

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, January 27, 2025 – 7:45pm

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Time: Jan 27, 2025 07:45 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83858501793?pwd=zTYmyLh85zskRstLQxiD4IMKA1AabS.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(A), Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Sherwin Tsai(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(A)

Approval of Minutes – December 16, 2024 - A motion to approve was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by L. Baldanza.

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

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

Communication/Correspondence:

- Meeting to discuss the EC's role in the approval process of development applications submitted to the Planning Board
 - Meeting included R. Hanrahan, Mayor Ghassali and J. DePinto.
 - The meeting was held to discuss EC involvement in ongoing and future development applications in Montvale.
 - S. Tsai, Planning Board Liaison to the EC and member can help with communication.
 - A time to meet will be scheduled between R. Hanrahan, J. DePinto, S. Tsai and Collier Engineering to discuss what the communication and EC involvement will look like moving forward.
- NJ Ban on Gas Blowers
 - M. Jensen states that there is a bill (S217) for a statewide ban on gas blowers to reduce air and noise pollution.
 - Currently, only a few local towns have banned them.
 - R. Hanrahan requests that M. Jensen keep us in the loop on any updates.

New Business:

- Review of Planning Board Submissions (if applicable) – no new submission to review.
- Review of Philips Parkway and DePiero Drive – discussion about creating crosswalks for pedestrian crossing.
 - Feedback from the Collier provided support to the suggestion to create a cross walk across from Borough Hall.
 - This will require the creation of a handicap accessible curb.
 - The suggestion was acknowledged and accepted.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Will work on events to launch in late spring.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - R. Hanrahan is working to establish an ongoing maintenance plan for Huff Pond with the DPW. The pond requires cleaning after every storm.
 - The aerators were removed from the pond prior to the first freeze and stored.
 - A resident contacted the borough to inform us that the swale along the trail (running parallel to Bayberry Drive) was full of soil/silt.
 - R. Hanrahan states that the cause of this is from the water drain that is flowing from the street during storms.
 - R. Hanrahan informed Mayor Ghassali of the problem and the mayor contacted Veolia. So far the problem has not been addressed by Veolia. R. Hanrahan will check in another week to see if any work has been done. Eventually that silt will go into the brook and return to the pond.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Antonio Vozzolo) – Absent
 - R. Hanrahan states that the chargers are in place but not yet operational.
- Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo) - Absent
 - R. Hanrahan suggested the possibility of an ordinance or agreement to include options for future development possibilities.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Suzy Basu, Master Gardener, met with us and said she wants to be involved. She is on the mailing list. She will be here to help with any community service.
 - We have other residents ready to participate in the development and management of a community garden. Several of these residents have previous experience.
- Repair of Environmental Learning Center, trail discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Michelle Zink-Jojic/Lou Baldanza)
 - R. Hanrahan has had multiple correspondence with the PHHS principal, Tim Wieland regarding students contributing to work on the Environmental Learning Trail and the scheduled event to rehab the trail. Due to the weather, the event was cancelled. Mr. Wieland offered help for the next date we schedule the work to be completed.
 - Thank you to R. Preston for consultation and work on the event.
 - We received the lumber and it was cut and prepared for installation by R. Hanrahan and R. Preston.

- We will resume work in early March, or when the weather provides us with warmer days.
- Update on Tree City Application
 - R. Hanrahan and E. Riccardi are working on completing the 2024 application.
- Update on status of Community Volunteer Form – No news to report.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche - Absent

Planning Board Report – Sherwin Tsai

- There was one application at the last meeting seeking to replace a deck with pavers which was approved.
- 22 Railroad Avenue - Many residents have been coming to the planning board meetings with interest in the outcome of the application for development. It is on the February 18th Planning Board agenda.

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

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, February 24th (4th Monday), 2025