

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, June 21, 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.

Link to Join Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89792405996?pwd=S3k2MktUVXhjcGRsSzlxWHIMMUROdz09>

Meeting ID: 897 9240 5996

Passcode: 507190

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), Daniel Eichhorn(P), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(P), Mairead Jensen(P), Randall Preston(P), Lisa Skoglund(A), Vicki Solis(P), Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(P)

Approval of Minutes – May 17, 2021 Minutes – A motion to approve was made by R. Zitelli and seconded by V. Solis.

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

Meeting Closed to Public – A motion to close was made by R. Zitelli and seconded by V. Solis.

Communication/Correspondence:

- A resident reached out to the mayor with interest in assisting with the community garden project. We will contact her when we are ready to implement project.
- We received communication from Bergen County, Department of Health Services confirming that the EC has been awarded a total of \$800.00 (\$400.00 per event) in grant monies for successful Clean-up events in 2020 and 2021.

New Business:

- Welcome Shannon Stemper – EC Intern – Shannon is entering her senior year of studies at McGill University. She is studying history and environmental science and her goal is to be an environmental lawyer.
- Tree Removal Request – Block 2412, Lot 3, Zone R-10 (10 Birch Terrace) – The home will be a new construction. There are three trees in the front yard that are within the protected zone. Two large oaks and one large maple. There is a third oak on the east side of the property that will

remain on the property. The compensatory requirement will require three replacement trees. The resident/applicant will plant three pine trees.

Comments from the EC: The request seems reasonable and the residents are meeting the intent of the tree ordinance.

- C. Roche: Suggests the EC reevaluate the tree ordinance for future tree removal requests as many residents are planting evergreen trees as opposed to other native deciduous species.
- R. Hanrahan: Will include a recommendation on the approval.

Approval of tree removal request submitted by property owner for Block 2412, Lot 3, Zone R-10 (10 Birch Terrace) A roll call vote was made and approved the request as follows: Lisa De Pellegrini(yes), Daniel Eichhorn(yes), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(yes), Mairead Jensen(yes), Randall Preston(yes), Lisa Skoglund(not in attendance), Victoria Solis (yes), Michelle Zink-Jojic(yes) Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(yes) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(yes)

- ANJEC 2021 Open Spaces Grant Awarded in the amount of \$ 1,500.00
 - Thank you to everyone that was involved; Mairead and Ellen.
 - The grant monies will go toward the pollinator garden.
 - Shannon met with the Girl Scout leader to discuss a location somewhere near the playground at Huff Park.
 - We will receive 2/3 of the \$1500 grant in the next week or so.
- Borough Tree Removal Policy
 - Chairman Hanrahan makes request to the EC to read the 8 page ordinance prior to the July monthly meeting.
 - Chairman Hanrahan is working with the building department on communication with the applicants/residents so that residents can submit applications that are complete and address the tree ordinance's compensatory requirement. Sometimes the applications are submitted without meeting the code requirements. We want to assist residents with the process to avoid any delay to the residents in completing their renovations.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Would like to do a community outreach project that involves residents making bat houses.
 - R. Hanrahan suggests that the boy scouts could assist and offers to contact them. Maybe an educational component at Montvale day. Residents could learn about bats through the library/programming.
 - C. Roche suggests hiring a bat expert to present at the street fair on October 17th. Suggests implementing the education component this year and the building of bat houses next year.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Thank you to Vicki and Joe Solis, Colin Hanrahan and Ellen Riccardi for helping to put up trail signs.
 - The proposal from Boswell regarding removal of soil is to treat all the soil as contaminated.
 - One section of the soil that was tested came back as contaminated.
 - We will require an additional \$31,160.00 to remove the soil to a location that will accept contaminated soil.
 - Maureen Iarossi is working with Boswell to present to Mayor and Council.

- We are approaching the completion of the trail.
 - S. Stemper is investigating grant opportunities.
 - We would like to connect the Pascack trail with the adjoining municipalities.
 - Connection point from the crossing in front of the firehouse to connect at the start of Mill Pond.
 - The wooded area across Grand Avenue would be a good connection location.
 - Suggestion to install a pedestrian light/emergency light on Grand Avenue.
 - Shannon Stemper presents on Grants/Open Space/Pollinator Garden
 - There are many open space grants available
 - Montvale has 7.3 acres of open space per 1000 residents.
 - There is a big demand to increase open space but it is costly to increase acreage by acquire property.
 - Bergen County Open Space Grant– For Land acquisition project awarding up to 250K(no match funding required).
 - Deadline for submission is May 15th
 - Requirements to qualify include: open space tax, declaration of intent, appraisal report, public hearing.
 - New Jersey Urban and Community Forestry program – Offering grant up to 150K with 25% match funding for reforestation and tree planting.
 - Tree Inventory
 - As we evaluate the requirements for the tree inventory, it may be useful to document current inventory.
 - The boy scouts previously worked on a spreadsheet that has every block lot with fields for placing information about the trees. It's a good starting place.
 - Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Mairead Jensen)
 - NJ State rules will be in place by the end of this year.
 - We have one more 6 month cycle for collection of plastic bags.
 - The EC will have a responsibility to educate residents well before NJ State changes go into effect.
 - Goal of late September to start educating community.
 - Community Garden
 - R. Hanrahan is trying to get on agenda for Mayor and Council meeting to report on community garden recommendations.
 - Recommended location- The north end of the former swim club property.
- C. Roche: A Community Center is likely four to five years down the road.
- R. Hanrahan: Waiting for Mayor and Council to give us some direction.
- Suggestion on fundraising for Community Garden
 - Other municipalities are using benches as fundraisers for things like the community garden. Residents donate a specified sum of money in exchange for a plaque on a bench honoring someone.
 - C, Roche: suggest pavers up to where the trail starts which can honor someone in exchange for a donation.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche - Nothing new to report.

Planning Board Report – Bob Zitelli

- Many use permits being submitted to the planning board.

- A daycare center and a medical facility (Montvale Health and Spine) are moving to the location below Wegmans with an entrance from Paragon Drive. Plans approved last week.

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

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, July 19, 2021