

124 Cedar Drive  
Colts Neck, NJ 07722  
Web: [www.coltsneck.org](http://www.coltsneck.org)



Ph: (732) 462-5470  
Fax: (732) 431-3173  
TDD-TYY: (732) 462- 6090

## **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

Meeting Minutes  
November 1, 2021

### **MEMBERS**

Present – David Kostka, John Vig (7:20pm), Brook Crossan, Mary Massey, Thomas Pacheco, Thom Hennessy

Absent – Liaison Susan Fitzpatrick

### **OPENING REMARKS**

Chairperson David Kostka called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM, and read the following statement:

“In accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act P.L. 1975, Chapter 231, public notice of this meeting has been provided by publication of an annual notice in the Asbury Park Press and posting of this notice on the bulletin board at Town Hall.

Notice was provided to the Asbury Park Press that in order to comply with Executive Order No. 104 from the Governor of the State of New Jersey, this meeting would be held virtually with log-in information and telephonic numbers for call-in being provided via the Township’s website.”

### **MINUTES**

The October 2021 minutes were approved with unanimous consent without any corrections.

### **REVIEW OF ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT (ZBA) APPLICATION – DUNKIN DONUTS**

- Chairperson Kostka reviewed the basics of the application before the ZBA.
- The full application was available on the ZBA web-site.
- After much discussion Crossan made a motion, seconded by Hennessy to send a letter to the ZBA expressing three concerns, that should be fully explored by the ZBA, with respect to the application:
  - The air pollution emissions from the vehicles queued at the drive-up window, and the potential for additional air pollutant emissions from congestion in the shopping center caused by queued vehicles that exceed queuing capacity of the drive-up window (numerous Dunkin Donuts in the area have been observed with queues exceeding 20 vehicles);
  - The potential for queuing vehicles creating congestion in the shopping center access to Merchants Way; and
  - Light pollution created by the additional lighted signs and increased operating hours.
- The motion was passed unanimously, 6-0.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Mr. Kostka stated that Red Bank launched a plastic bag, film recycling program. They worked with manufacturer SC Johnson to develop the program. Red Bank will begin collecting plastic film in special, separate containers starting November 3. Plastic film or the soft plastics found in grocery bags, sandwich bags, bubble wrap, Zip lock bags, dry – cleaning bags etc. will now be collected. He has a call into them for additional details. Some information on Red Bank’s pilot program is included as Attachment #1.

Bradley Beach (they are charged \$95/ton for the plastic collected), Matawan (he has a call into them), and Loch Arbour have similar programs.

**Mr. Kostka will look further into the program to see if Colts Neck (CN) might become involved in a similar effort, and report at the December meeting.**

Crossan raised the issue, & Kostka concurred, that we also need to understand where the “recycled” plastic is taken, and how it is processed, before the Township makes any decisions.

2. **Mr. Vig will explore the Backyard Wildlife Habitat certification process to see if a program should be developed to get Colts Neck and/or individual residents certified, and report at the December meeting.**
3. Mr. Crossan and Ms. Massey had begun exploring projects that the Environmental Commission (EC) might consider.

- a. Ms. Massey, had circulated an example of Participatory Budgeting in Freehold. See Attachment #2. In Freehold, 13 projects were put to a citizens vote and the top 3 are to be implemented. While their budget of \$200,000 exceeds what Colts Neck would likely do, the concept is very interesting. **Ms. Massey will look into potential projects in Colts Neck.**
  - b. Mr. Crossan expressed that the EC should do more education of the residents and Township Committee (TC) with respect to climate change. There was much discussion on this point.
    - Ms. Massey observed that people do not think about what they can do to reduce their carbon footprint often enough;
    - There was general consensus that the Township Committee needs to be more proactive, and take the issue more seriously;
    - There was discussion about the fact that the short-term direct impacts to Colts Neck may not be as great as in the shore communities; but
    - Mr. Crossan pointed out the costs to Monmouth County and the State of New Jersey will also be borne by the residents of Colts Neck; and
    - Mr. Kostka acknowledged that it was important for every community to do its part in the fight against climate change.
    - There is a Rutgers webinar that may be of interest. See Attachment #3.
    - **Ms. Massey and Mr. Crossan will report back in December regarding a variety of actions that the EC could consider attacking.**
4. **Mr. Hennessey and Mr. Pacheco will look into appropriate field trips to increase the knowledge of the members, and report back at the December meeting.** Potential possibilities included:
- a. Dorbrook Park to look at areas that could be potentially forested for carbon sequestration;
  - b. Monmouth County Reclamation Center: and
  - c. A Monmouth County recycling center.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Mr. Kostka will confirm that our \$2,000 grant from Sustainable Jersey does not expire in 2021.**
2. Mr. Hennessey felt that we need to develop a “business plan” to present to the TC regarding additional funds for environmental efforts. This should be discussed further at the December meeting.
3. Mr. Crossan raised the issue of trying to recruit more people to the Environmental Commission. Two potential avenues discussed were using the new website, and approaching Green Team members. **Mr. Kostka will report next month on this potential.**

As a point of clarification on membership:

- a. EC's must have a minimum of 5, and a maximum of 7 members. We currently have 6.
- b. There is enabling legislation that would allow CN to amend its ordinance to provide for up to 2 Alternate Members, who only vote in the absence of regular members. The current CN ordinance does not provide for this.
- c. The EC itself can appoint non-voting Associate Members (who do not have to be Township residents) and Student Members (e.g. interested high school, or college students).

