

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, December 13, 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/81615701880?pwd=QWZOalpya2pwVUNBaG9hQzFZSGtpdz09>

Meeting ID: 816 1570 1880

Passcode: 762756

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

Approval of Minutes – November 15, 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 V. Solis.

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

New Business:

- Open Spaces – Borough of Montvale Resolution No.172-2021
With the help of M. Jensen and in conjunction with the planning board we were able to finalize an agreement with the Land Conservancy of New Jersey to contract their services to prepare and provide an Open Space and Recreation Plan. The proposal went before the Mayor and Council on November 30, 2021 and was approved unanimously.
 - Recommendation by Chairman of the Planning Board, J. DePinto - The contracted work with the Land Conservancy of NJ will be the responsibility of the Environmental Commission to monitor, collaborate with and assist with as needed.
 - The EC will help prepare and compile information and data that will be forwarded to the Land Conservancy..
 - The Land Conservancy will prepare a draft proposal.
 - The EC will review the draft in the early part of 2022.

- By the conclusion of 2022 Montvale will have an Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- The contract guarantees a detailed report. The agreement expires at the end of 2022. It is not automatically renewed. Further work provided on their part may will be available at an hourly rate.
- Tree City Application
 - A federal level certification
 - Once Montvale is certified as a “Tree City” we can utilize the status to apply for grant funding; a requirement on many grant applications.
 - Provides proof we are good citizens in replenishing trees in this municipality.
 - Application is in progress and will be finalized and submitted by February 15th, 2022.
- Fundraising
 - R. Hanrahan requests EC members to take the lead on potential projects. Please reach out to R. Hanrahan or E. Riccardi if you would like to move forward with a fundraising idea.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Update on Bat Education Project (Lisa De Pellegrini) – no news to report
Bat project will continue at the end of the winter.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Hurricane Ida caused destruction to Huff Pond which will require a significant financial investment to repair.
 - FEMA - Federal application for funding has been submitted.
 - R. Hanrahan met with the Mayor and Council who agreed to fund the repair of Huff Pond. Work will start the end of March.
 - Boswell Engineering and Downes Tree Service will bring Huff Pond back to its former condition and more.
 - The outlet sluice will be redesigned and will be constructed of cement, not wood as it is today.
 - Sluice will be larger so that as water egresses it will not flow over the banks.
 - Hurricane Ida came through weeks after a lot of fresh soil was put in place. Not all of the grass and plantings were rooted yet.
 - Rooted plantings would have significantly reduced the damage.
 - We have contracted work with a landscaper to clean up damage caused by Tropical Storm Ida:
 - Help clean up the trail with work including moving of boulders and tripping hazards on the trail, moving soil and covering an exposed pipe.
 - Installing new edging on the south side of the trail close to Grand avenue near the fire station. Edging was damaged by the storm.
 - Fencing Repaired - A contractor repaired the damaged fence across the Bayberry Drive rear yards. Also installed two safety fences along two headwalls open to people walking along the Memorial Trail.
 - Screening between trail and the recycling center - 12 evergreen trees will be planted to provide visual screening for those walking the trail.
 - Boy scouts installed 3 benches along the trail and installed the safety fence along the playground.
- Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Maired Jensen)

- We are over the 2 ton mark of collected plastic bags at the conclusion of our 3rd Trex challenge which ended at the end of November.
- We have now collected enough bags to place an order for a third Trex bench.
- The benches will be installed at the Senior Center Building near the bocce courts.
- A new Trex challenge began on December 8th.
- By the end of 2022 the full New Jersey mandate on the ban of plastic will be in place and there will be no more single use plastic bags.
- Volume coming in is still high. R. Preston and V. Solis assesses 25% of the weight collected are single use shopping bags.
- R. Hanrahan states that we continue to need help with processing and transporting bags and requests any EC members available to assist to reach out.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Lisa Skoglund)
 - R. Hanrahan – There continues to be grants available to fund EV charging stations.
 - E – bicycles and E - scooters are becoming popular and cost effective transportation options.
 - It would be interesting to start discussing engineering and the possibility of better accommodations for bicycles on our roads.
 - R. Hanrahan requests any EC members to reach out with interest in researching further.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan) – no news to report.
 - R. Hanrahan requests Councilman Roche to remind the Mayor and Council that we are waiting for feedback before moving forward on a plan.
 - We believe we have a valid plan, and a viable investment.
 - R. Hanrahan request EC members to reach out to friends and neighbors for more community involvement.
- Pollinator Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Thank you to the girl scouts on the completion of the pollinator garden.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche

- Budget meetings start next month (3 Monday Meetings)
- The Mayor has asked about planes and air traffic overhead.
- The increase in air traffic has been noticeable.

Planning Board Report – Bob Zitelli – not in attendance

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

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, January 17, 2022