

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, February 12, 2024 – 7:45pm

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83389875937?pwd=ai9RRmE0aEdYMW5KZWRPVHU5MC9UQT09>

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(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(P)

Approval of Minutes – January 8, 2024 - A motion to approve was made by L. Skoglund 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 M. Jensen.

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

Communication/Correspondence:

- PHHS community service – recap
 - 30 community members participated, including students and adults including the principal.
 - They helped to put down mulch on the trail and cleared garbage from Pascack Brook.
 - Thank you to L. Baldanza for going above and beyond in managing this project.
 - L. Baldanza states that everyone worked well together, brought wheelbarrows and hand tools and the principal, Mr. Weiland asked if they could do this again.
 - It was a great day and a lot of work was accomplished.
- MSKCC – Requested sponsorship opportunities for clean-up day.
 - EC members agreed that promotional information would be limited to anything environmentally beneficial for the community.
 - They can wear t-shirts or hats at the event with their company information as a show of support.

- Give away items such as pens or cups or pamphlets will not be permitted.

New Business:

- Review of Planning Board Submissions
 - The EC requires more documentation to provide adequate feedback on submissions.
 - We could use a checklist to ease navigation of what we want to review. For example, landscape architecture, Category One waterways, wetlands, etc.
- **36 Marion Road**
 - There are no wetlands and no category one waterways near the property.
 - Concern can be water table. A pool would change the ground water flow for other people's backyards. The neighbors may feel the impact.
 - R. Hanrahan states there is no ordinance in place to address this. Planning letter of denial went out in September. Impervious coverage caused them to have to get a variance. Request borough engineers to study accordingly.
- **DePiero Property– 53 Craig Road**
 - Located north and to the left toward Summit Avenue.
 - There is a wetland just a little over the 50 foot buffer. This is the only area of DEP concern.
 - Feedback from EC members:
 - S. Tsai states The president of the neighboring condominium association as well as a planning board member, have concerns about runoff when it rains from the stream toward the easterly side. The applicant plans on putting trees against Craig Road to make it more aesthetically pleasing.
 - L. Baldanza notes that there is an existing well which may still in service.
 - C. Roche states this is a subdivision; no change in use.
- **107 Woodland Road**
 - No comment from EC as no construction is indicated.
- Clean Up Day– April 20, 2024
 - R. Hanrahan updated flyer for distribution.
 - The cub scouts want to participate on Clean Up Day.
 - Flyer distributed to Friends of Montvale and the local scouts.
 - We did not get an email from DEP offering trees.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Researching speakers on the following topics:
 - Skylands Botanical Gardens
 - Raptors
 - Composting
 - Rainwater collecting
 - Pollinator Gardens
 - Considering another bat walk in the springtime.

- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - A request has been made to the borough for funding to rebuild the outlet of Huff pond. We are waiting for approval.
 - The inlet has substantial erosion. Would like to propose that we move forward with contracting work to include soil replacement and planting of deep rooted green grasses to repair the area. Right now the pipe is exposed.
 - A resident who is a contractor in town suggested we reach out to Wegmans and see if they would donate some of the boulders from Wegmans Phase 3 location to Huff Pond for use on the bank. This would require a lot of volunteer time. Steve Rich is willing to help.
- Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Mairead Jensen)
 - Wind down
 - R. Hanrahan made informational signs and posted at the Senior Center, Borough Hall and the Recycling Center informing residents of the end of the program.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Antonio Vozzolo)
 - Met with Joe Voytus who is looking at 3rd party independent services to provide bids for EV charging stations. Will follow up with Joe.
 - There was a recent announcement about addition grants from the Department of Transportation in an effort to increase the charging networks.
 - R. Hanrahan states that the permit to install an EV charger costs almost as much as the EV charger itself. Suggestion to waive the permit fee.
 - R. Preston suggests that we collect fee to fund inspection of work only.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan) – No news to report.
- Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo)
 - Work is in progress – massive project.
- 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. Skoglund states that ANJEC is awarding grants for trail building, signage, maintenance, and guides for the trails (printed or online). Deadline for grant submission is April 26.
- Tree City Application – Reapplication process in progress.

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

Planning Board Report – Sherwin Tsai

- EV ordinance will be reviewed at the next meeting.

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

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, March 18, 2024