



North Brunswick Township Environmental Commission

Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2024

1. **Members:** Jonathan Flanders, Siobhan Gibbons, Carol Paszamant, Dan Patel, Antora Banerjee, Tony Brooks, Shailendra Patel
Member Attendees: Jonathan Flanders, Siobhan Gibbons, Carol Paszamant, Dan Patel, Antora Banerjee
Guests: Mike Hritz (North Brunswick Director of Community Development), Jim Watson (CME – township engineer), Joe Ansah (Jonathan's plogging partner), Lucia Middleton (Watershed Institute), Kristal Calkins (volunteer with Watershed Institute), Andres Caceres (Columbia Climate Revolution Network),
2. **Public Meeting Statement:** This regular meeting is held under the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law; adequate notice has been provided by posting in the North Brunswick Township public calendar and transmittal to the newspaper
3. **Review and Acceptance of Minutes** of prior meeting on September 25, 2024
4. **Plans to Review** – NBTOD Associates – 2300 Route 1, Major Site Plan, Due 11/8/24
5. **Follow up items from prior meetings:**
 - EC team requests to meet with Township engineer for further information on township sewer inspections. Trying for September or after to have Mike Hritz and Jim Watson (CME) attend meeting. **Mike and Jim will come to meeting on October 22nd. List of possible questions:**
 - a. Updated Map of Sewers – inlets and outlets? Could Jim Watson bring copies of sewer maps?
 - b. Recent article mentioned “mitigation” to prevent future flooding at Municipal Complex and possible emergency shelter in future.
 - c. How are sewer inspections conducted and how often? Cleaning schedule of sewers?
 - d. Noticed several sewers filled with debris along Adam Station Lane (North side along section of road going over railroad tracks)
 - e. Upgrades to sewers to prevent debris entering sewers?
 - f. Is it possible to have residents help with keeping debris away from sewers?
 - g. Any upgrades planned to existing sewer system. How old is sewer system.
 - h. Anything Environmental Commission can do to help with improving/maintaining sewer system (community outreach, clean-ups)?
 - i. Discuss Princess Drive stream modifications by Shailendra Patel.
 - j. **See Addendum for detailed notes from Jim Watson and Mike Hritz.**
 - EC team requests to have a copy of township sewer plan map once available. CME still working on this. Will take months to complete per Mike Hritz email on 6/24
 - Budget for EC renewed 6/30/24 for \$500.
 - Siobhan to ask Janice Larkin who at township is responsible for looking for new grants.
 - Mike Hritz 6/24/24 email to Jonathan regarding Facebook: “We can create the page and manage for you, just like the website and post anything you would like. I will speak to our

FB manager.”

- Review North Brunswick EC website layout and discuss use of Facebook/Instagram. Possible updates to website (need to coordinate with Craig Yetzko)
 - a. About
 - b. Meeting Dates & Locations
 - c. Events – link to Facebook
 - d. News
 - e. Resources – eg. Locations of charging stations, Best Practices, etc.
 - f. Videos / Pictures
 - g. Volunteer opportunities
 - h. Minutes / Agenda
 - i. ERI link (Environmental Resource Inventory).
- Note: This last done in 2014. Ask Mike H. how often this is updated.

6. New Items

Heritage Day – October 5th – Day’s summary

- a. Thanks to all who helped.
 - Carol, Siobhan, Shailendra and Jonathan manned table at Heritage Day.
 - Siobhan provided knitted hanging that depicted temperatures of land and ocean temperature by year.
Additional note: Siobhan brought Tempestry wall hangings for the earth, oceans, US, NJ and India to illustrate increase in global warming for last 140 years.
 - Joe Ansah enthusiastically helped draw people over to EC table.
 - Aarohi Banerjee created Environmental Survey phone app for people to answer questions as to their environmental activities.
 - Joe Vincze generously put together native flower seed packets for EC to distribute. Also provided Pawpaw tree sapling which we raffled off. Lastly he provided flyers for Native Plants and Pollinators and Zebra Swallowtail Butterfly.
 - Carolyn Flanders set up 2 tables next to EC for Master Gardeners which was helpful when we were asked questions about plants.
- b. Lucia Middleton says Sustainable NJ can provide funding for EC projects. Status for town is Bronze, Silver or Gold depending on achievements attained.

7. Future Business:

1. More clean-up events
2. Arboretum at Pulda Farm – ANJEC grants?
3. Update EC township website
4. Enforcement of NJ idling regulations
5. Community outreach and education – North Brunswick Youth Alliance. Follow up with Aarohi. Aarohi says Youth Alliance has been instructed to work with North Brunswick High School.
6. Evaluate how well recycling working in North Brunswick
7. Township mailer
 - Detail recycling, anti-litter, library seeds program
 - Perhaps do this through North Brunswick Facebook
8. Environmental Club – High School. Reach out to them in September 2024.
9. ANJEC suggestions for no litter signs.
10. Sustainable NJ – have grants available.

8. Public Portion

- 9. Adjournment** – Upcoming meetings:
November 26
December 17

Addendum (Notes from Jim Watson and Mike Hritz regarding Sewer System)

1. Sewer rules more complicated under new MS4 regulations. There is 75 miles of road in North Brunswick to maintain.
2. Discussed flood at municipal complex. Jersey Ave and Milltown Road (Old Bank of America site) are vulnerable to flooding. During Hurricane Ida North Brunswick got 6" inches of rain in a short time starting around 10:30 PM which caused sewer system surcharge. As a result municipal building flooded. By 1 AM the building had emptied. Mike said there is not total agreement on what caused flood but that one possibility is that Linwood Basin had not been maintained. This may have contributed to flooding. Cranbury Cross had lots of homes flooded that never flooded before.
3. Jim Watson has been with CME 35 years. Says that CME is starting to map sewer system. Water Utility and sanitary sewer maps exist but there is no good storm water map. Jim provided EC with map of North Brunswick Outfall Locations.
4. There is no storm water utility so no revenue is designated for maintaining it. There is money collected for water and storm sewer. There is need to establish a storm water utility.
5. North Brunswick not responsible for new detention and retention basins since 2002. Older ones are maintained by town.
6. FEMA may be able to provide some money for Municipal Center damage from Irene. There have been 50 FEMA claims from Ida in North Brunswick.
7. Municipal Building – goal is to start using by end of year. Mike and Police to move back.
8. According to Steve Boyd 20% of sewer inlets cleared per year. North Brunswick aims to increase this to 25 to 50% per year.
9. All outfalls and catch basins have been mapped in North Brunswick.
10. North Brunswick drinking water comes from Delaware and Raritan Canal.
11. Water main along Washington Road recently replaced. Georges Road water main replacement is in progress.
12. Succor Brook is not maintained by township because there are no easements. Residents own the brook.
13. How Lane and Adams Lane bridges are "Orphan Bridges", meaning no one designated to maintain them. They were built by Rail Road. State has agreed to fix bridges but will then turn over to County to own and maintain.
14. North Brunswick is not responsible for maintaining new detention and retention basins built since 2002. Older ones are maintained by town.
15. Discussed work done by Shailendra Patel on stream along Princess Drive. Shailendra had done some cleaning and modifications to improve flow of stream but stopped work when advised by township. Mike Hritz said that he and Jim Watson would like to meet with Shailendra to figure out a plan to maintain. Will likely need to remove materials used by Shailendra and find a new way to fix.