

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, March 18, 2024 – 7:45pm

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85063171802?pwd=RIftUndNc0RzMtV3UXFYM2ZMSmVGUT09>

Meeting ID: 850 6317 1802

Passcode: 688021

Join by phone/Dial by your location +1 929 436 2866 US

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(A), Antonio Vozzolo(P), Michelle Zink-Jojic(A), Planning Board Liaison/Member Sherwin Tsai(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(P)

Approval of Minutes – February 12, 2024 - 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 L. Baldanza and seconded by S. Tsai.

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

Communication/Correspondence:

- A local Boy Scout contacted R. Hanrahan to request a community project to work on toward his Eagle Scout award. L. Baldanza suggested the scout work on signage for the Environmental Learning Center trail. The trail conference can give us some ideas regarding suppliers. L. Baldanza offered his help to guide the scout.

New Business:

- Review of Planning Board Submissions
 - 36 Marion Road: Update from the last submission.
 - EC unable to make recommendation because we don't have the amended engineering documents that shows the recommended changes.

- Clean Up Day – April 20, 2024
 - R. Hanrahan ordered 150 trees based on last year's success with white pines and red maples (100 white pines/50 red maples)
 - L. DePellegrini suggests we give the trees to residents in biodegradable cups.
 - Trees will be delivered between April 15th and 19th.
 - Preparation of trees (soaking of roots) and transfer to cups will take place at R. Hanrahan's home prior to the event.
 - R. Hanrahan placed an article about Clean Up Day in the Pascack Press, in the borough newsletter, and on our website.
 - R. Hanrahan will have the event and date posted on the sign outside Memorial Park.
 - R. Hanrahan will pick up from the County shirts, sticks, and other items to give away to volunteers. The County also gives us trash bags.
 - Start time is 9:00 a.m., please try to arrive by 8:30 on the 20th.
 - E. Riccardi will place work order for DPW to set up for event.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Arborvidium can present the following programs for a fee of \$150.00 per presentation:
 - From Buzz to Chirps and Flashes – pollinator gardens
 - Going Native – choosing deer resistant plants
 - Firefly Program
 - Creating a Native Plant Garden
 - What Evil Lurks at the Garden Center – invasive plants

Comments from the EC: Deer resistant plants sounds applicable. We could do the presentation in the Senior Center. Lisa can write an article afterward. We could ask the scouts to help residents create these gardens at their homes.
 - Jim Wright, the Celery Farm, in Allendale, could present to us on hawks and owls and safe ways to control rodents.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - R. Hanrahan states that the last few rainfalls did break the threshold of moderate flooding, went over headwall and caused more erosion. We need to take corrective measures. Some soil and fast rooted planting where the pipes are exposed is a good start. This work requires a contractor and quotes.
 - R. Preston states that placing boulders and some ornamental grasses would be a great stronghold and help to stabilize the ground.
- Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Mairead Jensen)
 - Wind down
 - All collection boxes have been removed.
 - R. Preston states that the amount of plastic has been greatly decreased from what we have received in the past but some is still being deposited.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Antonio Vozzolo)

- A company based from Syracuse, NY presented a proposal to place chargers, manufactured in China, near the police station. C. Roche states the company is paying for installation of all the infrastructure. The grant for this project is for the charger and has been approved by Orange and Rockland. It expires on 4/26/24 if not approved at the next Mayor and Council meeting. If we purchase from an American company the cost will exceed 114K.

Important points to consider:

- Location at Borough Hall. Would be used for charging of borough vehicles.
 - Would be a start to building the infrastructure for electric vehicles.
 - Possible security concerns. Components of units are not American made.
 - Possible cyber security concern. Is there surveillance equipment in the chargers?
 - Cost is funded through an Orange and Rockland grant.
 - Cost if purchased through an American made company, would exceed 114K.
 - Do we have any research to refer to the viability of this equipment?
 - Concern over access to non-residents for charging use. Should it be restricted to borough use only?
 - Does the borough have any input on the cost charged to individuals who use it?
 - We currently don't have any vehicles in our fleet that could use the charger. Are there any grants for funding of vehicles?
 - Could it be installed at the DPW?
 - EC would like to present their research on EV's to the Mayor and Council.
 - Contractual information is required to make a recommendation on this proposal.
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- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan) No news to report.
 - Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo) No news to report.
 - New Community Center discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Chris Roche) No news to report.
 - Repair of Environmental Learning Center, trail discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Michelle Zink-Jojic)
 - L. Baldanza and son did a great job with a plan that shows hiking paths around borough hall and Wegman's.
 - We have funds to help put the placards in place. QR code would be useful in certain locations not only at the trail head but along the path.
 - Tree City Application – We have the initial approval from the state but we are waiting for final approval from the Arbor Day Foundation.
 - Checklist for Planning Board Communication
 - Was given to Jamie Giurintano, Darlene Greene, John DePinto.
 - Feedback was positive on simplifying the process.
 - Discussion on EC responsibility:
 - EC can offer recommendations.
 - The borough does not have responsibility over DEP rules.
 - R. Hanrahan states if there is form that states waterways are missing, it would be more evident that there are DEP rules to be complied with. Feels that waterways should be depicted on submitted plans.

Roll Call Vote:

A roll call vote was made and approved the proposal on documenting a memo to the planning board to recommend that the borough enact a policy to require category one waterways be depicted on any plans.: Lou Baldanza (yes), Lisa De Pellegrini(yes), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(yes), Mairead Jensen(absent), Randall Preston(yes), Lisa Skoglund(absent), Antonio Vozzolo (yes) Michelle Zink-Jojic(absent), Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(yes) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(yes)

- Revised letterhead that shows the logo of the Borough of Montvale and the logo of the Environmental Commission.

Roll Call Vote:

A roll call vote was made and approved the proposal to send the revised EC letterhead to the Mayor and Council for review and approval of use: Lou Baldanza (yes), Lisa De Pellegrini(yes), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(yes), Mairead Jensen(absent), Randall Preston(yes), Lisa Skoglund(absent), Antonio Vozzolo (yes) Michelle Zink-Jojic(absent), Planning Board Liaison/Member Robert Zitelli(yes) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(yes)

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche – No news to report.

Planning Board Report – Sherwin Tsai

Electric Vehicle ordinance did not pass with the planning board due to safety concerns. Decided to hold off on adopting a municipal ordinance and defer to state regulations.

Adjournment - A motion to close was made by S. Tsai and seconded by L. Baldanza all in favor stating aye.

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, April 15, 2024