

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, August 21, 2023 – 7:45pm

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85337730872?pwd=UTB6cTUyNnZNV01FMXpkTmYwa1BqQT09>

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: Lou Baldanza(P), Lisa De Pellegrini(P), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(A), Mairead Jensen(P), Randall Preston(P), Lisa Skoglund(P), Antonio Vozzolo(P), Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(A) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(P)

Approval of Minutes – July 17, 2021 - A motion to approve was made by R. Preston and seconded by M. Jensen.

Meeting Opened to Public Agenda & Non – Agenda Items - A motion to open was made by R. Preston and seconded by M. Jensen.

Meeting Closed to Public – A motion to close was made by C. Roche and seconded by L. DePellegrini.

Communication/Correspondence:

New Business:

- Al Telsey, Special Counsel on Natural Resource Damage (Environmental Attorney)
 - Presents on how to recover money that is due to Montvale but has been placed under the supervision of the DEP.
 - Settlement of 13 million dollars due to Montvale from Environmental Damage done in past years.
 - Suggests that Montvale can recover some of these monies awarded to be used toward NRD projects.
 - It has already been ascertained that Montvale has sustained some type of damage. We need projects to retrieve money.
 - A. Telsey suggests the EC work together to create a list of projects that will fall within the realm of Natural Resource Damage pertaining to this court decision.
 - A. Telsey suggests projects related to waterway, infrastructure, water lines to communities that don't have them, waste water treatment upgrade, stream restoration, dredging and flood control. Projects that return ecological uplift.

- We could also consider projects that cooperate with other municipalities.
- Suggests compelling compliance from the DEP with settlement agreements.
- Suggestions from EC members include: Land acquisition for recreational and/or conservational use.
- Ground Zero: 20 Craig Road.
- Day in the Park – September 9th (discussion of new handout)
 - L. DePellegrini and L. Skoglund will attend. M. Jensen and L. Baldanza will also help.
 - We have a tent and a Tree City banner.
 - E. Riccardi will place order for table and chairs.
 - M. Zink-Jojic suggests a handout with a recipe for a homemade natural bug repellent. We could have some of the repellent available at the table for residents to try and a QR code with the recipe available.
 - Fireworks start at 8:30 p.m.
- Montvale Grove
 - Some EC members were not able to access the submitted documents on the google drive.
 - L. Skoglund states that the most recent plans are required to review the landscape plan.
 - L. Skoglund states that we need to review the trees scheduled for removal. A discussion with a Montvale Grove representative and the EC committee may be necessary.
 - Montvale has a storm water ordinance that must be adhered to. There must be 35% open space provided on that plan and it must be documented.
 - L. DePellegrini stated that the location is a vernal habitat which falls under the jurisdiction of the Fresh Water Wetlands Protection Act.
 - L. Skoglund requests that the EC review an accurate listing of the plantings prior to the next meeting.
 - L. Skoglund states that we are invited to walk the property but need to be cautious and do so in small groups (2-3 members) so as to avoid a quorum.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Update on Bat Education Project (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - We do not have enough wood to move forward with the project.
 - L. DePellegrini suggests we find some ready-made bat houses to purchase at a reasonable price and distribute.
 - M. Jensen suggests we ask Downes Tree Service to help with the installation.
 - Update on Pollinator Garden Project (Lisa De Pellegrini) – No news to report
 - L. DePellegrini suggest we present education series of presentations to the community.
 - The Raptor Trust presents on how to keep our raptor's safe. Many raptors are killed b/c they eat rodents that have been poisoned.
 - L. DePellegrini will find out more information.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Fat heads minnows were delivered and placed in Huff Pond.
- Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Mairead Jensen)
 - We are still getting a lot of bags.

- Suggested that we may want to move toward transitioning residents to bringing their bags to Wegman's or Stop and Shop themselves.
- Will continue discussion.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Antonio Vozzolo)
 - Working on submitting applications.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan) Absent
- Girl Scout Garden – Huff Pond – No news to report.
- Open Spaces and Recreation Plan (Mairead Jensen/Robert Hanrahan) – No news to report.
- Environmental Resource Inventory (Robert Hanrahan) Absent
- Summit Avenue Open Space Land Purchase/Trail (Robert Hanrahan/Chris Roche) No news to report.
- Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo) – No news to report.
- New Community Center discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Chris Roche) – No news to report.
- Repair of Environmental Learning Center, trail discussion (Robert Hanrahan) – Absent
- Category One, Riparian Zone and Wetland Protection Ordinance Discussion (Robert Hanrahan) – Absent
- Sustainable Jersey (Lisa Skoglund) – No news to report.
- Tree Ordinance – update (Robert Hanrahan) - Absent
- Swim Club Property (Block 2305 lot 13) (Robert Hanrahan) - Absent

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche - No news to report.

Planning Board Report – Bob Zitelli - Absent

Adjournment - A motion to close was made by M. Jensen and seconded by M. L. DePellegrini. All in favor stating aye.

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, September 18, 2023