

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, November 17, 2025 – 7:45 p.m.

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85023617344?pwd=yKlLphbfjPFf2F29zRJ2l1EJbOdm8k.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(P), Randall Preston(P), Lisa Skoglund(P), Antonio Vozzolo(P), Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Sherwin Tsai(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(A)

Approval of Minutes – October 20, 2025 - A motion to approve was made by L. Baldanza and seconded by L. DePellegrini.

Meeting Opened to Public Agenda & Non – Agenda - A motion to open was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by L. DePellegrini.

Present from the Public:

- Anthony Giorrusso residing at 145 Green Way
 - A. Giorrusso is interested in finding out about any local walking trails.
 - R. Hanrahan states that there are 2 trails in town.
 - The Environmental Learning Center (a wooded walking path) located near the borough, and;
 - the Pascack Brook trail which is a ½ mile wooded trail and sidewalk for the return on Memorial Drive.
 - L. Baldanza states that many people walking on the trail around Wegmans also include the Environmental Learning Trail into their walk.
 - We are working toward connecting to the trail that begins in Park Ridge and continues through to Hillsdale.
 - L. Baldanza states that the Veolia Summit Avenue property will have a water tower going on it and once completed there is a plan to put a walking path in that area as well.

Meeting Closed to Public - A motion to close was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by L. DePellegrini.

Communication/Correspondence:

- E. Riccardi has distributed a draft 2026 schedule of meeting dates to the EC members. Please review them and notify her of any conflicts by Friday.

- Arbor Day Proclamation – Arbor Day Proclamation is tentatively scheduled for April 25, 2026. We will need to purchase some small trees for distribution and organize Montvale Clean-Up day in concert with Arbor Day.

New Business:

- Review of Planning Board Submissions (if applicable)
 - Metropolitan Home Development – 55-61 Magnolia Avenue
 - There is a 300 foot riparian buffer from top of bank.
 - To the west side of the property are freshwater wetlands. The developers cannot development the area between the riparian zone and the wetlands.
 - L. DePellegrini states that they picked a good selection of trees to plant which include linden, redbuds, and oak trees.
 - R. Hanrahan states that there is a freshwater flood transition zone. Wetlands provide an environmental benefit of filter water and providing habitat for animals.
 - R. Preston states that a good amount of open space will be preserved.

Roll Call Vote:

A roll call vote was made and approved to accept the drawings presented by Metropolitan Home Development as currently presented: Lou Baldanza (yes), Lisa De Pellegrini(yes), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(yes), Mairead Jensen(yes), Randall Preston(yes), Lisa Skoglund(yes), Antonio Vozzolo (yes) Michelle Zink-Jojic(yes), Planning Board Liaison/Member Sherwin Tsai(yes), Council Liaison Christopher Roche(absent)

- Dunkin Donuts Property:
 - Concern of wetland on the east side of the property. There was one of the drawings where we stated that the wetlands should be indicated on the drawings presented.
 - The engineers for the applicant went out for an LOI stating that there is no regulated buffer on the property.
 - They are mitigating by planting trees for those that are being removed.
 - R. Preston states that they indicate on the plans that they are removing 21 trees from the preservation zone, but R. Preston counts 28 trees marked for removal.
 - M. Jensen states that observing from the parking lot there are currently very few trees of value. The property abuts the parkway ramp. Questions how they will grade this and account for water runoff.
 - L. Skoglund states that there is a lot of scrub, but feels there is too much paving indicated in the drawings.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Will work toward a raptor presentation for the spring time.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - R. Hanrahan states that the borough will be buying various shade trees that will be planted in the spring time.
 - R. Preston states that they changed the black slats to green on the fence repair along the Bayberry property.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Antonio Vozzolo)
 - Federal tax credits have expired.

- Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo)
 - Working on gathering several more plans to circulate.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - R. Hanrahan presents ideas that were discussed in 2021.
 - There is a 20 year lease that was awarded to D'Agostino farming for up to 20 years.
 - The D'Agostino family will maintain the two houses and live in them.
 - R. Preston states that area for the garden is approximately 100 x 200 feet.
 - The garden will be accessible only during daylight hours and only via code or a key.
 - Suggested size for raised bed 4 ft. x 8 ft.
- Repair of Environmental Learning Center, trail discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Michelle Zink-Jojic/Lou Baldanza)
 - R. Preston, L. Baldanza and R. Hanrahan will meet before it snows to repair the flooring.
- Update on the Interconnect Trail between the ELC and Wegmans
 - Project on hold.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche - Absent

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

Adjournment - A motion to adjourn was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by L. DePellegrini all in favor stating aye.

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, December 15, 2025