

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

### Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, September 20, 2021 – 7:45pm

### Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Go to [www.zoom.us](https://www.zoom.us) click JOIN A MEETING and enter the meeting number shown below.

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82028855909?pwd=aWd2WXhYdERRdXdGdVITQkIMc1llZz09>

**Meeting ID: 820 2885 5909**

**Passcode: 588799**

**Or by phone: US toll call: + 1 929 436 2866**

### Open Public Meeting Statement:

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Bergen Record and/or The Ridgewood News, informing the public of the time and place according to the provision of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1976)

### Roll Call:

**Members:** Lisa De Pellegrini(P), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(P), Mairead Jensen(A), Randall Preston(P), Lisa Skoglund(P), Vicki Solis(A), Michelle Zink-Jojic(A), Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(A), Shannon Stemper (intern)(A)

**Approval of Minutes** – August 16, 2021 – A motion to approve was made by R. Zitelli and seconded by L. Skoglund.

**Meeting Opened to Public Agenda & Non – Agenda Items** - A motion to open was made by R. Zitelli and seconded by L. Skoglund.

### Presentation to EC by Girl Scouts Sofia Paxinopoulos and Hannah Brinkman

- Girl Scout leader Melanie Paxinopoulos in attendance with girl scouts Sofia Paxinopoulos and Hannah Brinkman for presentation on Silver Award project. Goal of project is to improve recycling in Montvale by assisting communication at the DPW/recycling drop-off.
- Project will focus on signage to explain recycling in Montvale.
- Girl Scouts will create a custom sign for the DPW to explain what can and cannot be recycled.
- Created informational video that details the rules.
- H. Brinkman: Suggests one sign with different directions for each bin.
- R. Hanrahan: Suggests one sign for each bin to indicate correct sorting. Recommends using material that is strong and weatherproof. Recommends simple signage. One for plastics and one for paper. Will facilitate communication with the DPW and the girl scouts.
- L. DePellegrini: Suggests using a pallet as a stabilizer for the signage.

**Meeting Closed to Public** - A motion to close was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by R. Zitelli.

### **Communication/Correspondence:**

- We received a quote for the repair of the fence on Bayberry and we will have it repaired.
- Interest from several members of the community in joining the environmental commission.

### **New Business:**

- Tree Removal Request – 33 Partridge Run – Block 902, Lot 26, Zone D40
  - Five trees are described to be removed (in application) that were not depicted in the drawing. Three white pine trees, one oak and one maple. Fairly wooded front yard. There are approximately 20 mature trees in the front yard.
  - The five trees to be removed are in the front of the property in the location that will be used for a new driveway.
  - They are moving the driveway to a *straight in* with a parking area and a drive into the three car garage.
  - Proposing compensatory planting as follows: Seven Japanese plum trees, seven dogwood trees, one blue spruce tree and one weeping cherry tree.
  - All to be planted around the rear of the yard. Required by tree ordinance to be 2 inches or larger in diameter; some are larger.
  - Comments from the EC: The homeowners have planned for substantial replanting and have complied with the ordinance.

**Approval of tree removal request submitted by property owner for Block 902, Lot 26, Zone D40 (33 Partridge Run) A roll call vote was made and approved the request as follows: Lisa De Pellegrini(yes), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(yes), Mairead Jensen(A), Randall Preston(yes), Lisa Skoglund(yes), Vicki Solis(A), Michelle Zink-Jojic(A), Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(yes) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(A)**

- Tree Removal Request – 7 Blue Sky Lane- Block 2601, Lot 35
  - We are waiting for updated drawings with pool and landscape detail.
  - Request on hold
- Open Position on the EC - Alternate 2
  - Having all positions filled gives us increased opportunity to vote if some members are absent.
- Fundraising
  - Ideas from past meeting include dedicating benches and selling bricks.
  - L. DePelligrini. – Suggests having some larger bat houses made for installation in community spaces which would be sponsored.
  - L. DePelligrini - Suggests a bat house building competition for community members/collect entry fee.
  - R. Hanrahan: - Suggests the idea of pavers being dedicated with donor sponsorship.
- Polystyrene (recycle #6)
  - Currently there is a program in Mahwah. We did a study on the subject of polystyrene and unless we compact the polystyrene locally we are potentially doing more harm via transportation of the material.
  - Recycling involves melting the polystyrene. The outgas from the machines gives off smell.

