

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, April 17, 2023 – 7:45pm

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82551515989?pwd=MFhtYXBJTE0vT1VxelZKaXVPRGp4UT09>

Join by phone/Dial by your location

+1 929 436 2866 US

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(A), Antonio Vozzolo(A), Michelle Zink-Jojic(A), Lou Baldanza(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche (A)

Approval of Minutes – March 20, 2023 - A motion to approve was made by R. Preston and seconded by L. DePellegrini.

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

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

Communication/Correspondence:

- A memo was received from the Planning Board:
 - Agreeing that copies of all plans received by applicants for site plan review shall be forwarded to the EC secretary. Once received the plans will be forwarded to all members of the EC.
 - The EC will discuss the site plans and draft a letter to the planning board setting forth concerns and recommendations.
 - The review was said to be limited to landscape architecture which the EC took issue with and requested further clarification. The EC believes the review should include all environmentally related subject matter and described by local ordinance and state legislation.
 - The EC recommendations/concerns shall be taken under advisement by the Planning Board.
 - EC members may not meet or communicate with any applicants and may not directly solicit any Planning Board members.
 - The Planning Board secretary will advise us of any applicant on their meeting agenda which will give use the opportunity to attend the meetings.

- R. Hanrahan will review applications within 24 hours; and, if deemed urgent, he may require a special meeting.
- E. Riccardi will distribute the application to EC members and request that the EC members return comments and concerns.
- Memorial Sloan Kettering and Balchem sent communication with interest in participating in Clean-Up day.
 - Memorial Sloan Kettering will be bringing employees to the event on April 22nd. They agreed to our request to no solicitation. We agreed to allow them to hand out brochures on cancer prevention.
 - Balchem reached out and wanted to have their own clean up event but details have not been sorted out.
 - Boy scouts asked if they could participate by cleaning up the week prior to the event. They cleaned the borough property and the Environmental Learning trail.

New Business:

- ANJEC Open Space and Stewardship Grant 2023
 - We applied for the same grant that we received 2 years ago for planting and trail work at Huff Pond.
 - J. Voytus completed the grant application and requested the funding of trail signage for the Environmental Learning trail.
 - M. Zink-Jojic offered to help research options for the placards.
 - R. Hanrahan asked the former chairman of the EC for input. He is happy to assist.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Update on Bat Education Project (Lisa De Pellegrini) – No news to report.
 - Update on Pollinator Garden Project (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - L. DePellegrini will contact the Girl Scout leader to find out details on when they will begin spring maintenance on the garden.
- Clean Up Day 2023 – April 22, 2023 (rain or shine)
 - R. Preston, A. Vozzolo, L. DePellegrini, L. Skoglund, M. Jensen, and R. Hanrahan volunteered to help,
 - R. Hanrahan requests volunteers to arrive by 8:15 a.m.
 - R. Hanrahan will pick up plastic bags, plastic gloves, t-shirts and pick-up sticks from the County of Bergen.
 - R. Hanrahan will pick up 225 12 inch seedlings from the NJ DEP.
 - Seedlings will be in a dormant state.
 - We will recommend that residents plant seedlings as soon as possible upon arrive home.
 - If residents take seedling trees, they will be required to sign their name, and promise to plant them by the end of the day.
 - We will have a table with handouts:
 - Value of Trees trifold
 - Waterway article
 - Radon article
 - E. Riccardi will print flyers and maps.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)

- Downes installed all of the DEP original plantings as well as additional plantings. They also mulched and seeded.
- They have not yet planted the 550 live stakes that will be put along the bank of Huff Pond and Pascack Brook. We are still waiting for the live stakes to be delivered.
- R. Hanrahan called Downes asking about the new installation plans. We learned they were in and were soaked during install but Downes did not water afterwards or inform anyone about the installation or watering plan.
- R. Hanrahan watered the plantings behind the DPW last Friday and Saturday mornings.
- R. Preston watered the plantings behind the DPW last Saturday.
- The DPW will water the new plantings around the pond every 2 to 3 days unless it rains.
- The seniors put together the 4 Trex benches and positioned them behind the community center but they need to be bolted down.
- R. Hanrahan recommended they be installed in cement footings.
- L. DePellegrini can move forward and advise the 4th grade girl scouts on the planned garden around Huff Pond.
- Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Mairead Jensen) – No news to report.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Antonio Vozzolo) (absent)
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan) – No news to report.
- Open Space and Recreation Plan (Mairead Jensen/Robert Hanrahan)
 - Revised Draft plan was forwarded to the Planning Board on April 12th.
- Environmental Resource Inventory (Robert Hanrahan)
 - By the end of this month the draft ERI will be forwarded to us and we will start our review process.
 - Please review upon receipt and send any feedback to Ellen.
- Summit Avenue Open Space Land Purchase/Trail (Robert Hanrahan/Chris Roche)
 - The NJ trail conference said they could come in, access the property and give us a quote for trail plans.
 - We will delay any trail work until the town decides on a plan for the property.
- Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo) (absent)
- Communication about Tree Ordinance to New Families/ New Resident Welcome Mailer (Robert Hanrahan) – No news to report.
- New Community Center discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Chris Roche)
 - Currently on the Mayor and Council priority list; location is uncertain at this time.
- Repair of Environmental Learning Center, trail discussion (Robert Hanrahan)
 - There are a few places that we can repair.
 - Lou, Bob H. and Bob Z. will work on it.
 - L. Baldanza suggested QR codes for the signage identifying wildlife.
- Category One, Riparian Zone and Wetland Protection Ordinance Discussion (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Nothing further to discuss regarding an ordinance.
- Sustainable Jersey
 - Requires the formation of a green team. The green team can be a subcommittee of the EC.
 - We can bring in additional members from the community to participate.
 - The green team should include members from different groups in the community.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche (absent)

Planning Board Report – Bob Zitelli

- Maple Grove – Potential location is at the corner of Spring Valley Road and Grand Avenue.
 - Applicant wants 19 residences on 4 acres. Last meeting, applicant failed to provide complete plans. Next hearing is first weekend in May.
- R. Hanrahan suggests including the EC earlier in the approval process.
 - Early input from the EC would be time saving for the Planning Board.
 - R. Zitelli suggests sending a communication to the Planning Board requesting EC input earlier in the approval process.

Adjournment - A motion to close was made by R. Zitelli and seconded by L. DePellegrini.

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, May 15, 2023