



The Town of Fenwick Island

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ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING

September 11, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

Town Hall

MINUTES

Members Present: Colleen Wilson, Janice Bortner, Liz Lear, Susan Brennan (Zoom), Vicki Carmean, Deborah Cowell (Zoom)

Other Participants: Rose Mary Hoy (Zoom)

Staff Participants: Kathy Grab

Call to Order/ Flag Salute

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes from August 14, 2024.

- **Motion to approve the minutes from August 14, 2024 on a Susan Brennan /Liz Lear motion.**

Motion Passed Unanimously

2. Offshore Wind Update

- Colleen Wilson stated there is a lot of news, and most of it is not so good. The US Wind Project got an approval from BOEM: DE Governor approved wind industrialization of the ocean in Delaware.
- Comments were due this week to DNREC, Colleen Wilson sent in a comment from the Environmental Committee. You are able to see all the comments online.
- Vicki Carmean stated that they keep having these meetings and you can go to them, it doesn't make a difference, they are going to do what they are going to do, she is happy we are joining the lawsuit.

- Susan Brennan gave an update from Ocean City. There will be a new offshore hearing Tuesday September 24th at 5 pm at the Powell Convention Center to present plans to construct the offshore wind turbines as close as 3.5 miles from Ocean City shoreline. This is in addition to the current leases.
- Vicki Carmean asked if anyone who is involved with the windfarms are buying up the coastal property for extra money. Colleen Wilson stated that interestingly enough real estate agents have not gotten involved but either way, it's a win-win for them.
- Colleen Wilson asked about the lawsuit and Susan Brennan stated that all she knew was at this time the town of Ocean City lawsuit is still on going. The only saving grace we may have is the permitting for the onshoring in Delaware near the Indian River.
- Vicki Carmean would like to be optimistic, but she cannot believe that there's anything so ill-conceived as these wind farms. You hear on the news they are not good and not efficient. Nantucket for instance needs tourists, and their fishing industries are going to be impacted from the debris from the broken blades.
- Susan Brenan discussed what had happened just north of the bridge with two tropical storms. When they start maneuvering cables underneath there, the shifting sand underground will make it even more unstable.
- Janice Bortner questions how they are able to construct windmills 3.5 miles out. Colleen Wilson stated that in Virginia where Dominion Energy is currently being constructed the homes are one mile back and are being impacted, cracks in the house, the noise is loud. Janice Bortner stated that Ocean City will need to look into this as some of the old high rises will be impacted.
- Vicki Carmean stated she liked the poster that Ocean City is doing, Colleen Wilson stated she posted it on Nextdoor, the committee would like it to be posted online and on Facebook as well.

3. Pollinator Park Update.

- The grand opening was very successful. 75 people or so showed up. The refreshments and music were greatly appreciated. Barefoot Gardeners were there with the children's program, people really liked the seed packets. Janice

Bortner had her flyers out for the forestry initiative meeting which will be held today. There is a sign-up sheet at town hall.

- Susan Brennan stated that she and Colleen Wilson have formed a relationship with Inland Bay Garden Center. Cheryl, one of the owners, and Sarah, who manages their media, came to the opening and was blown away. They suggested she make contact with someone from the Center for Inland Bays, which she did, and they would like to meet and tour the garden. The program is an opportunity for what looks like small towns or HOA to provide native plants. Hopefully some funding will be available.
- Vickie Carmean was very impressed with the selection of plants.
- Susan Brennan has put together a preliminary maintenance plan to work with the Barefoot Gardeners Club. She will share the information with Colleen Wilson for the club's meeting this Saturday.
- Vicki Carmean stated that there is a plot of town land at the end of Georgetown. Susan Brennan stated that the Infrastructure Group is currently looking at road ends and has received a list of larger plots of land that are owned or mostly owned by the town. They are looking into some sort of park, where it could incorporate the remedial infrastructure for flooding. Like a living shoreline. She and Tim Leahy are meeting with the University of DE for the Gap Grant to start that discussion.
- Janice Bortner stated Steven from the Botanical Garden came to the symposium, they have hedge rows they are working on that help to mitigate water. There are also some plants that help as well. Deborah Cowell has met with him.
- Deborah Cowell said they had trees, shrubs and perennials. They incorporated a grid system for their parking area. Wildflower seeded flower garden was created and can be mowed when they need more parking spots. This area once was where standing water remained.
- Deborah Cowell also researched Norfolk VA and their green infrastructure, there is some really good information, she will forward the information on to Susan Brennan to review.

4. Old Business

- None

5. New Business

a. Discussion of Future Projects

- Pollinator Park will be an ongoing project.
- There is a possibility that there is property that will be given to the town that has certain stipulations. There are some caveats that the owner is placing on the transfer.

b. Planning Commission Matrix Review/Update

- Susan Brennan stated we are at almost one full year of the implementation of the plan. At the end of the month each committee chair will need to submit their reports. Commissioners are currently looking at the matrix which are the recommendations and to be sure everything lines up properly. Currently working on handouts for committee members giving some important information to help educate members.
- Vicki Carmean is very impressed with the commission and their work. Susan Brennan stated that if they expect leaders to come up within the committees, they need a little education to help them out. Janice Bortner agreed as it is solely volunteer and many sign up for a committee where their passions are.
- Vicki Carmean stated that there are a lot of volunteers with expertise and talent in our town and it would be nice to recognize it at least once a year. Friends and Neighbors lunch. Other towns do this. It is a nice way to bring people together.
- Colleen Wilson has stated that she hopes everyone has sent in their applications for the committee membership.

- Janice Bortner stated the collaboration and overlapping of the committees is important and you can learn from others on other committees.

6. Date of the next meeting:

- October 9, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

7. Public Participation

- Rose Mary Hoy stated this is her first time at the meeting, the committee has piqued her interest and thanked the committee for their work. She listened to a podcast about insects and nighttime lighting. She sees the connection between DarkSky and the Pollinator Garden and the Environmental Committee. Because of that she did sign up for the Environmental Committee as well as the RCC.
- Vicki Carmean wanted to thank both Colleen Wilson and Susan Brennan for their direction this year. It has been fun coming to the meetings, it is organized, and everyone does their homework.

8. Adjournment

- **On a Janice Bortner/Liz Lear motion the meeting was adjourned at 9:49 a.m.**

Motion Passed Unanimously