



The Town of Fenwick Island

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RESIDENTIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE MEETING

June 3, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Town Hall

MINUTES

Members Present: Janice Bortner, Deborah Cowell (Zoom); Sharon Harris, Stu Rubenstein (Zoom), Rose Mary Hoy, (Zoom), Geri Verlaque (Zoom), Shaughnessy Pierce (Zoom), Megan Staczek (Zoom)

Other Participants: Natalie Magdeburger (Zoom), Kurt Zanelotti, Ann Riley, Susan Brennan (Zoom)

Staff: Lori Dabbondanza, Kathy Grab

Flag Salute & Call to Order

1. Approval of the May 6, 2024 committee meeting minutes. The minutes of the May 6, 2024 meeting were approved on a Stu Rubenstein/Rose Mary Hoy motion. Motion carried.
2. Discussion and Action
 - a. Mission/Vision Statement - Janice Bortner stated she has received input from several members regarding the mission statement of the Residential Concerns Committee. She read a draft version of the mission statement. Additionally, she shared a list of issues and concerns that the committee has dealt with in the past. She noted that the committee creates awareness and advocates on behalf of the residents. Any feedback or ideas on streamlining the committee is welcomed to be shared.
 - b. RCC Educational Summer Event – The RCC Educational event was discussed in the context of the following two agenda items.
 - c. Dark Sky Working Group – Janice Bortner reported that the Beach Committee has agreed to allow the working group to put out information about Dark Skies during the bonfire event in July. Rose Mary Hoy stated that she was pleased with the removal of the lights on S. Schulz. The working group has been busy putting together educational information for residents and business owners. The Planning Commission has encouraged the working group to take the lead on education on the Dark Sky initiative. The group met about a week ago to discuss how to move forward with their education on the issue. Rose Mary Hoy shared a presentation that their working group put together that outlines their goals for community education (copy can sent via email if needed). There was discussion of short-term activities such as the Dark Sky

Community Education Forum that is tentatively scheduled for July 27, 2024. They would like to collaborate with Sussex County and other coastal towns, the Environmental Committee, Charter and Ordinance Committee, etc. She discussed the need to coordinate with Sussex County on their comp plan that is in the planning stages. One long-term goal of the working group is to have the town certified as a Dark Sky Town as well as establishing a dark sky chapter in the Delmarva area. Janice Bortner has reached out to potential partners for the educational event, including Sussex County, Inland Bays, Surf Bagel (who agreed to donate one hundred bagels and spreads for the event). They will be looking for business donations as well. Volunteers will be needed for the event to assist. Janice Bortner asked about staff and overtime for work on a Saturday. Concern was expressed about the proposed date being the day after the July Town Council meeting as well as the need for staff to work overtime if held on a Saturday. Lori Dabbondanza indicated that by holding it during the week, staff would be available to assist as needed. It was noted that the target audience is the residents and the business owners of Fenwick Island. The mayor urged sharing information with other committees as well, specifically the Business Committee, and explaining ways that businesses in town can reduce their energy costs by adopting dark sky protocols. After discussion, Thursday, July 25 from 9-11 a.m. was proposed as the new event date. Members noted that this initiative will take a lot of time and several educational events to educate residents and businesses on. The importance of getting Ocean City to buy into the Dark Sky Movement was noted as well. On a Janice Bortner/Rose Mary Hoy motion, the committee voted to recommend approval by the Council a budget not to exceed the amount for \$400 to cover expenses to host the educational forum on July 25. Motion carried.

Ann Riley encouraged grass roots efforts to get neighbors involved in the initial event with the hope of growing interest. She recommended that everyone look at what [Truckee, CA](#) is doing with their dark skies initiative.

- d. Green Infrastructure Working Group - Deborah Cowell noted that they have not met yet this month. They will be discussing what they would like to do with the educational forum. They will be discussing tree plantings, potential speakers, etc. She has been talking with a forestry worker that may be interested in volunteering to conduct a tree inventory for Fenwick Island.
- e. Contact/Request for Consideration form suggestions – Janice Bortner discussed the various sampled forms she has received from other towns and has suggested reviewing ours. She feels it should be more streamlined and available at every meeting and at Town Hall. Lori Dabbondanza indicated that she would prefer the “Contact Us” form on the website be used and that it be kept simple. Natalie Magdeburger noted that she prefers to have all concerns shared with the Town staff rather than committee chairs. Janice Bortner indicated that she will give Lori Dabbondanza the forms for her to review.
- f. Wiring on the Delmarva utility poles and damaged Verizon boxes – Mike Locke has reached out to Delmarva Power but has not heard anything back from them yet.

- g. Welcome Packets – Discussion with Lori Dabbondanza and our working group to coordinate going forward with the new format for the welcome packets with the support of the business community. Janice would like to invite a representative from Hometown Press to present to the Residential and Business Committees in the fall. Kurt Zanelotti agreed to present this to the Business Committee for input. Janice Bortner stated that she would prefer Fenwick Island businesses only. Lori Dabbondanza stated that the company does that end of the work, but Town Hall has the final say on advertisers.
- h. Communicating to the public via the Town’s social media and website – Stu Rubenstein noted that he spoke with Lori at Town Hall, and she shared that the process and procedure used to getting information to the community is to send the information to the Town Manager and administrative staff for consideration and review. They will consult the mayor if there is a question regarding the content.

3. Old Business

- a. Lighting on S. Schulz Rd – The lights have been removed.
- b. Benches on Bunting – Janice Bortner indicated that she contacted all council members that voted against the measure, and none felt that their constituents were interested in advancing the issue.
- c. Fallen Heroes Commemorative Flags – This is on hold for now.

4. New Business

- a. Mosquito Control measures – Janice Bortner shared that there has been concern expressed about mosquito mitigation measures. It was noted that this is a green infrastructure issue and mitigation falls on the homeowners regarding properly maintaining their properties. One mitigation measure discussed was planting mosquito repellent plants on their properties. There are a lot of things that need to be addressed in Fenwick Island regarding standing water on the roads and on our lots. The Green Infrastructure committee should be involved. There was discussion about rain gardens but one of the concerns with them is the potential for mosquitos. One member mentioned that dragon flies and bats eat mosquitoes. The mayor noted that she would like to explore the native plant issue further and highlight the issue in her next Message from the Mayor.
- b. Janice Bortner reminded everyone about a bridge forum scheduled for Monday, June 10 @ Roxana Fire Department. Everyone was encouraged to attend. Rose Mary Hoy asked Natalie Magdeburger if there is a way to get the public input and survey results from their preliminary reports. Natalie Magdeburger indicated that we may have to file a FOIA request to get the information. She plans to go and would like to see what they do.

5. Public Participation - None
6. Future Meeting July 1, 2024 at 10 a.m.
7. Adjourn – Motion to adjourn on a Stu Rubenstein/Rose Mary Hoy Motion at 11:42 am. Motion carried.