



The Town of Fenwick Island

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RESIDENTIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE MEETING

October 7, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Town Hall

MINUTES

Members Present: Sharon Harris, Betsy Patten, Joel Patten, Janice Bortner (Zoom), Deborah Cowell (Zoom), George Stone (Zoom), Kate Norman (Zoom), Rose Mary Hoy (Zoom), Megan Staczek (Zoom), Stu Rubenstein (Zoom), Cindy Kerns

Other Participants: Ann Riley, Natalie Magdeburger (Zoom)

Staff: Kathy Grab

Flag Salute & Call to Order at 10:03 am

1. Approval of the September 9, 2024 meeting minutes

a. Motion to approve the September 9, 2024 meeting minutes with the typo correction on a Rose Mary Hoy/Megan Staczek motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Welcome New Members and Returning Member

a. Mission Statement

- Janice Bortner read to the committee the Mission and Vision Statement.
- George Stone requested that he have a copy of the mission statement. Janice Bortner will be sure it is sent out.

b. Planning Commission Report and Matrix

- Janice Bortner explained the tasks and recommendations assigned by the Planning Commission, which they will be focusing on and also taking on other initiatives as well. She gave the members an update on the activities that the Residential Concerns Committee, DarkSky, and Green Infrastructure have accomplished in the last year and the upcoming events.

c. Planning Commission Committee Procedures

- Everyone should have received the Town of Fenwick Island's Committee Guide and Procedures, please review.
- Rose Mary Hoy recommends that new members read the Town of Fenwick Island's Comprehensive Plan. It is on the website and available at Town Hall.
- Ann Riley stated that by just clicking on one of the three responses in your meeting notice, there is no need to email your intentions separately.
- Ann Riley asked if anyone had questions regarding FOIA and stated it is important that you cannot speak of committee business offline, must be in an open meeting.

3. Discussion and Possible Action.

a. Meeting with Taryn Davidson from Delaware Urban Forestry on 9/11/24 and Site Visits on 9/25/24 update.

- Deb Cowell reviewed the Green Infrastructure's Events with Taryn Davidson. The first on September 11th is an educational session and the second being the site visit on September 25th. There are oil sample kits still available at the Town Hall.

b. Next Subject Matter Experts Presentation from our Fenwick Nurtures Nature Symposium on 11/14/24 (they will be discussing estuary science and restoration, as well as living shorelines, rain gardens, and pocket forests).

- A Zoom meeting has been set for Green Infrastructure on November 14 at 7:00 p.m., with Meghan Fellows and Bob Collins on Pocket Forests & Living Shorelines.

c. Green Infrastructure Working Group – Deborah Cowell

- More in-depth meetings with subject matter experts are in the plans along with holding more working group meetings. She explained what Green Infrastructure is according to DNREC and how it relates to the Government down to Fenwick Island.
- Plans for Arbor Day 2025, looking at the land that was granted to the town, educational forums, and plans for cross relationships with Infrastructure and Environmental Committees.
- Janice Bortner spoke on the exciting opportunity the new land has brought and that now that it is owned by the town, we could investigate grant funds to help with the project.
- Natalie Magdeburger stated that the land is now part of the town, it is across the street from the Town Hall. Must keep it natural, pathways and such are going to be allowed. Thought it would be a great place for the natural tree canopy. She

stated that Susan Brennan during the staff meeting stated doing a survey of what plants there are already there would be an advantage. She is excited for this project.

- Deborah Cowell asked Natalie Magdeburger for a copy of the conditions, and Natalie Magdeburger will give them a copy of the Deed.
- George Stone asked how large the property is, Natalie Magdeburger stated it is the two lots near Royal Farms, about 150 feet deep and 100 feet wide.
- Janice Bortner stated that the upcoming Zoom meeting will be interesting and beneficial to this project.

d. DarkSky Working Group – Rose Mary Hoy

- Rose Mary Hoy stated that she is connected with DarkSky International and receives numerous emails on programs and upcoming events. Would like to discuss with those who are responsible for the webpage content about adding these events. She feels this would be a good way to get the public's interest. She discussed a few of the upcoming events with DarkSky International.
- Betsy Patten asked that Rose Mary Hoy to explain what DarkSky is about. She explained the DarkSky International and their foundation of why they exist. She explained how the nighttime lighting can interfere with nature, the wildlife, birds, nocturnal animals, insects, moths, turtles, and health disorders for humans such as cancers, and cognitive issues. We aren't even able to see the stars in the sky. She explained how lighting can be effective without blinding.
- George Stone added that DarkSky International is not only about the education to the consumers but prominent in facilitating with municipalities to help educate at that level through promoting or producing better lighting ordinances. They are working closely with manufacturers that produce lighting fixtures and with stores advising consumers which ones are DarkSky compliant.
- Janice Bortner stated that it comes down to education. To update our ordinance, we need to educate people.
- Rose Mary Hoy stated she has never had a negative reaction when she has been asked to explain the importance of DarkSky. Will need to follow up on these topics and who on the committee are interested in joining the DarkSky Working Group. A plan is in the works, and it is comprehensive, and the education is the foundation.
- Janice Bortner stated she will be sure to have the committee the opportunity to sign up for the different initiatives they are interested in helping with.

