

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, January 8, 2024 – 7:45pm

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87904377863?pwd=QUtTTmtKUeIhZnFFbVpVeTBCYk94dz09>

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 (A), 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 – December 11, 2023 - A motion to approve was made by L. Baldanza and seconded by L. DePellegrini.

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 L. Baldanza and seconded by S. Tsai.

Communication/Correspondence:

- PHHS Community Service
 - Teachers, staff and students will volunteer by participating in a clean-up event on 1/15/24 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
 - They will clean up the garbage that has settled along the banks of the Pascack Brook, near the bridge and along the trail.

New Business:

- Welcome Sherwin Tsai – New Planning Board Liaison to the Environmental Commission
- Review of Planning Board Submissions - The EC will be reviewing planning board submissions for potential environmental impact.

- **26 Kinderkamack Road**
 - 300 foot riparian zone from property to waterways (Muddy Brook)
 - EC Recommendation - No environmental impact from a state perspective.
 - Will request additional information (plans) from the planning board to determine other potential environmental impact.
- **45 Akers Avenue**
 - The subject property does not appear to fall within any DEP regulated land, zones, or buffers.
 - No state level concern noted.
 - Based upon submitted documents, it is very difficult to compare the existing structure to the proposal.
 - No environmental impact noted by the EC.
- **53 Craig Road (DePiero's property)**
 - Category One waterway Mill Brook shown on right side of property and Bear Brook shown to the left.
 - Across Summit Avenue there is wetland that looks like it is within 50 feet of the property.
 - State level concern.
 - Proposed stockade fencing.
 - EC requires more information to comment in any detail on environmental impact.
- **50 Chestnut Ridge Road**
 - Proposal to connect EV chargers from a main electric room to an area on Chestnut Ridge Road.
- **Service Area**
 - There are DEP applications for flood hazard.
 - Plans involve installing a culvert.
 - Based on DEP applications in place the EC has no further comment.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini) no news to report
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Outlet of Huff Pond requires \$ 30,000 to \$ 35,000.00 for installation of a new outlet construction to accommodate inlet water flow. Engineering will be required.
 - Inter-municipal trail – Connecting the Pascack trail to the inter-municipal trail at the Park Ridge connection will require a pedestrian crossing.
 - Approximate cost to install a traffic light to cross Grand Avenue is \$ 40,000.00. The Fire Department is supportive of this idea.

- Suggestion to purchase the property across the street which would give the borough access on our own property to connect to Electric Pond, and the continuation of the trail.
 - L. Baldanza suggests we may not need to purchase the property (Block 2401 lot 1) if the easement is large enough to accommodate a path. A path will wash out if we build it too close to the brook. We require accurate survey data to locate the right of way.
 - Off every county road there is a 20 foot setback that allows the town access on resident owned property.
 - Property could be purchased with grant money. This would remove it from the buildable lot calculations that contributes toward affordable housing locations.
- Post Storm Clean Up and Repairs – Suggestion to submit an Open Work Order to clean up after significant storms.
- Montvale Plastic Bag Recycling Update (Randy Preston/Mairead Jensen)
 - Program Wind Down
 - R. Hanrahan presented a proposed poster at the last meeting.
 - Needs input on getting them printed.
 - M. Jensen suggests forwarding the announcement to school, library, etc.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Antonio Vozzolo)
 - The borough is working with a subcontractor.
 - Proposal to install EV chargers at 4 locations (Borough Hall for police and employees, Community Center, DPW, and LaTrenta).
 - A. Vozzolo and R. Hanrahan agree that residents of Montvale who own an EV will purchase a charger for their home and will not use public charging stations as their main source of charging.
 - Community Center and LaTrenta locations do not make sense.
 - Borough Hall, the DPW and the rear of the firehouse locations warrant further consideration.
 - Municipal EV vehicles do require chargers that should not be public.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - \$ 32,000 startup costs.
 - We do have volunteers in town who would manage a garden.
 - It would make sense to have it at DePiero's property location.
 - We would install woodwork that would mark plots, fencing, water, plumbing, etc.
- 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)
 - R. Hanrahan purchased materials for the repairs of the wood decking.
 - 20 pieces 5/8 x 8 cost \$ 180.00.
 - R. Hanrahan states that every year we will lose 20 pieces of decking through weathering and wear and tear. Repairs will happen in March/April.
- Tree City Application
 - E. Riccardi and R. Hanrahan will work on this.
- New Tree Ordinance
 - We increased fine from \$250 to 750.00.

- Lookback increased from 4 months to 12 months.
 - There is a request for a subcommittee to be formed. We need someone to lead up a longer term tree ordinance update.
 - Contact to E. Riccardi or R. Hanrahan if you would like to help out.
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- Walking path and Bike Path
 - Vozzolo is compiling materials.
 - New Community Center discussion
 - Currently being negotiated with town lawyers.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche (absent)

Planning Board Report – Sherwin Tsai

- There is a bill that currently will be voted on today regarding fair housing.

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, February 12, 2024