



MEETING MINUTES

Jersey City Environmental Commission
City Hall – 280 Grove Street, Jersey City NJ 07302

Sara K. Schultzzer, Chair

Meeting: Jersey City Environmental Commission Public Meeting

Date / Location: 12 April 2016 – 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, City Hall, 280 Grove Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302

Attendees:	Commissioners/City Representatives	Public Participants
	Sara Schultzzer, Acting Chair	Ronald J. Riccio, PPG Site Administrator
	Alison Cucco	James D. Ray, PPG Site Administrator Team
	Gregg Lanez	Michael Place, JCMUA
	Mario Verdibello	Chris Perez, Berry Hill NA
	Michelle Luebke	Bhavana Ingali, HPNA
	Gabriel Ristorucci	Elna Mubardi, HPNA
	Willow Latham, Secretary	Steve German
		John Frohling, Morris Canal Assn.
		Maureen Crowley, Embankment Coalition
		Nick Milak, JCPC
		Mory Thomas, WPA/JCPC
		Laura Skolar, PFGF/JCPC
		June Jones, Morris Canal CDC
		RJ Harper
		Emme Wolf, Research Advocates
		Jean-Marie-Hartman, Rutgers University
		Tom Gibbons, MUA/GI
		Daniel Gere

Prepared By: Gabriel Ristorucci/ Willow Latham

Date Prepared: 13 April 2016

ROLL CALL

Five of eight commissioners were present (Commissioner Luebke arrived late); four constitutes quorum. Commissioners Goldsmith and Solowsky were absent.

SUNSHINE ANNOUNCEMENT

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

No comments from commissioners. February minutes approved.

SCHEDULED SPEAKERS

Ronald J. Riccio, PPG Site Administrator

- Mr. Riccio, who is the new court-appointed site administrator for the PPG chromium cleanup in Jersey City effective Jan. 4, 2016, introduced himself and his professional background to the Commission. Mr. Riccio has been an attorney in private practice for 45 years, as well as Dean of Seton Hall Law School. He particularly highlighted previous experience in public interest discussions.
- The PPG Site Administration team also includes Mr. Jim Ray (attorney and environmental science M.A.), as well as a technical consultant team from Weston. The NJDEP and PPG have also contracted separate technical experts.
- The Site Administrator is appointed to be an independent, neutral agent of the court and carry out the duties outlined by the court, which are to ensure that (1) the cleanup schedule is followed, (2) the interested parties are heard, including the City of Jersey City, the JCRA, the NJDEP, the developer, and the community, and (3) the public is protected; in order to guarantee that cleanup is safe, effective, and efficient.
- Mr. Riccio stated that no blood sample tests conducted to date have revealed unhealthy levels of chromium. There is also an ongoing residential inspection program available to residents near the contaminated sites to inspect for and remediate excess levels of chromium within homes.
- At the Garfield Avenue sites, cleanup is ongoing. Most of the cleanup that has taken place to date consisted of excavation and removal of contaminated soil and backfill and covering at the site. Groundwater remediation is still being explored. Future steps include some building demolition, further soil excavation, and discussions regarding installation of a capillary break system. Other sites include locations at Burma Road, Linden Avenue, and Dennis Collins Park (Bayonne). A chromium “hotspot” discovered on Communipaw Avenue is also being remediated. Interim remedial measures are in place to prevent spreading of chromium during the cleanup process.
- Berry Lane Park, which Mr. Riccio identified as being outside of his purview as Site Administrator, has been certified as fully remediated by the NJDEP.
- Mr. Riccio stated that at some cleanup sites, mercury and lead have been identified, although not at a level that poses a health risk.
- The date and time of the next Town Hall to be held by the Site Administrator will be provided to the public by his office, or via www.chromiumcleanup.com/.

Tom Gibbons, JCMUA

- Mr. Gibbons raised concerns regarding the long-term adequacy of Jersey City’s water supply, citing figures that show a 50% increase in JCMUA customers since 2012, with an estimated increase in demand of 50 million gallons/day for units under construction.
- Jersey City currently has a total water supply reservoir capacity of 11 billion gallons at Split Rock and Boonton Reservoirs, both of which are dedicated to providing water solely for Jersey City. As of last October, the reservoirs were at a total of 60% capacity, a four months’ supply for Jersey City.
- Mr. Gibbons requested that Jersey City’s ERI include an evaluation of (1) the adequacy of Jersey City’s current reservoir capacity; (2) the sustainability of Jersey City’s growth rate given limited reservoir capacity; and (3) recommendations for long-term water supply planning, including improved efficiency, stricter use and efficiency requirements (not currently included in the residential development approval process), and increasing total reservoir capacity.
- Commissioner Luebke raised concerns regarding water use by the City’s street sweepers, which use 300-400 gallons of potable water per machine per day.



