

Minutes of the Parks & Environment Advisory Board
Meeting May 5th, 2021 online via Webex

In attendance:

Officers Present - Bill Reinert – Chairman,

Members Present - Stephen Fielder, Dick Colby, Lisa March, Heather Warburton,

Members Absent - Mike Hogan – Vice Chairman, Ken Sooy

Commissioner Representative – James Bertino - absent

County Staff - Greg Brookins, D.H.P.W. - present

Secretary - Eric Husta – D.D.P.R. – present

Old Business:

None

Guest Speaker:

John Peterson, Department Head of Regional Planning and Development for Atlantic County, joined the meeting to discuss the feasibility study for the completion of Bikeway West. The SJTPO has been studying ways to connect a bike path from Philadelphia to the southern borders of Camden and Gloucester counties. There are multiple options currently being considered for a route from this border southward.

There was also discussion regarding the possible route to Cape May over the Garden State Parkway bridge. The federal funding is there for this connection but there are hurdles to overcome. Discussion was also had regarding a route from Pleasantville to Atlantic City as well as talk of what it would take to complete the Bikeway West connection over the Great Egg Harbor River at the old train trestle in Mays Landing.

The second major topic Mr. Peterson discussed was coastal resiliency. This generated much talk of rising sea levels and the economic viability of an organized retreat from the shore. There was also discussion regarding who would be responsible for funding this work with John noting it could not be solely a municipality's responsibility.

John's presentation concluded with talk about planning roads and roadway capacities. Further discussion was had regarding the NJDEP and the ACOE and their plans for resiliency. The talk concluded with comments on the disparity of representation for the southern portions of New Jersey.

Roundtable Discussion topics:

Steve Fiedler noted Hay Road leading to Clark's Landing is now passable and has been regraded. He also noted Mannheim Avenue is in poor shape and needs work. He concluded by noting Galloway still had 500 out of 1,000 tree seedlings left from their recent giveaway.

Dick Colby mentioned his recent participation in a clean-up of the newly acquired 35 acres recently added to the existing 700 acre Cologne Tract and inquired as to the current condition of the trails and parking there. Eric

Minutes of the Parks & Environment Advisory Board
Meeting May 5th, 2021 online via Webex

Husta responded by noting the County purchases different types of open space, some of which, as is the case with the Cologne Tract, is geared primarily towards conservation.

The round table discussion concluded with discussion regarding a recent application made by prospective member Carey Lowrey. The group decided to extend an invitation to our next meeting for a meet and greet which Eric Husta agreed to send via email.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.

Our next meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday, June 2nd, 2021 at 7 PM via Webex.

cc: Dennis Levinson, County Executive
Jerry DelRosso, County Administrator
Diana Rutala, Deputy County Administrator
Maureen Kern, Chairperson - Board of County Commissioners
James Bertino, Board of County Commissioners – PEAB Representative
Greg Brookins, Department Head Public Works
All Advisory Board Members