



The Town of Fenwick Island

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RESIDENTIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE MEETING

August 5, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Town Hall

MINUTES

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

Other Participants: Natalie Magdeburger (Zoom)

Staff: Lori Dabbondanza, Kathy Grab

Flag Salute & Call to Order at 10:00 a.m.

1. Approval of the July 1, 2024 committee meeting minutes.

- **Motion to approve the July 1, 2024 meeting minutes on a Megan Staczek/Rose Mary Hoy motion.**

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Discussion and Action.

a. Discussion and Big Thank You to all who participated in the RCC Educational Forum - Evaluation of the event

- Janice Bortner stated that the event was a huge success thanks to Rose Mary Hoy and Deborah Cowell leading it and would like to know the next steps.
- Deborah Cowell believes the next step is to contact presenters to get a feel for what could have been done differently and what worked well.
- Rose Mary Hoy agreed. She reviewed the list of goals both short term and long term.
- Rose Mary stated we need to connect with the development across the bay regarding their lighting and working together with them.
- More upcoming presentations in the future, including Zoom, were requested.
- Janice Bortner indicated that there was resident interest in adding trees and plants throughout town. Many have scheduled experts to come out already to review their property.

- DarkSky self-evaluation is available for residents to do on their own, but Janice Bortner indicated that the town code is so outdated that it really doesn't apply to current conditions.
- Megan Staczek thought that adding a link on the website to these issues to help educate residents for DarkSky and Green Infrastructure.
- Janice Bortner indicated that we need to start working on the ordinances updating the verbiage.
- Rose Mary Hoy thought that we should possibly work with the Environmental Committee so as not to overlap efforts. Janice Bortner stated there are options to address this and suggested an Ad-Hoc or subcommittee. The creation of additional committees, whether ad-hoc or subcommittee would need to be approved by the Town Council per Lori Dabbondanza.
- Natalie Magdeburger indicated that a subcommittee is used in lieu of working groups, but they are subject to the same requirements, and we follow all guidelines to be transparent. Ad hoc committees are formed when there is a particular issue or project that we want to pursue and just focus on, such as the Dredging Committee. If you want to pursue a DarkSky/Green Infrastructure group, you may want to ask for an Ad-hoc committee as this is starting to be the focus point. It would allow people to follow it more.
- Janice Bortner stated that this is something the committee needs to discuss further.
- Rose Mary Hoy circled back to collaborating with the Environmental Committee as well. Janice Bortner agreed and thought the Infrastructure Committee should be included as well. Deborah Cowell shared the Integrated Committee Concerns slide from the Green Infrastructure presentation which included the Infrastructure, Environmental, and Residential Concerns committees. She noted that all three play a role in it.
- It was decided that trying to set up a meeting with the Environmental and Infrastructure committees would be a good starting point.

b. Residential Building halt during July and August due to congestion during the busiest time of the year for pedestrian safety and convenience

- Janice Bortner noted that this concern was brought to her attention recently. She asked Deborah Cowell to expand on this. Deb stated that the construction on Atlantic Street has been increasing since COVID. The amount of construction vehicles is getting to be over the top. Geri Verlaque stated that as a full-time resident, it is all the time and that holding people up building homes during these months could have the town in an uproar.
- Janice Bortner indicated that maybe this should be addressed with the Pedestrian Safety Committee or Infrastructure Committee.
- Deborah Cowell questions if the construction managers in town have all the tools they need to ensure proper construction management/oversight as issues have been observed that would not normally be tolerated on a construction site and surrounding properties. Geri Verlaque stated that reaching out to Mike Locke is an

idea as he is very responsive to issues. Lori Dabbondanza stated that Mike Locke and the team do inspections throughout town every day, but they are not able to supervise every job going on all day every day. If there are concerns about code violations, safety, etc. they address them right away.

- Signage needs to be addressed regarding pedestrian safety, particularly on W. Atlantic Street. It has been noted that there is heavy traffic due to the lack of adequate parking at Matt's Fish Camp (MFC). Perhaps having a "no right turn" from the MFC parking lot or a "resident or guest parking beyond this point" sign would help alleviate the constant turn heavy traffic and arounds on W. Atlantic Street.
- Rose Mary Hoy suggested someone work with the restaurant in a friendly manner. Natalie Magdeburger stated that we need to discuss the best way to work with our businesses before approaching them about parking concerns.

c. Residential request for privacy fencing around pools and hot tub

- The issue of public nudity was brought to the attention of Janice Bortner. She spoke with Chief Morrissey, and he indicated that he felt the best approach was to send a letter to the owner of the property and recommend that they be cognizant of neighbors and cover up when entering and exiting their pools and hot tubs.
- Deborah Cowell noted that the privacy walls that everyone has been adding recently to their homes look nice and could be an option.
- Janice Bortner reviewed the rental card that is given out and suggested adding language to it regarding this issue.
- Rose Mary Hoy stated that this should not be an issue, that surely there are public decency laws to cover this. Natalie Magdeburger stated that there is not, specifically when it comes to someone's private property.
- Rose Mary Hoy disagreed with the suggestion of privacy walls, for her in particular there is a view that they like to see when they are in their hot tub.
- Geri Verlaque feels that neighbors should try to resolve their issues one-on-one first before making a rule that applies to everyone.

d. New traffic sign on W Atlantic St (No thru street only Residents and guests beyond this point).

