Flemington Borough Environmental Commission
Tuesday, April 21st, 2026 7pm
38 Park Ave, Flemington, NJ
Regular Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:09pm

a. OPMA Statement

Chairwoman Swingle read the OPMA statement

b. Roll Call

Name	Position	Present	Absent
Milissa Swingle	Chair	X	
Chris Runion	Vice-Chair		X
Trent Levitt	Secretary	X	
Ellen Indoe	Member		X
Ken Palminteri	Member	X	
Freddy Mejia	Member, Alt #1		X
Adrienne Fusaro	Council Liaison	X	

II. Reports

a. Chairperson

No Report

b. Council Liaison

Councilwoman Fusaro reported that the bamboo ordinance was introduced

c. Planning Board Liaison

Still looking at Spark Car Wash, the board has concerns about the amount of parking spots are being left despite the small space being utilized by the car wash. The board may receive new landscaping plans.

d. Shade Tree Liaison

Secretary Levitt reported that the Shade Tree Commission will doing an event with RFIS environmental club for Earth Day / Arbor Day on April 22nd at 8:30am.

He further reported that the annual ANJEC payment was misattributed to the Shade Tree Budget and is working on correcting it.

Planner McManus joined the Shade Tree Commission on the 31st to update them on the Shade Tree Ordinance. Secretary Levitt expected the fine structure in the ordinance to be the part most heavily debated by Planning Board and Council. The Commission discussed the fines and fees.

Councilwoman Fusaro asked if there was an exception for electric utility companies / JCPL, Secretary Levitt reported there was not.

e. Committee Reports

No Report

III. Public Comment

There were no public comments

IV. Approval of Minutes

Secretary Levitt moved to approve the 2026-03-17 minutes. Commissioner Palminteri seconded the motion. All were in favor.

V. Site Plan Reviews

There were no site plans to review

VI. General Business

a. Borough Clean Up Day

Chairwoman Swingle reported that she received a list of the fourteen houses on the annual historic house tour from Dennis Schoeb. DPW will leave out clean up supplies at the DPW building on the Friday prior to the event. She contacted the Scoutmasters of local scouts groups to participate. The Commission debated the timing of the cleanup. It will likely be from 10am-2pm. Councilwoman Fusaro had requested with the DPW to pick up the trash after the event. The DPW also agreed to provide 70 vests, 20 pairs of gloves and garbage bags.
The Commissioners will reach out to local restaurants to request donations for food for the event and the Society of Neighbors to encourage involvement.

b. Borough Garbage Cans

The Commission discussed the merits of putting more garbage cans out near the railroad tracks on Broad St and near the baseball fields.

c. Ordinance Review

i. Lighting Ordinance

Secretary Levitt reported that he had met with Planner McManus, who prepared a draft revision to strengthen the Borough's exterior lighting standards. He explained that the draft would require more controlled fixtures, including Dark Sky-approved or otherwise shielded, downward-directed lighting, and would limit exterior lighting to 3000 Kelvin or below to reduce glare and light pollution. The draft also codified an exemption for holiday/decorative lighting from approximately October through February.

The Commission discussed at length whether these standards should apply to single- and two-family homes in addition to commercial and multifamily properties. Secretary Levitt expressed the view that exempting one- and two-family homes entirely would undermine the ordinance, since much of the Borough's problematic lighting comes from those properties. At the same time, members were cautious about being overly restrictive and generally favored applying some standards to residential properties while allowing greater flexibility than for larger or commercial uses.

The Commission also discussed how to balance safety/security lighting with light-pollution reduction. Members agreed that homeowners should still be able to use front-entry lighting, camera lighting, and motion-activated safety lighting, but that such fixtures should remain shielded and directed so as to minimize glare and spill. There was little support for requiring timers, as several members noted that residents often leave lights on overnight for security reasons.

Finally, the Commission discussed decorative and accent lighting, including whether the ordinance should prohibit flashing, moving, rotating, neon lighting, or strings of lights, except for holiday/decorative use. Members referenced an especially bright and multicolored house near the circle as an example of the type of lighting that could become problematic, while also recognizing that modest patio or porch lighting should likely not be treated the same way. The general consensus was that the draft was moving in the right direction, but should be refined further to clarify its application to one- and two-family homes, preserve reasonable security lighting, and consider a limited exception for low-level residential decorative lighting that is not glaring or offensive.

ii. Bamboo Ordinance

Councilwoman Fusaro reported that the bamboo ordinance had been introduced by the Borough Council.

d. Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment

Chairwoman Swingle reported that Planning Board Planner Jim Kyle had reached out regarding the Borough's required climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment under the MLUL. She explained that he had shared the Pennington Borough assessment as a model, describing it as a strong template prepared with input from a DEP staff member and environmental scientists, and suggested that Flemington could use that framework and adapt it rather than starting entirely from scratch. The Commission generally agreed that this approach made sense, both to avoid unnecessary delay and to keep the process moving efficiently. The general consensus was to authorize Planner Kyle to move forward in preparing a draft assessment and the Commission would review the document and provide comments once a draft was completed.

VII. Chair Items

There were no chair items.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Approved 2026-06-16