

Montclair Environmental Commission

December Meeting Minutes - Draft

12/4/24 @ 7:30 pm

EC Members Present: Suzanne Aptman (Chair), Bill Martens (Vice Chair), Ruchi Misra (Secretary), Keith Brodock, Mac Carbonnell, Gray Russell, Alison Tribus

Montclair Township Presence: Deputy Mayor Susan Shin-Andersen, Lisa Johnson (Township Liaison)

Approval of October Meeting Minutes

Yes: 4 No: 0 Abstain: 3

Approval of November Meeting Minutes

Will vote during January meeting

Reports/Updates: (input/decision/action needed or action completed)

- Community Solar Energy Program - Presentation by Gabel Associates
 - Gabel Associates gave an hour-long presentation with questions and discussion.
 - The State Board of Public Utilities (BPU) is offering a program to enable Low- Middle Income (LMI) Households an opportunity to receive solar energy/electricity and a guaranteed 20% savings on their electricity bill for 15 years. 80% of those enrolled in the program must be LMI households according to the BPU. Residents would be billed for their electricity usage as usual, but receive a 20% savings on that bill.
 - This would become part of the household's regular PSE&G billing process.
 - Gabel could be hired to manage the RFP process to find a solar developer and the customer acquisition and customer service process for Montclair. Montclair would not pay their fee; the solar developer pays Gabel's fee.
 - Gabel guarantees the customer service and billing invoices will all go through PSE&G. Customers will get the same bill and have access to the same customer service. The only difference is they are getting cheaper, cleaner, solar energy.
 - Gabel is only just starting to roll out the program in other municipalities such as Hoboken and Princeton.
 - Next Steps: MEC's commissioners to conduct outreach to the towns that Gabel is currently working with (i.e. Hoboken, Manchester, Princeton) and

understand what hurdles they faced when implementing the program, etc. Then MEC will develop a formal proposal to Council and support the roll-out if the project moves forward.

- Ordinance Prohibiting Certain Invasive Species
 - Montclair would benefit from an ordinance addressing invasive species beyond the bamboo ordinance; *Wysteria* for example.
 - Bill created and shared a document comparing and contrasting the invasive species ordinances in Verona, Bloomfield, Morristown and Chatham.
 - Next step: continue discussing which species to prohibit from planting and which already planted species must be removed or contained.

Next Meeting: January 8, 2025 at 7:30pm