

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, May 19, 2025 – 7:45pm

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81435944326?pwd=6PDxmxKcPCiD5SQstUsleFAPiRavPx.1>

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(P), Mairead Jensen(A), Randall Preston(P), Lisa Skoglund(P), Antonio Vozzolo(A), Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Sherwin Tsai(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(A)

Approval of Minutes – April 28, 2025 - A motion to approve was made by L. Baldanza and seconded by R. Preston.

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

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

Communication/Correspondence:

- A resident contacted the EC with a request to donate American Hemlock trees to the borough.
 - Trees are currently 5 to 6 feet tall and will reach a height of 7 to 8 feet tall at maturity.
 - The resident making the donation requested they be planted on the swim club property.
 - R. Preston suggested to place them between the trail and the DPW.
- June 8th – Street Fair
 - EC members decided not to attend this year with a booth. We will focus on Day in the Park.

New Business:

- Review of Planning Board Submissions (if applicable)
 - 22 Railroad Avenue
 - S. Tsai stated that the submission was discussed at the last planning board meeting with no decision made. The planning board meeting scheduled for May 20th to continue the discussion has been cancelled.
 - There is concern over traffic flow and congestion

- It was suggested that allowing a left and right turn would lessen the traffic that was not going toward Grand Avenue. Many people do not think the left turn would work.
- A traffic study, focused on that particular location, did not include a mention or review of the traffic light at the train station and Grand Avenue. There are additional questions the planning board would like the traffic experts to review.
- L. DePellegrini states that the area is already congested with traffic.
- The county reserved a certain boundary line so that in the future there could be a widening of the road. The proposed frontage of the building would touch on that boundary line. People entering the front of the building would be entering at an area abutting that boundary.
- R. Hanrahan states that there is a heavy gradient at the rear of the building. The plan includes a buffer (19 arborvitaes) next to the single family residence.
- R. Preston counted 77 parking spots on the plan.
- L. Skoglund states that there should be a shade tree for each parking area.
- L. Baldanza states that the plan creates a continuous wall of landscaping around the building.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Jim Wright Screech Owl presentation on June 3rd at 7:00 p.m.
 - L. DePellegrini has been handing out promotional flyers to residents.
 - Pollinator Garden at Huff Pond
 - Girl Scouts are starting to work on the garden.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - The pond looks good but the inlet is clogged.
 - Aerators are in, running and look great.
 - There are lots of people fishing.
 - There are going to be trees put in near the play area.
 - A pavilion is to be built near the Senior Center for shade.
 - Dedication Bench for Sherwin's son is in a beautiful, peaceful location.
 - Kiera Luff finished her Eagle Scout project.
 - We would like to recognize her work. She did a great job with erosion control and plantings and built and installed a beautiful new bat house.
 - R. Hanrahan will speak to the Mayor about her work.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Antonio Vozzolo) absent
- Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo) absent
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan) – No news to report.
- Repair of Environmental Learning Center, trail discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Michelle Zink-Jojic/Lou Baldanza)
 - Maintenance of Wooden Plank Trail Boards
 - R. Preston, R. Hanrahan and L. Baldanza will oversee the repair of the wooden trail.
 - We have some students from Pascack Hills High School and Boy Scouts who can help.
 - Work day tentatively scheduled for May 31st.

- Trail extension
 - R. Hanrahan, L. Baldanza and Steve Rich found a great path behind the tower and through the woods.
 - Only a four or five foot section will need screening.
 - R. Hanrahan is getting quote from S. Rich to move the soil and lay down some mulch.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche - Absent

Planning Board Report – Sherwin Tsai – no news to report.

Additional Comments:

- R. Preston inquires about the Summit Avenue property.
 - The borough is working on some drone assessment.
 - Plan for trail is on hold.
 - R. Hanrahan will requests an update.

Adjournment - A motion to adjourn was made by L. Baldanza and seconded by R. Preston all in favor stating aye.

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, June 16, 2025