



# MEETING MINUTES

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

Sara K. Schultzer, Chair

**Meeting:** Jersey City Environmental Commission Public Meeting

**Date / Location:** 13 December 2016 – 6:30 p.m.  
Caucus Room, City Hall, 280 Grove Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302

<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Commissioners/City Representatives</b>	<b>Public Participants</b>
	Allison Solowsky, Acting Chair	Dr. Jean Marie Hartman, Rutgers
	Alison Cucco	
	Takeya Meggett	Representatives of Jersey City's
	Mario Verdibello	Department of Public Works (DPW):
	Gregg Lanez	Patrick Stamato, Director of DPW;
		Jeffrey Dublin, Director of
	Kate Lawrence, Secretary	Sanitation; and John Lynch, Chief of
		Administrative Services

**Prepared By:** Allison Solowsky, Katherine Lawrence

**Date Prepared:** 14 December 2016

## ROLL CALL

Five of eight active commissioners were present; four constitutes quorum. Commissioners Luebke, Schultzer, and Goldsmith were absent.

## SUNSHINE ANNOUNCEMENT

Secretary Lawrence confirmed the sunshine announcement went out Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>.

## APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

No other comments from commissioners. November minutes stand approved as corrected.

## SCHEDULED SPEAKERS

### Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI): update by Dr. Jean Marie Hartman

- Dr. Hartman distributed printed copies of the final summary chapter, executive summary, and two additional appendices of the Environmental Resource Inventory for the Environmental Commission's review and consideration.
- Dr. Hartman has received minimal comments from the commissioners so far. She would like to receive final comments on the main document and appendices no later than January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 so she may make appropriate revisions prior to the February EC meeting. She will not be able to attend the January 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- Secretary Lawrence provided comments in regards to the quality of the map graphics and suggested that the text provided in the main document and the appendices seemed to be a bit redundant; may be beneficial to merge the two and only include the larger versions of the maps.

## **Department of Public Works Representatives: Patrick Stamato, Jeffrey Dublin, and John Lynch**

- The three representatives from DPW introduced themselves and gave an overview of the departments, the changes that have been ongoing over the past year, and their current and upcoming projects. The representatives included the new Acting Director of DPW Patrick Stamato who joined the department 3 weeks ago, Jeffrey Dublin, who serves in an assistant director capacity and oversees the Division of Sanitation, and John Lynch, the Chief of Administrative Services who is also fairly new to the department.
- The representatives provided a printout that detailed an overview of the department, their services and responsibilities, and their upcoming initiatives. Mr. Lynch stated that DPW is dedicated to supporting and improving Jersey City's infrastructure and enhancing the quality of life for our residents. DPW has a vast array of responsibilities and provides services that used to be spread out between DPW and the former Jersey City Incinerator Authority (JCIA) prior to the merger of the two agencies earlier this year. Now all these services and responsibilities are centralized under DPW and they are working on creating better lines of communication between the department and the residents, neighborhood organizations, and commissions such as the EC so that they may enhance their services even more.
- Mr. Dublin and Director Stamato both reiterated that the department is improving their snow removal processes, their recycling efforts, and enhancing their division of Parks and Forestry tremendously going into the New Year. The department is looking to purchase new street sweeping vehicles and is partnering with the Office of Innovation team and Outdoor Creative to purchase 5,000 new trash receptacles that will be placed throughout the City. The pilot program will consist of 100 new receptacles strategically placed throughout the City and will consist of trash, co-mingle, and recycling bins.
- Director Stamato announced to the Commission that they will be bringing an arborist on board with their Division of Parks and Forestry and once he/she begins, he will ensure that the new arborist as well as Sammy Ocasio, the Acting Director of Parks and Forestry, attend an EC meeting to give commissioners a better overview of the division and their initiatives. Director Stamato also invited the commissioners to DPW headquarters to meet with all of the division directors that are housed within DPW, to learn more about each division and their upcoming projects and initiatives.
  - Commissioner Meggett asked about DPW's involvement with urban gardening programs. Mr. Dublin replied that the City's urban gardening program is operated through the Department of Health and Human Services but DPW provides assistance to the program as needed.
  - Commissioner Verdibello mentioned that he is concerned about the use of tree grates on street trees because they choke the trunks of mature trees. Director



Stamato replied that he is concerned as well and that the Division of Parks and Forestry is looking into this issue.

- Commissioner Lanez mentioned that he had recently learned about the Port of Elizabeth converting its Port vehicles to hydrogen. He suggested that the DPW look at this technology for the new street sweepers. Director Stamato replied that this would likely be impractical but he is interested in looking into electric vehicles for the department.
- Commissioner Cucco asked about the timeline for the new trash and recycling receptacles. The DPW representatives replied that the contracts are being finalized now and that the first 100 will likely be placed in the new year once the weather is clear.
- There was general discussion about the potential for composting within the City. The DPW representatives explained that space was an issue but that they are interested in exploring limited composting programs for yard waste.

## OLD BUSINESS

### Resiliency Planning Documents - update

- Secretary Lawrence stated that the Resiliency Planning Documents project is ongoing and is on schedule to be completed by June of 2017. There will be another public meeting early in the spring.

### Shade Tree Fund Ordinance

- Secretary Lawrence has met with Deputy Mayor Vivian Brady- Philips to review the draft of the Shade Tree Fund Ordinance. Deputy Mayor Brady-Philips provided revisions and will be forwarding on to the law department for further review.
- Commissioner Cucco provided comments and revisions on the draft we received during the November meeting. Commissioner Cucco asked if the language outlining the proposed members of the new Shade Tree Commission could be loosened; the language was very specific, dictating the specific background each member was required to have in order to be a member on the board.
- Secretary Lawrence stated that the Deputy Mayor had made similar revisions to the member requirements. It is proposed that at least one of the members have a background in forestry; it was suggested that this member could be filled by the City's new arborist.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Discussion of EC priorities for 2017

- Secretary Lawrence briefly summarized the possible initiatives for the Environmental Commission that was proposed during the November meeting. She suggested that the commission brainstorm to come up with a few potential initiatives prior to the January 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Secretary Lawrence suggested that the commission should definitely consider hosting a conference, possibly to coincide with Earth Day. It was also suggested that the



commission should assist in the creation of a Sustainability Plan to coincide with the Master Plan. The commission could suggest priorities, goals, and objectives that could help create the framework of the plan.

- Commissioner Cucco volunteered to create a Google document where the commissioners can brainstorm and propose ideas. Commissioner Meggett suggested creating education programming geared toward the City's youth. It was suggested that the Commission could potentially host a conference that was not only geared towards adults but also young audiences to incorporate environmental education for our youth.
- Secretary Lawrence volunteered to send the commissioners information from past environmental conferences to help them in their planning efforts.

## **CLOSING REMARKS AND OTHER BUSINESS BY COMMISSIONERS**

- No closing remarks or other business by commissioners.

## **GENERAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- No comments or participation by the public.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next Environmental Commission meeting is scheduled for 17 January 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the Large Conference Room on the 14th Floor of 30 Montgomery Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302. Members of the public who wish to attend must bring a form of ID for security.

