

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, August 16, 2021 – 7:45pm

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Go to www.zoom.us click JOIN A MEETING and enter the meeting number shown below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87259953969?pwd=ZW9vV2ZhbzFFOE1NcVEweXAwa2l0dz09>

Meeting ID: 872 5995 3969

Passcode: 714212

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(A), Vicki Solis(A), Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(P)& Council Liaison Christopher Roche(P), Shannon Stemper (intern)(P)

Approval of Minutes – July 19, 2021 Minutes – A motion to approved was made by R. Preston and seconded by L. De Pellegrini.

Meeting Opened to Public Agenda & Non – Agenda Items - No motion made – N/A

Meeting Closed to Public - No motion made – N/A

Communication/Correspondence:

- D. Eichorn resigned as member of the EC.
- L. DePellegrini previously Alternate 1 position on the EC is now filling position as member.
- M Zink-Jojic previously Alternate 2 position on the EC is now filling position as Alternate 1.
- Clean Community Initiative – Suggestion of a clean-up day between September and November along the trail next to the Pascack Brook. Successful event completion can be applied toward the Bergen County Clean Community grant.

New Business:

- Day in the Park – Saturday, 28th from 5:00 p.m. to 9 p.m.
 - There will be food trucks, music and fireworks.
 - Various community groups will be represented and have table promoting their community initiatives and work.

- The EC will have a table, tent and information for distribution to the community which will include information on our tree ordinance, recycling and the upcoming bat event.
- R. Hanrahan will have updated information on the Huff pond and trail renovation.
- We have reusable shopping bags to give to community members.
- Suggestion to present upcoming NJ plastic bag legislation details. R. Hanrahan will work on a flyer with information.
- Fundraising
 - Past suggestions are donations pertaining to bricks and benches.
 - R. Hanrahan will clarify the regulations pertaining to fundraising with borough administration.
- Plastic Bag Legislation
 - Town/business regulations are different than residential rules.
 - The rollout will start this year with a ban on straws; next year will be polystyrene/containers.
 - Suggestion to work on initiative to educate businesses on upcoming legislation.
 - Social media – post current information
- CVS (Kinderkamack Road) Drawing Review
 - The shrubs along Hamilton Street have died.
 - CVS wants to re-plant with an evergreen shrub; hews (hardy variety).
 - The planning board is asking for the EC for a recommendation/input.
- September 11th Memorial Tree (prune/replacement)
 - The two trees in front of the memorial in the center of town are very large and are blocking visual access of the monument.
 - Suggestion to prune trees to increase visibility of the monument.
 - R. Hanrahan has received input from tree experts who state that pruning could permanently damage the trees or leave an end product that would not look good.
 - Suggestion to remove trees all together and replace elsewhere in town.

EC member feedback:

- Pruning could be attempted in the hopes of retaining the trees and producing a beautiful result. It is worth trying. We can reach out to tree experts for quotes.
- Suggestion to reach out to DPW for an annual maintenance contract for pruning of town trees.
- Suggestion to get quotes on defined parks and trees in need of maintenance and awarding a contract.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Bat Education Presentation on September 3rd with a rain date of September 4th.
 - The bat expert is Joe D'Angeli. He has been working with bats for over 25 years and is very knowledgeable.
 - Two hour program consists of Bat education/information session and a bat viewing walk using echo locators. He can easily accommodate 100 people.
 - We can promote the event at Day in the Park.
 - R. Hanrahan will speak to the Mayor about the event.

- Bat education can continue on October 16th at the street fair where we can present prototypes for bat houses.
- Pascack Trail Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Boy scout is installing commercial quality benches along the trail. Project will be completed in 3 to 4 weeks.
 - The plantings will not be in by Day in the Park; we need to mitigate the risk of losing the plants based on high temperatures and hydrology.
 - Major planting will take place in late September.
- Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Water level is high; the pond is looking good.
 - The fences around Huff pond will be taken down and the trail will also be opened up.
 - Adjustments made on the sluice and at the inlet to increase circulation of water. Water is trickling in.
 - When there is no rain for 1 or 2 weeks and the brook level goes down, a check valve keeps the water in the pond.
 - R. Hanrahan put in a work order to reinstall the aerator.
 - R. Hanrahan requested to building and grounds department to purchase a 2nd aerator. Effective in oxygenating the water (Location for the north side of the pond).
 - Grass is starting to root.
- Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Mairead Jensen)
 - Goal is collection of 500 lbs. by November. We should achieve that goal easily.
 - We have collected approximately 200 lbs. of plastic bags since June.
 - Since we started the plastic bag program, 3777 pounds in total have been collected to date.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - We are waiting on further guidance from the Mayor and Council regarding next steps.
 - Support is on hold due to possible future plans for the area.
- Open Spaces (Shannon Stemper)
 - Grants under consideration are Bergen County Open Space Land Acquisition and NJ Urban City Forestry. Both submissions are due April 2022.
 - Tree City Status – neighboring towns (Woodcliff Lake and Ridgewood) do have tree city status. Status shows the town is dedicated to protecting and encouraging trees. Good credential when submitting a grant.
 - Spoke with Andrew Hipolit about the feasibility of a potential traffic light to assist in the crossing of Grand Avenue and connect the Pascack trail to the Suez inter-municipal trail which meets at Mill Pond. Police Department could also utilize for school crossing with a remote control.
 - Tree Inventory – R. Hanrahan and S. Stemper met with J. DePinto regarding updating the tree inventory.
- Pollinator Garden Update (Shannon Stemper)
 - July 27th girl scouts presented the pollinator garden to the Mayor and Council.

- Tree Removal Policy (Robert Hanrahan) – Building department confirmed there is tree removal. No violations of the ordinance and clear cutting has been reduced.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche – All items of note have been discussed above.

Planning Board Report – Bob Zitelli

- The last meeting was cancelled; activity has been low.
- Inquiry into the former western Union building at 100 Summit Avenue for use as a rehabilitation facility. Will update the EC as information becomes available.

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

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, September 20, 2021