



Buffalo Environmental Management Commission

MINUTES

Meeting of Wednesday, February 18, 2009

The meeting started at 8:10 AM and was held in Room 920 City Hall.

Commissioners Attending: Joseph Gardella, John Hackney, Charles Grieco, Frank Armento, and David Hahn-Baker.

Others Attending: Dennis Sutton (staff), David Hornung (COB), John Bauda (HSBC), Arthur Robinson (Seneca Babcock Block Club)

Minutes: the minutes for the December 2008 and January 2009 meetings were approved.

As opening remarks, the Interim Chair presented history and background of BEMC and related SEQRA issues and procedures for J. Bauda's benefit.

TIP Sheet

February's TIP SHEET featured information about the New York City's PlaNYC 2030 transportation alternatives and Cambie Village solar trash compactors. Mailing list included Common Council members and Mayor's office.

SEQRA/Sustainable Development

J Gardella to request Commissioner Reilly and new planning staff member to attend BEMC meeting to discuss SEQRA and business development issues.

Art Robinson expressed concerns regarding the Battaglia concrete crushing operation at his C & D facility. Mr. Robinson was concerned about the potential expansion of the facility and its proximity to the surrounding neighborhood. He was concerned about dust, noise and increased traffic (40-50 trucks per day). Mr. Robinson mentioned foundation, sewer and street condition problems he believed were as a result of the increased truck traffic. He was also concerned that Battaglia had also changed the grade of his property and wanted to know if the City required a permit to change property grades.

Mr. Grieco stated that, as a general provision, proper zoning classification and the existence of a valid permit do not necessarily allow a business to conduct its business in a manner that constitutes a nuisance and that the Attorney General's office can abate such nuisances, notwithstanding the zoning and/or permit status of the facility, and that Battaglia's facility has had a history of ongoing concerns.

The Interim Chair stated that he was willing to meet with the City Law office and Abby Snyder of the NYSDEC to discuss the concerns. Mr. Gardella suggested that the ongoing truck traffic be documented and that the City Law office, NYSDEC, the Attorney General's office and Council Member Franczyk's office be contacted.

LED Streetlights

J. Gardella stated that there is a local contact for Lumicon that should be getting in touch with the City to move the pilot project forward. The Sierra Club is also involved in this effort.

Brownfields Update

No discussion this meeting

Pest Management Board

No discussion this meeting.

Greenhouse Jobs

David Hahn-Baker stated that he submitted a green jobs stimulus proposal to Kenya Hobbs but has had no response. D. Hahn-Baker indicated that the proposal requested office space and a phone in City Hall where efforts could be made on employment opportunities pertaining to lead remediation, solar panels, and other green jobs efforts. J. Gardella asked that D. Hahn-Baker summarize the proposal so that he could submit it to Catherine Palko of the OSP.

City Forestry, Parks, Vacant Properties

A Forestry status report was received and reviewed by the Commission. Future reports will be requested every six (6) months.

D. Hahn-Baker indicated that there were grants available to community gardens from the USEPA for neighborhood tree nurseries. Activities under the grant include planting up to 50 samplings on vacant lots and providing care and maintenance for the trees. Mr. Hahn-Baker was considering a grant application for \$5,000 to fund activities and expand neighborhood nurseries and requested BEMC support for the grant. BEMC requested that he coordinate with Public Works and the City Forester. The BEMC would then consider issuing a supporting statement.

Membership

All current commissioner terms have expired. J. Gardella to request that an update on appointments from Dana Bobinchek. J. Gardella states that John Bauda, of HSBC Bank and present at the meeting, is interested in BEMC membership.

Other

D. Hornung stated that Public Works was considering a proposal to apply geothermal and photovoltaic measures to the Public Works garage and Marcy Casino in Delaware Park.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 AM. Next scheduled meeting is to be March 18, 2009.