**4. Mr. Vig will approach the TC regarding putting solar panels on the roof of the new Town Hall.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Brook Crossan

Attachments:

- #1 – Red Bank Plastic Recycling Pages
- #2 – Freehold Participatory Budgeting
- #3 – Rutgers Climate Communication Webinar

## Attachment #1 – Red Bank Plastic Recycling Pages

### Borough of Red Bank News

Posted on: October 13, 2021

#### Plastic Film Recycling to begin in November

Beginning Wednesday, November 3, 2021, the Borough of Red Bank will accept plastic bags, plastic film and plastic wrap as part of its residential curbside recycling program. This will be a one year pilot program. On the first Wednesday of each month, residents can recycle clean and dry plastic bags, plastic storage bags (such as Ziploc® brand bags, dry cleaning bags and other flexible plastic film by using the plastic film recycling bin.

Bins will be available beginning October 16 between 9am and 12pm at Borough Hall, 90 Monmouth Street. After that date, they will be available at the Public Works Office at 75 Chestnut Street during regular office hours.

For more information on the program including pick up dates and acceptable materials, please visit the following link: [Plastic film info](#)

To sign up for the program, please use the following link: [Sign up for Plastic Film Recycling](#)

Sign up Page

## Attachment #2 – Freehold Participatory Budgeting

### **Freehold Borough voters pick new projects**

FREEHOLD BOROUGH - The borough will add bottled water refilling stations to two parks, install traffic light generators at three corners and extend a walking trail at Lake Topamemus after voters chose those projects in the annual "participatory budgeting" election.

It's not quite like choosing a mayor or deciding on a multi-million dollar development project. But the annual exercise in democracy that allows residents to have a direct say in spending some of their tax money has become a favorite in the borough.

For the fifth straight year voters as young as 14 were allowed to cast their choices for three projects to be completed out of 13 placed on a ballot.

"It's phenomenal, we are getting more and more voices from the community," said Council Member Annette Jordan, the governing body's liaison to the program. "It has grown with a lot of interest from the Hispanic community and an opportunity to hear what they want."

At least 323 people voted in the event, which Jordan described as "a huge increase over last year." She said that included 235 online votes, 45 by paper ballot at borough hall and 43 at the downtown Latino Festival last month.

The participatory budget approach began in 2017 and is aimed at giving residents 14 and older a say in how officials spend up to \$200,000 in taxpayer money each year. The combined \$200,000 limit is budgeted each year as part of the borough's \$1 million capital improvement plan.

Since then, the borough has held the annual vote both online and in drop-off ballots that have drawn hundreds of votes each year.

The process invites ideas through an online portal that are reviewed by a committee appointed by the council. This year that resulted in 29 submissions, ranging from informational kiosks to a dog playground.

That group then chose 13 projects that were put up for a vote to choose the top three.

There are some restrictions. Each project must benefit the entire community in some way, serve the public for at least five years, and involve property owned by the municipality.

This year, the three chosen projects were: 1 Extending the trail at Lake Topamemus from the bandstand to Pond Road and connect to another trail across the parking lot. Cost: \$32,000.

2 Installing three water bottle filling stations with dog bowls and a fountain for humans in Liberty Park and Veterans Park. Cost: \$14,700.

3 Installing traffic light generators at Elks Point, South and Main streets, and West Main Street and Park Avenue to allow their use when power fails. Cost: \$32,000.

Freehold Borough was the first New Jersey community to utilize participatory budgeting, which has since spread to other Garden State communities such as West Orange and Neptune City.

The first Neptune City vote asked residents of the 5,000-population city to choose from among five ideas that had been chosen by a committee out of 20 submitted by residents. The spending limit: \$20,000.

No Neptune City vote was held in 2020 or 2021 due to COVID-19 issues, officials said.

Participatory budgeting actually dates back to 1989 when Brazil first implemented the process to give poor residents a say in improvements for their rising poverty levels. It has since been used in New York City, Phoenix and Oakland, California.

*Joe Strupp is an award-winning journalist with 30 years' experience who covers education and several local communities for APP.com and the Asbury Park Press. He is also the author of two books, including Killing Journalism on the state of the news media, and an adjunct media professor at Rutgers University and Fairleigh Dickinson University. Reach him at [jstrupp@gannettnj.com](mailto:jstrupp@gannettnj.com) and at 732-4133840. Follow him on Twitter at @joestrupp*

Attachment #3 – Rutgers Climate Communication Webinar

**Rutgers Department of Human Ecology  
Rutgers Climate Institute  
Joint Seminar  
Virtual and In-person\***

**Creative (Climate) Communications:  
Productive Pathways for Science, Policy  
and Society**

**Friday November 12, 2021  
11:30 am – 12:30 pm**



**Max Boykoff, University of Colorado-Boulder**

**Abstract:** Conversations about climate change at the science-policy interface and in our lives have been stuck. In this presentation Boykoff will highlight some dimensions of his recent book '[Creative \(Climate\) Communications](#)' that integrates lessons from the social sciences and humanities to more effectively make connections through issues, people, and things that everyday citizens care about. This has worked to enhance our understanding that there is no 'silver bullet' to communications about climate change. It argues that a 'silver buckshot' approach is needed instead, where strategies effectively reach different audiences in different contexts. Tactics emanating from this approach can then significantly improve efforts that seek meaningful, substantive, and sustained responses to contemporary climate challenges. Boykoff argues that it can also help to effectively re-capture a common or middle ground on climate change in the public arena. The presentation will highlight endeavors that harness creativity to try to better understand what kinds of communications work where, when, why, and under what conditions in the twenty-first century communication environment.

\* This seminar will be held in person on the Rutgers Cook Campus and virtually. A limited number of Rutgers faculty, staff, and students will be eligible to attend in person following Rutgers COVID protocols. All are welcome to attend virtually (including members of the public and those not affiliated with Rutgers).

**\*Everyone must register to attend whether they will  
participate in person or virtually.  
[REGISTER HERE](#)**