- Deb Cowell asked if this can be considered. Again, perhaps having a "no right turn" from the MFC parking lot or a "resident or guest parking beyond this point" sign would help alleviate the constant turn heavy traffic and arounds on W. Atlantic Street. It was determined that it needs to be addressed with the Pedestrian Safety Committee.

3. Old Business

a. Welcome Packets

- Janice Bortner stated that based on the information that was provided by Kathy Grab, she feels that welcome packets for new residents from January through April should be sent out.
- There is a lot of useful information in the packets.

b. Mosquitos

- Janice Bortner asked if there have been any issues currently regarding mosquitoes. No one felt it was currently an issue. She asked if Mike Locke had been filling in areas where water collects, and Lori Dabbondanza indicated that our Public Works team maintains areas within our easements. They frequently add gravel to areas that need it.

4. New Business

a. Bicycle Rack on Farmington

- Geri Verlaque had a neighbor request that the bike rack at Farmington needed to be increased again as it is still not large enough.

b. Little Library

- The library is leaking. Mike Locke will be looking into ways to waterproof the current one. Janice Bortner indicated that we may need to look into purchasing two new ones. One for adults and a matching one for children. Lori Dabbondanza indicated that Kathy Grab shared the link to the Little Free Library website with Janice in order to get pricing and ideas of what may work better than what we currently have.

c. Trash and recycling corrals

- An issue with trash and recycling bin corrals was brought to Janice Bortner. She indicated that she spoke with Mike Locke and there is no code requiring one. Natalie Magdeburger noted that they do have to follow the code on when to put the bins out and bring them back in.

d. Grass clippings in the canals

- This concern by a resident was brought to Janice Bortner. We believe it is a DNREC issue. Lori Dabbondanza noted that it may be possible for the town to put a

reminder on the website and Facebook with information regarding proper disposal of grass clippings.

e. Residential Concerns Committee Newsletter

- Janice Bortner would like to do email messaging quarterly that would include highlights and different information beneficial to the residents. Natalie Magdeburger stated that this is something that already goes out with the Message from the Mayor, Facebook, or the website. The Council had decided that they did not want to overwhelm people with too many town emails. Janice Bortner felt that not everyone goes to the town website or Facebook for town information.

f. Resident Concerns with Town Hall

- Janice Bortner shared that when people call the Town Hall voicing their concerns, there should be someone answering the phones at all times. She suggested logging the calls, noting who the caller was, who is addressing the concern, and when the resident was contacted back with answers. She believes this option will alleviate the frustration of residents when they are not able to speak with someone. Janice Bortner stated she calls Town Hall and gets no answer. The town needs to better document calls.
- Natalie Magdeburger stated that this is something that should be addressed at the Council level. She noted that staff meet every Monday morning to discuss inquiries, issues, and follow-ups that have been made or are still needed. She stated that she is privy to this and knows that the staff do work together to make sure that the concerns are being addressed and the proper staff is handling the issue. She added that we are currently trying to bring in a database which will help manage open issues. Staff are currently managing this manually. She noted that there are several ways to share concerns and complaints. They can:
 - Go to the website and fill out a Contact Us form,
 - Call Town Hall,
 - Email individual staff, or,
 - Stop in the Town Hall.
- Lori Dabbondanza noted that the phone system has recently been changed so that three different people have their phones ringing if someone presses 0. If all three staff members are in a meeting or are unavailable, it will go to voicemail. She added that we react as quickly as possible, but not all calls are an immediate priority.
- Natalie Magdeburger also stated that we need to be mindful that not all complaints are valid. We need to allow time to go out and investigate before pulling the trigger.
- Deborah Cowell asked what to do when there is overflowing trash or recycling bins. Natalie Magdeburger suggested that if it is a continuous issue, take a picture and

report it to the Town Hall. Rose Mary Hoy recommended sending the schedule of trash and recycling to them and asking that they post it in rental units.

5. Public Participation.

- None

6. Future Meeting.

- a. September 9, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

7. Adjourn.

Motion to adjourn on a Sharon Harris/Rose Mary Hoy motion at 11:46 a.m.

Motion passed unanimously.