- Commissioner Verdibello raised concerns regarding the use of potable water for non-household uses, including cooling systems. Mr. Gibbons responded that water used in power generation and air conditioning is significant, and solar and wind systems for electricity generation can provide substantial water savings.
- Commissioners Cucco and Verdibello will draft a letter regarding this issue.
- Mr. Gibbons informed the Commission that rain barrels will be for sale as well as raffled off free of charge during Earth Day events on April 23, 2016 at Liberty State Park, St. Peter's, and City Hall.

Maureen Crowley, Embankment Coalition

Laura Skolar, Mory Thomas, and Nick Milak, Jersey City Parks Coalition

- Ms. Skolar and Mr. Milak announced the formation of the City of Trees initiative, comprised of the Jersey City Parks Coalition and Jersey City Street Trees. This is a five-year tree planting initiative that draws on the results of the Jersey City Tree Canopy study sponsored by the JCEC. The JCPC will be holding a press conference on April 22 to announce this program. This program is working closely with the DPW to identify best practices and includes a community education component.
- As part of this initiative, City of Trees will continue to GIS map trees in Jersey City via a downloadable app, approaching neighborhood associations and businesses to map trees and identify problems.
- The JCPC also announced the TreeKeeper workshop that they will be sponsoring, which will be held on Saturday, May 7, 2016 at Dickinson HS from 10am-3pm.
- The Embankment Coalition also announced a talk, "From Paris to Jersey City: Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change" by Dr. D. James Baker, currently with the Clinton Foundation Climate Initiative and former head of NOAA. The talk will be held on Saturday, May 14 at 1pm at the NJCU School of Business, 160 Harborside Financial Center.

OLD BUSINESS

Environmental Resource Inventory (Dr. Jean Marie Hartmann, Rutgers University)

- The Rutgers team presented draft Phase 2 (Cultural Resources) maps, and requested feedback from Commissioners and the public on tone, level of detail, content, and presentation.
- The next set of maps that the Rutgers team will produce will include landmarks and sites of public interest, which the team would like suggestions and feedback on.
- All documents are available on Google Drive, and anyone can request access to review the documents and provide comments via email or in Drive comments.
- Biological resources maps in May. The Rutgers team is seeking information from the public on plants and animals (particularly birds) present in Jersey City.

Rebuild by Design

- Updates on Hoboken's RBD community outreach process were not provided as no EC representative attended the latest RBDH CAG meeting.
- The Hoboken project team has now narrowed the options to three alternatives, and is focusing on design elements and amenities. Modeling is expected to be concluded soon.

Resiliency Planning Documents: bid review process



- An RFP had been issued by city for a suite of resiliency planning documents, including a Resilience Master Plan, Adaptation Master Plan, Urban Environmental Design Plan, Zoning and Building Code plus Design Standards, and Capital Improvement Plan. These will assist the City in addressing infrastructure, flooding, and stormwater issues. Funding for implementation is not included, although identifying future funding sources is an element of the RFP. Eight bids were received by the March 23 deadline and are under review by a scoring committee. Commissioner Luebke is the EC representative evaluating the bids.
- After a winning bid is identified, there will be a year-long drafting process—including a community outreach component to be undertaken by the consultant—which is expected to conclude in June 2017.

NEW BUSINESS

Earth Day Preparation and Discussion

- On Saturday, April 23, 2016 Earth Day events will be taking place at City Hall and Liberty State Park, as well as a citywide cleanup.
- Commissioners Cucco and Luebke will be coordinating the EC's representation at the City Hall event, from 11am-6pm.

GENERAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

John Frohling, Morris Canal Associates
Robert Harper
Maureen Crowley, Embankment Coalition
Michael Place
Wolf
June Jones, Morris Canal CDC
Daniel Gere

CLOSING REMARKS AND OTHER BUSINESS BY COMMISSIONERS

Announcements

- JCMUA Treekeeper training program – May 7
- 4/23 JCEC at Earth Day at City Hall (possibly at LSP too) & individuals can partake in The Great JC CleanUp in local parks
- 4/28 Rutgers & NJIT Embankment presentations [since rescheduled to 5/5]
- 5/1 Friends of Liberty State Park Luncheon honoring Hackensack Riverkeeper Captain Bill Sheehan and others & fundraiser for SaveLSP campaign
- 5/7 Tree Keepers at Dickinson H.S.
- 5/14 Pet Parade Protest in LSP
- 6/14 40th Anniversary Picnic for LSP



ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next Environmental Commission meeting is scheduled for 17 May 2016 at 6:30p.m at the Caucus Room, City Hall, 280 Grove Street, Jersey City, NJ 07307.

