

WWT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

October 12, 2023

The October 2023 meeting of the WWT Environmental Commission was held on Thursday, October 12, 2023 via Zoom with Ephraim Buhks calling the meeting to order at 7:31pm.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, place and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board, and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Members: E. Buhks; L. Katz; E. Gordon; H. Shankar;
Liaison: D. Dobromilsky Council Liaison: Andrea Mandel, WWT Council President
Guests: Andi Ichsan Sjamsu, Drive Electric

PUBLIC COMMENT – Andi Ichsan Sjamsu, co-founder of the West Windsor Drive Electric Week, gave an overview presentation on the annual event that is part of the National Drive Electric Week series to promote electric vehicle outreach. The event allows current EV owners to display their own EVs for community members to explore and ask questions regarding the EV ownership experience. Potential EV owners are given the opportunity to obtain information on a variety of topics including purchase price, real-world range, operating costs, and incentives. This year's event had to be rescheduled and relocated due to inclement weather and was eventually able to be held on October 7, 2023 at the upper lot of the Farmers Market. Dealers showcased the latest available models from Polestar and Lucid and offered test drives for potential owners. A total of 28 vehicles were on display from numerous manufacturers including Volkswagen, BMW, Tesla, Nissan, Audi, Ford Lightning and Mustang Mach E, Jeep Wrangler and a GMC Hummer. Mr. Sjamsu provided details on current and upcoming rebates and incentives for purchasing EVs as well as the installation of charging stations within residences. There was additional discussion on the environmental and economic benefits of utilizing EVs. E. Buhks thanked him for the presentation and the valuable information supplied.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 9, 2023 L. Katz motioned; E. Gordon seconded;
Minutes were approved as presented with one grammatical correction.

CONTINUING BUSINESS: Project Review/Update

Community Park Gardens and Meadow – S. Parratt was unable to attend the meeting. An update on the Community Park Gardens and meadow projects is tabled until the next meeting.

E. Gordon gave a brief presentation on pesticide use and current trends, specifically about insecticides containing neonicotinoids which are chemically related to nicotine. Concerns have been discussed that these types of insecticides have a detrimental impact on bees. A law passed in New Jersey in 2022 restricted the use of these pesticides, and shortly the NJ DEP is expected to prohibit the non-agricultural sale or use of any neonic pesticide once necessary federal guidelines and specific exceptions are included. Any additional information or development will be discussed or addressed at a future meeting as necessary.

Planning Board – A. Baig was unable to attend the meeting. D. Dobromilsky reported that the Conservation Plan Element was presented for review to the Planning Board; some questions and minor revisions were discussed and implemented. The final version is slated for approval and adoption at the November 8, 2023 PB meeting.

Township Council Update – S. Gawas was unable to attend the meeting. A. Mandel reported that several employee-related contracts and Memorandums of Understanding have been presented and approved. There are currently no environmental issues being addressed at this time that would involve the EC. The next meeting is scheduled for October 24, 2023, a Tuesday, due to the observance of a Monday holiday.

Solar Lighting – H. Shankar did not have an update on the solar lighting project at this time. Based on previous discussions, E. Buhks requested H. Shankar volunteer to assist with coordinating and arranging Girl Scout presentations on their various projects at future EC meetings, based on her continuous involvement with the Girl Scout organization. H. Shankar accepted the suggestion and will continue to encourage the Girl Scouts to present as appropriate.

Solar Energy – L. Katz reported that the State is having a public hearing to finalize the community solar program. He hopes to receive the information and provide a presentation to the EC members at the November meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

2024 Budget Request – D. Dobromilsky reported that the budget process has begun for the township for the upcoming year. The proposed 2024 EC budget will remain the same as it was for 2023. In the future, if any specific needs or additional project requests are presented from EC they can be incorporated as appropriate into the planning process. In addition, if the need arises, grants and other funding sources can be explored for specific projects if they meet the parameters.

Motion to adjourn by L. Katz, seconded by E. Gordon. Meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Samantha Tomaro, Administrative Secretary
WWT Environmental Commission