ordinance to ban smoking in all public parks within the Borough.

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

Councilman Kashwick said the HPC would soon again be considering a revised plan for reconstructing a chicken coop situated on 119 Hickory Lane.

Bicycle Racks

Mr. Scholz said the installation of new racks should not be expected until warm weather returns in the spring, especially in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.



New Business

The Commission discussed no new matters.



Plan Review

The Commission prepared the following administrative reports:

Zoning Board of Adjustment

- ◇ 11 Homans Avenue: This is an application for both Use Variance and Site Plan Approvals involving the tenant separation of a non-residential building; **NOTE:** the 3 tenant spaces to be created would be occupied by the following establishments: 1.) "Tiger Kim's Taekwondo

Center”; 2.) undetermined retail use; 3.) undetermined office use. The Commission had no comments.

◇ 318 Harrington Avenue: This is an application appealing the determination of the Zoning

Officer as to the legality of the continuation of the following uses for 3 detached buildings: 1.) 3-family use (front building on-site); 2.) 2-family use (middle building on-site); 3.) 1-family use (rear building on-site); in the alternative, a Use Variance would be sought. The Commission had no comments.

Planning Board

◇ 679 Closter Dock Road: This is an application for Minor Subdivision Approval involving the creation of 2 lots. While there was confusion both as to whether the proposal would result in a flag lot being created as well as if the newly-created lots are fully forested or barren, the Commission had no comments.



Adjournment

Ms. Mayer announced she was resigning from both the Commission and as liaison to the Mac Bain Farm effective immediately, though she would continue to volunteer for the Farm. Her colleagues thanked her for 22 years of service to the Commission.

There being no further items to discuss, the unofficial gathering ended at 8:42pm.