e. Motion Sent to Council – Ad Hoc DarkSky Committee

- Janice Bortner read the motion that was brought to the Council. And advised the committee that Council approved an Ad Hoc Committee.
- Three members are currently on the committee, Janice Bortner, George Stone, and

- Rose Mary Hoy.
- Rose Mary Hoy is very thankful for Town Council's support on this project.
- Three primary components to the motion were educational, ordinance (where we ultimately want to get to), and the survey. She feels that the committee can move forward with this.
- Rose Mary Hoy feels that two lighting groups for lighting is not necessary. She feels it should all be in one place. Megan Staczek felt it was a great point. Natalie Magdeburger wanted to be sure that everyone understand why the Ad Hoc Committee was formed and she agreed. With the ultimate end goal is to change lighting ordinance, FOIA requirements must be followed. Open meetings and structure are needed. A larger survey with a lot of different issues will be sent out to residents, need to be sure it is necessary, and people are supportive of.
- George Stone asked Natalie Magdeburger if it reasonable to consider whether the DarkSky Working Group could convene for the purposes of as an Ad Hoc group to review the lighting ordinance in an open forum. Natalie Magdeburger stated that is why it was formed, it ends the working group and begins the formal recognition of the committee.
- Rose Mary Hoy asked Natalie Magdeburger that down the road if a professional service is needed, how to go about requesting the funding. Natalie Magdeburger stated the committee would need to vote on the motioned in their meeting to go to council with the recommended expense with an action plan, and council will then approve or not approve the expense.

f. Suggestions for New Initiatives from Members

- Janice Bortner asked that the members bring to her any suggestions they may have for new initiatives.

4. Old Business

a. Traffic Concerns

- Janice Bortner stated that the Pedestrian Safety Committee will not be continued, she brought to the Town Council the issues of the traffic concerns that were addressed in the previous meeting and Chief Morrisey will address these issues.
- Residential concerns on the lack of Summer Bicycle Patrol will be researched by Chief Morrisey as well.
- Cindy Kerns stated that she has great concerns on pedestrian safety, especially crossing the highway. She feels that better signage is needed. Stu Rubenstein agreed. Natalie Magdeburger stated that the signs are mandated by the state, the town must follow the guidelines. There is a sidewalk project in place to be done by 2029 which should alleviate some of these traffic issues. She has received response back from the State on the issue at Bayard Street.
- Janice Bortner asked if it is law to stop for pedestrians, Natalie Magdeburger

stated that you must stop if a pedestrian is in the crossing.

- Sharon Harris asked Natalie Magdeburger if the community had issues with the Pedestrian Safety Committee on hold, they could express their concerns? Natalie Magdeburger stated that it was disbanded for the year, any safety concerns can and should be addressed with her or the town office.
- Rose Mary Hoy stated that while drivers need to be responsible, so do the pedestrians, she felt that more education can be done. Natalie Magdeburger stated that there was education done earlier in the year, and that is why the Patrol Bicycles were added.

b. Welcome Packets

- The Business Committee is currently working on the possibility of using Hometown Press. Welcome packets will be kept as is for now.

5. New Business

a. For the Town Council Request

- Longer Terms for Council members was discussed as well as members must have their residence within fifty miles of Fenwick Island as well as owning property here.
- Sharon Harris encourages that people go to Town Council meetings either in person or by Zoom where you can learn about what is going on in town.
- Rose Mary Hoy asked if real time updates on the dredging committee will be made on the website. Natalie Magdeburger stated that she will be doing so. They are currently prepping.
- Starting in the North Channel for 2 weeks and ending in South Channel for about 10 days. Hopefully shut down by December 15th.
- Rose Mary Hoy asked if we could restrict the time for their work? Janice Bortner stated they must abide by Sussex County code, not Fenwick Island.
- Deborah Cowell asked if there will be more posted listing of what is open and not open for the boaters? Janice Bortner stated that you could speak with Bill Rymer or Natalie Magdeburger. She feels that it is important to have this information should be given to the public.

6. Public Participation.

a. None

7. Future Meeting.

- a. November 4, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.
- b. Ad Hoc meeting has not been set yet.

8. Adjourn.

a. **Motion to adjourn on Sharon Harris/Rose Mary Hoy motion at 11:47 am**

Motion passed unanimously.