

Environmental Commission Meeting
Monday October 21 2024 @ 7:00 pm
Borough Hall

Minutes

Meeting start time: 7:01PM

Attendance: Chris Runion, Marcia Karrow, Freddy Mejia, Melissa Swingle, Justin Schelenger, Jae Hoff

Public Comment

No members of the public were present for the meeting.

Liberty Village Project

The Commission discussed the proposal for the Liberty Village Redevelopment project, which just came before the Planning Board for completeness. Swingle noted that the project's approval was conditional on more documentation to be provided before the Planning Board meeting on 11/26.

The Commission reviewed the proposed retention basins for stormwater runoff collection and purification at Park Street and Brown Street. It was noted that the basins would be fully planted for natural water absorption and purification of runoff.

The Commission also discussed the pocket park on Brown Street:

First, while the park would be surrounded by planted trees, shrubs, and other vegetation, the park itself lacks any plantings. There will be little shade on the playground or area with benches. The Commission suggested the inclusion of better shade in the form of trees, umbrellas, or another structure.

Second, the Commission discussed the materials being used for the play surface in the park, citing concerns about ADA compliance and high maintenance costs. The Commission would like to seek clarity on if the play surface will be loose recycled rubber mulch or a solid surface and recommended a solid (but water permeable) surface like recycled rubber mats.

Third, the Commission recommends another one to two trash cans, better signage for ensuring that dogs are leashed, and the addition of a public water fountain or bottle refilling station.

Lastly, the question of whether the playground equipment itself is ADA compliant was also raised.

Schelenger noted that the Shade Tree Commission recommends swapping the Zelkova trees proposed in the plan with disease resistant elms. He also noted a request to ask for a maintenance plan to understand how the developer plans to maintain all of the newly planted greenery on the site.

Meeting adjourned 8:30