



MEETING MINUTES

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

Alison Cucco, Chair

Meeting: Jersey City Environmental Commission Public Meeting

Date / Location: 17 July 2018 – 6:30 p.m.
Council Chambers, City Hall, 280 Grove Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302

Attendees:	Commissioners/City Representatives	Members of the Public:
	Alison Cucco	Bill Armbruster
	Gregg Lanez	Anthony Harrington
	Michelle Luebke	Tom Hilmer
	Gabriel Ristorucci	Da Li
	Mario Verdibello	Jim Muhan
		Hilary Padget
		Ben Roeser
	Kate Lawrence and Laura Piraino, Office of Sustainability	Luis Rios
		Justin Taylor
		Aldo Treville

Prepared By: Alison Cucco

Date Prepared: July 28, 2018

ROLL CALL

Environmental Commission Chair Cucco called the Commission to order at 6:47 pm. Five of nine active commissioners were present; four constitutes quorum. Commissioners Meggett, Mirescu, Mittman, and Solowsky were absent.

SUNSHINE ANNOUNCEMENT

Secretary Lawrence confirmed that the meeting agenda was sent on Friday, July 13th to: Jersey Journal, Jersey City Reporter (aka Hudson Reporter), and the City Clerk's Office.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Commissioners Verdibello and Lanez indicated formatting issues with the May and June meeting minutes. The May and June meeting minutes were unanimously approved with the stipulation that the formatting issues would be addressed.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Secretary Lawrence shared the list of recent environmental notifications. Copies of notices made to the Environmental Commission ("EC") are available for review by the public for up to one year at the Office of Sustainability, 280 Grove Street, Room 108, Jersey City, 07302. (A member of the Office of Sustainability staff will meet individuals in the atrium if such individuals are unable to walk stairs to Room 108.)

SCHEDULED SPEAKER

Justin R. Milliet R. Taylor, New Jersey Passive House

- New Jersey Passive House's (NJPH) mission is to utilize industry experts to increase awareness about Passive House design and construction techniques to cultivate a community of professionals and citizens who will create a resilient, affordable, healthy, zero-energy, and carbon-free economy in New Jersey to fight climate change. NJPT is a nonprofit.
- Issues NJPH addresses:
 - Uncomfortable living
 - High cost of living
 - Extreme weather events such as rain bombs
 - Rising sea levels will put pressure on our infrastructure
 - Carbon emissions
 - 40% of our energy usage and carbon emissions come from buildings. Unless we address energy efficiency in buildings, we will not be carbon zero.
- Passive House standards aim to reduce heating and cooling by 95%.
- Passive House has five Principles
 1. Airtightness
 - a. Seal every air hole in the building as best you can with a weather resistant membrane barrier.
 2. Continuous Insulation
 3. High-Efficiency Windows
 - a. Use triple pane windows and two air chambers instead of one.
 4. Thermal Bridge-Free
 - a. Since we want to maintain the indoor temp, we don't want anything connecting the outside and inside.
 5. Heat Recovery Ventilation
- Energy reduction and costs
 - A 75-90% reduction in energy has been reported.
 - 2.5% cost increase in year 1, a reduction in cost during year 2, and a 75% cost saving over the life of the building.
- It's possible to retrofit an existing home or building. The owner finances the construction. There are no special contractors. There is training provided by the passive house organization.
 - Next training session in Ramsey NJ October 22-31st
- PH is a way to meet carbon reduction commitments.
 - NJ committed to 100% clean energy by 2050. Reducing building emissions is a reachable goal with PH standards.
- What are the next steps for City of Jersey City/JCEC?
 1. Nominate a liaison/facilitator for addressing building code and similar challenges
 2. Help promote PH and energy efficiency education
 3. Use PH standards as tool in broader carbon reduction schemes
 4. Add PH to documents and resources such as the ERI (Environmental Resource Inventory on the JCEC site)



OLD BUSINESS

Boonton Reservoir Public Access Discussion:

- Commissioner Verdibello drafted and distributed a letter to the EC in April 2018 highlighting the environmental and safety concerns of opening the Boonton reservoir to the public.
- Chair Cucco edited the letter and distributed it to the JCEC during the meeting.
- The commission unanimously voted in support of sending the letter to Terrence Nolan of OSI. Chair Cucco will email City Council to make them aware the letter was sent to OSI and to share the JCEC's views and concerns.

Green Business Recognition Program:

- Four applications for a "Certified Green Business" designation were received from Jersey City businesses: om.life Wellness Spa, Tidal Poke Co, Greenspot JC, and Chrissy's Cleaning Service. Chair Cucco read the applications aloud.
- Commissioners voted to approve applications for the following businesses:
 - om.life Wellness Spa, Tidal Poke Co, and Greenspot JC
- Commissioners voted to reject the following applications:
 - Chrissy's Cleaning Service
- Laura Piraino shared revised Green Business Certification criteria with the JCEC.
 - The updated application provides more relevant criteria to the particular business type.
 - Commissioners discussed potential changes, including clarifying the catering section, having percentages included, changing the language regarding food "waste" and encouraging businesses to not use plastic utensils.
- Commission members unanimously voted to accept the updated criteria. Commissioners were asked to send over any further edits within one week to the Office of Sustainability after having the opportunity to read over the criteria further.

NEW BUSINESS

Plastic Bag Ban

- Ordinance 18-065 banning plastic bags was passed by Council on June 27, 2018.
- Education campaign discussion at next meeting

Resolution to Enact Revenue-Neutral Carbon Fee:

- A resolution to enact a revenue neutral carbon fee on a national level is being circulated by the Citizen's Climate Lobby (CCL). CCL seeks to publicize support on the local level for reducing carbon emissions.
- The commission voted unanimously to support the resolution and send it to the Jersey City Municipal Council for review.



JC Green Team Update

- Promoting campaign this fall to reduce plastic straw use at JC businesses
- Next meeting – 1st Thursday in August (check Facebook page for location information)

Office of Sustainability Updates:

- Secretary Piraino reminded commissioners a survey has been distributed to the JCEC in order to identify what roles EC members are interested in taking on in order to engage the community and policy makers.
 - Physical copies of the survey were available if commissioners wanted to complete the survey at the meeting.

CLOSING REMARKS AND OTHER BUSINESS BY COMMISSIONERS

None at this time

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Jersey City resident Tom Hilmer expressed concern with the CSO outfall at the Jersey Avenue tidal basin. Tom met with the JCMUA to provide concepts to better handle the volume of waste at this site.
- Laura Piraino indicated that Tom's concerns are timely given the Long Term Control Plan. Laura also indicated that the Office of Sustainability will be working with the JCEC and the Supplemental CSO team to determine how to better engage the public on the Long Term Control Plan.
- Resident Tom Hilmer provided his contact information in order to further discuss his concepts with the Office of Sustainability in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next Environmental Commission meeting is scheduled for 18 September 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers, City Hall, Jersey City, NJ 07302.

