

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, April 18, 2022 – 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/85406190882?pwd=R1BDMGNQNm5ndHBTZl1lTENORUlvZz09>

Meeting ID: 854 0619 0882

Passcode: 910977

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(P), Randall Preston(P), Lisa Skoglund(P), Vicki Solis(P), Antonio Vozzolo(P), Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), **Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(P)**

Approval of Minutes – March 21, 2022 - A motion to approve was made by R. Preston and seconded by L. Skoglund.

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

Communication/Correspondence:

New Business:

- Barbara Davis of the Land Conservancy of New Jersey – presents an update on the Open Space and Recreation Plan
 - Barbara is the Vice President of Programs and Land Conservancy and a licensed planner.
 - Toured Montvale today to view our open spaces and recreation areas.
 - Montvale's last master plan was created in 2008.
 - The Land Conservancy will follow Green Acres (NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection) guidelines when creating the open space plan in case we apply for funding. The Open Space plan would serve as the application for funding.
 - Because Montvale has an open space trust fund an open space plan would help us to qualify for grants for the purchase of property.
 - In 1997 Montvale accepted monies from New Jersey for the funding of parks. Chestnut Ridge and Memorial Park were funded by the state. Montvale has not accepted state funding for parks since 1997.

- Since the town has not accepted Green Acres funding, we do have property acquired with open space trust fund monies.
- We currently don't have a good record of properties acquired or improved with open space trust fund monies.
- Examples of open space in Montvale
 - the environmental center (trail) next to the municipal building on DePiero Drive;
 - the property behind Fieldstone Middle School is a park and is owned by the borough;
 - the land along Cherry Brook.
- R. Hanrahan: What is the difference between open space and parks?
- B. Davis: Open space is considered parks and recreational areas. If we own property that is undeveloped that is open space.
- B. Davis: If land is on the ROSI (Recreation and Open Space Inventory) it has the highest level of protection.
- M. Jensen: When Green Acres first began some of the first recipients were selling off existing park land to acquire new park land. This was against the initial intention of the funding.
- Map should be updated to include properties we consider a park.
- One portion of Montvale is very historic and one portion is very transformational.
- Montvale does not have enough parks.
- We will need to have two public meetings:
 - Recommendation for first meeting now, or in the fall once the plan is written.
 - The second meeting would be after we have a very strong draft.
- R. Hanrahan suggests a joint meeting between the EC, planning board and governmental body.

Questions/comments from the commission members:

- R. Zitelli: Confirms with B. Davis that the plan will be merged together with master plan.
 - B. Davis: Recommends that it will be included as an element of the master plan.
 - R. Preston: States that there are not many areas that are not developed. We don't seem to have a lot to work with. What can we do?
 - B. Davis: We will get to a point where we won't have enough space to host recreational events. We can identify potential open spaces. It is very expensive to be reactive to land acquisition. It is much better to be proactive.
 - A. Vozzolo: How does state funding go from 25% to 50%?
 - B. Davis: If we put forth the effort to do an open space plan the state rewards the municipality with 50% grant funding
- Montvale Clean Up Day/Arbor Day Event – April 23rd, 9:00 a.m.
 - R. Hanrahan will be setting up at 8 a.m.
 - Hold harmless form is required to be signed by a parent/guardian for child participation. All participants must complete the form.
 - Bergen County is providing t-shirts and gloves and shopping bags (handouts). R. Hanrahan will pick them up.
 - The borough (the Mayor allotted \$ 300.00) in concert with the EC purchased trees to give to residents who participate.
 - We are a tree city. Mayor gave us approx. \$300 to acquire trees.
 - We have 100 white pines (evergreen) and 100 red maples (deciduous).

- R. Hanrahan requested assistance from the boy scouts in planting some trees around Montvale.
- R. Preston suggests the trees are given to children with adult listening to instructions and understanding the task at hand. If they do not want to take it, or they cannot take it we can plant it on their behalf.
- Mayor said he will be happy to fly Tree City flag on a post near the bulletin board on the day of the event.
- New locations added to clean up schedule – School House 2/Octagon house and 25 Kinderkamack Road.

Tree City Signage/suggestions for placement:

- C. Roche suggests downtown in the park near train station.
- We have 2 signs – Suggestion to place them on Kinderkamack Road, one coming in from the north and one coming in from the south.
- R. Preston – Suggestion to make it a traveling sign.
- C. Roche – We could purchase additional signs. Cost is \$ 64.90 each for a 24” x 30” sign.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Update on Bat Education Project (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Still in process of acquiring wood. Donations are needed.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - The boy scouts were on the trail today cleaning up after the storm.
 - The Pascack Brook did breach the shore line and did expose the pipe that we had a contractor previously cover.
 - The DPW is now removing the pipe between the inlet and outlet and reinstalling new piping.
 - After clean-up day another event is scheduled in remembrance of Armenian genocide.
 - Circulation in Huff Pond is important to avoid the set in of algae during this season.
 - Pollinator garden – R. Hanrahan will contact Girl Scout leaders to make sure they are collaborating with the senior center participants to prepare and seed the garden for the spring.
- Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Maired Jensen)
 - Still receiving deposits *by the bushel*.
 - R. Preston is delivering 6 to 12 bags to Stop and Shop on a weekly basis.
 - R. Hanrahan: The participants at the senior center have decided they do not want all 4 benches around the bocce courts.
 - R. Hanrahan - Thank you to everyone for assistance and participation.
- Plastic Bag Legislation (Robert Hanrahan)
 - R. Hanrahan/R. Preston – The use of plastic bags (given out in stores) has been extended till November 2022.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Lisa Skoglund/Antonio Vozzolo)
 - No news to report
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan) –
 - The EC is waiting for Mayor and Council guidance – possible locations are field 11 or old swim club property.
 - L. De Pellegrini- Suggestion to look into the land for sale on Kinderkamack Road.
- Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo)

- In the process of setting up a meeting with the liaison of the Department of Transportation.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche

- Met with Mayor about a resident on Brook Avenue who is experiencing flooding from the brook.
- Hopefully a plan can be established to prevent the flooding.
- The DEP won't let you touch anything in the flood plain.
- R. Hanrahan: Has been in communication with Mayor about an environmental learning center; we are trying to maintain the natural element. If anyone sees an issue that needs attention please contact R. Hanrahan.

Planning Board Report – Bob Zitelli

- Great Capital/Western Union Building (Summit Avenue) – The developer plans to demolish the left side of the building and reconstruct a rehabilitation center with 180 beds.
- Valley Medical – Is going to take a significant amount of space in the Wegman's center. A new building will be constructed close to Grand avenue. They are coming before the planning board in May.

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

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, May 16, 2022