- Polystyrene will be banned in New Jersey in May of 2022. (Exceptions pertain to health, i.e. meats and fish).
- Polystyrene disposal is a big problem. Let's continue to research and learn as much as possible.

### **Old Business:**

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
  - Update on Bat Education Project (Lisa De Pellegrini)
    - Thank you Lisa D. for putting together the bat presentation at the community center. It was educational and entertaining.
    - We received positive feedback from community members in attendance.
    - R. Hanrahan states we will have other bat education events coming in the winter and spring.
    - We can continue the bat education initiative (Montvale Street Fair). We can sponsor a bat house building contest with entry fee, or we can have boy scouts can assist with preparing kits, we can present prototypes and provide community members with plans.
    - R. Hanrahan states we could have a scout demonstrating how to make the bat house. We can collect participant names on a sign-up sheet to get the bat house kits for free.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
  - Update on damage from Hurricane Ida.
    - Damage was severe.
    - We have applied to FEMA for assistance. Application is submitted and we are waiting for feedback.
    - R. Hanrahan met with the engineers to obtain a quote on the repair. The pond will need to be emptied. The shore line has receded approximately 20 feet. There are places in the brook that had whirlpools which created eddies. All the knotweed is gone.
  - We will return the pond to its former state. The mayor has asked the EC to expedite the process. We are waiting for a quote from the contractor.
  - Fortunately, the pond was not restocked with fish all the scheduled plantings are preserved and were not installed before the damaging storm.
  - All is being studied now. We need to drain, dredge and re-form the eastern wall of the pond which has moved 20 feet.
- Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Mairead Jensen)
  - Thank you Randy, Mairead, Vicki and Ellen for delivering plastic bags to the Trex receptacle at the Stop and Shop.
  - We will have an update on numbers collected next month.
- Plastic Bag Legislation (Robert Hanrahan)
  - Plastic Ban flyer to go on the Borough website.
  - Re-post on the Friends of Montvale Facebook page.
- Day In the Park (Robert Hanrahan)
  - Thank you for attending: Randy Preston, Lisa DePellegrini, Colin Hanrahan and Vicki Solis.

- At least 50 to 100 residents stopped by.
- Many questions about bat houses, recycling, what the EC does in Montvale, and general talk about the environment.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Lisa Skoglund)
  - R. Hanrahan states there are incentives available to get municipalities on board. We would need to provide a proposal to Mayor and Council with enough information about what could be obtained, what the costs are and what would be subsidized.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan)
  - No action since last meeting. We are waiting for Mayor and Council to provide guidance on next step.
- Open Spaces (Shannon Stemper)
  - Goal – To have an accurate estimate of ratio to residents currently and two to three years out.
- Pollinator Garden Update (Shannon Stemper)
  - Mazur Engineering reviewed the drawing.
  - Mayor and Council approved.
  - Girl scouts put in the garden and we received a call that it interferes with the bocce ball courts.
  - Plan: Move the garden closer to the senior center. The contractor will move the garden.
- September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial tree prune/replacement (Robert Hanrahan)
  - Two trees in front of the center of town memorial were removed.
  - The borough has received positive feedback because of the increased visibility of the memorial.
  - Discussion of replanting elsewhere to compensate for the trees that were removed.
- Tree Removal Policy (Robert Hanrahan)
  - There is no clearcutting.
  - Less indiscriminate tree removal than in years past.

#### **Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche (absent)**

#### **Planning Board Report – Bob Zitelli**

- Discussion of Montvale Family Apartments. A proposal for 25 affordable housing residences which would be located on Summit Avenue. Will be returning with the revised site plan.
- Other items presented to the planning board are use permits.
- No discussion of egress to garden state parkway.

**Adjournment - A motion to adjourn was made by R. Zitelli and seconded by L. Skoglund all in favor stating aye.**

**Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, October 18, 2021**