

**Montvale Environmental Commission
Meeting
12 Mercedes Drive, Montvale, New Jersey
Council Chambers at 7:45 pm**

October 17, 2016

Interim Chairman Hanrahan called the meeting of the Environmental Commission to order at 7:45 pm. adequate notice of this meeting was provided to The Record and/or the Ridgewood News, informing the Public of the time and place, according to the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L.1975).

The roll call attendance: D. Eichhorn (A), Interim Chairman R. Hanrahan (P), R. Johnson (P), R. Preston (P), L. Skoglund (P), J. Russo (Secretary, P), Judy Russo (A), D. Teagno (P)

Also in attendance: Councilman Weaver

Pledge of Allegiance – Interim Chairman Hanrahan

Approval of the Minutes from the September 19th Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from the September 19th meeting was made by R. Hanrahan and seconded by R. Preston. The minutes were approved & will be posted on the website.

Communication/Correspondence - No correspondence.

Secretary J. Russo wishes to publicly thank Lorraine Hutter for attending and preparing the minutes during her absence.

Environmental Commission Activity List – R. Hanrahan displayed the list on the overhead projector and provided an update of each item. *Fairview Trail* entry will be deleted because no action is required from the EC. A new item titled *Tree Information Document* regarding the value of trees will be added to the list. R. Hanrahan would like a one page fact sheet regarding the value of trees as either a handout in the Building Department or posted on the website.

Applicant- None

Inspections- L. Skoglund

L. Skoglund accompanied by L. Hutter, J. Fette, G. De Blasio, & A. Hipolit inspected the grounds at the municipal complex and the three traffic islands on Kinderkamack Road. The areas were identified as scenes numbered 1 to 7. G. De Blasio will prepare a report regarding the landscaping that is in need of replacement, pruning or removal. The line of sights areas required additional attention. This report will be forward to Borough Administrator, so the landscaping expense will be included in the 2017 budget. This project will be on-going. Councilman Weaver said he received input from residents regarding that the borough owned properties required maintenance and thanked L. Skoglund for volunteering her time.

Meeting Opened to the Public

A motion to open the meeting to the Public was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by R. Hanrahan.

Mrs. Hameyer, homeowner at 64 Summit Avenue provided comments regarding the pending tree ordinance. The homeowner's concerns were that she does not believe neighbors should dictate landscape preferences to one another. Trees grow, circumstances change and sometimes trees need to be removed or replaced with different species. She enjoys the 'leafy' character of Montvale and wants it to be preserved, but is not convinced that a tree ordinance is required to do so. An open discussion between the members, Councilman Weaver and Mr. & Mrs. Hameyer regarding different levels of the pending ordinance and the difficulties with defining clear-cutting. R. Hanrahan displayed photos of lots in the borough where the homeowners have removed numerous trees in an effort to make room for additions or to upgrade their landscaping. These lots today appear to be an improvement of what previously existed and throughout the years are now lush and provide sufficient screening where required.

Old Business

D. Teagno asked if each of the members would like to research the meaning of clear cutting and restrictions regarding tree removal to J. Russo by October 31. Councilman Weaver said he would like instead of the word restrictions to use a user friendlier word and state what is permitted. All the members agreed that they will submit their suggestions via email and be prepared to discuss it at the November meeting.

D. Teagno said he will remind Mr. Hipolit, at the PB meeting to email a copy of a successful tree ordinance from another town. Mr. Hipolit previously said he would provide a copy.

R. Hanrahan said he would like the EC to recognize that the American Legion received a small grant regarding their green initiative which they will disperse at their discretion. The members were pleased to learn about the grant.

Meeting Closed to the Public

A motion to close the meeting to the Public was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by R. Preston.

Planning Board Liaison Report

D. Teagno reported that several use permits were issued. Tree ordinance in regards to defining clear cutting remains unresolved. Different criteria's were discussed; PB Chairman and the board are still not in agreement with any option that was informally presented. The EC is being instructed to concentrate on clear cutting and enforceability of the ordinance.

New Business-no new business

Adjournment

Interim Chairman Hanrahan asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by R. Preston and seconded by L. Skoglund. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 21; it will be the last meeting of the year. Members will be emailed in the event the meeting is cancelled. The agenda will be posted on the borough's website; www.montvale.org. Members are reminded to notify Janet Russo if they are unable to attend.