

City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, January 22, 2019

Present: Donna Goggin Patel, Beth Lovejoy, Rick Bell, Kelly Moughalian, Chris Sprague, David Naidu
Guests: Courtney Cordaro, Gio Sce

Donna Goggin Patel called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM.

The December meeting minutes were approved.

Action items in red.

Earth Day Clean-Up: Kelly Moughalian

Kelly sent a Save the Date notification to all the organizations that have participated in past clean-ups that Saturday, April 27, 2019, is the date of the City's Earth Day Clean-Up (with Sunday, April 28, available for groups not able to work on Saturday and as a rain date for the 27th). She also notified Union County about the dates. Kelly will speak with Nancy Muñoz about the site that both Democrats and Republicans cleaned together last year.

Kelly also is writing letters requesting donations of tools for the clean-up. Kelly's company may need a 501(c)(3) to donate to this year. If so, it should be able to donate through The Summit Conservancy. We also considered putting one of the Earth Day Clean-Up signs out at Briant Park a week ahead of time as additional publicity. **Beth will look at the Earth Day Clean-Up email account she created a few years ago to see if we can use it again. Donna will check with Amy Cairns about when we should begin advertising the Clean-Up on the city's social media (and how she wants to advertise it more broadly). Donna also will reach out to Celgene to gauge its interest in an employee weekday clean-up.**

Park Line: Jeff Hankinson

Donna reported from Jeff that there was a well-attended workshop on December 6 at the First Aid Squad building on the Park Line. Phase 1 is open for use now. It is an asphalt pathway from Broad Street (across from the Salerno Duane car dealership) to Morris Ave. The Park Line Foundation is currently developing a section of the Park Line from Orchard Street towards Celgene.

Green Summit NJ: Courtney Cordaro

Last Thursday, January 17, 2019, Sean Frusco, a Project Manager at Public Service Solar, along with a representative from Green Power Energy, spoke about solar panel options currently available to homeowners in New Jersey. This event was cosponsored by Green Summit and the Summit Area GreenFaith Circle. It was an informative presentation with a lively discussion. If anyone would like the PowerPoint slides, please reach out to greensummitnj@gmail.com.

Green Summit organized a reusable bag drive in coordination with Summit's Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Justice, Equality and Service to Others. Through generous local business/entity and individual donations of reusable bags, Green Summit collected over 1,000 bags to distribute to certain area food

pantries and other organizations that offer routine assistance. Green Summit also got another 500 postcards for writing to the state legislators about the plastics legislation if any other groups would like to lead a party to write some postcards.

Green Summit will be hosting a second Repair Café from 1-4 pm on Saturday, March 23, at Christ Church (561 Springfield Ave., Summit, NJ). This event will be cosponsored by Green Summit and the Summit Area GreenFaith Circle. If you would like to volunteer at the Repair Café (either as a repairer or with set-up or the check-in table), please email Courtney Cordaro at greensummitnj@gmail.com.

Summit Schools: Donna Goggin Patel

The January meeting of parents from the Summit school green teams was encouraging and generated ideas for additional programs with the schools. The next meeting will be held on March 14 at 9:30 am. If you are interested in being part of this effort, please contact karin.pittle.gale@gmail.com.

Recycling Advisory Committee: Chris Sprague

RAC members met with representatives from Summit Public Schools Administrative Offices regarding recycling in the schools. The next step is to contact principals to request meetings with principals and head custodians, with hope of arranging time that RAC members/volunteers can take inventories of recycling bins in each school. Ideally each classroom would have a trash and paper recycling bin, and appropriate common areas would have commingled bins. If that infrastructure isn't in place, RAC will see how it can help establish that system.

RAC members are looking into pursuing grants for a composting vessel at the Transfer Station, and will gather pricing and sizing information about possible vessels.

Skip the Straws volunteers continue in their effort to contact each establishment in town that offers straws to discuss the campaign and whether/how each establishment is interested in participating.

Union County Hub: Donna Goggin Patel

The next meeting of the Union County hub will be held next Monday, January 28, at 7:00 pm at Chisholm Community Center (100 S Springfield Ave) in Springfield. There will be a speaker from the NJ Clean Energy Program who will discuss municipal outreach for residential and commercial energy efficiency programs. Representatives from Berkeley Heights, Rahway, Roselle Park, Springfield, Summit, and Westfield all plan to attend. Donna and Marian plan to attend. Others from the EC and other green groups are welcome to join, too.

Renewable Energy Subgroup: Donna Goggin Patel

There will be a webinar on community solar on Wednesday, January 23, at 1:00 pm. It will focus on municipal engagement of local stakeholders in creating momentum for developing community solar

projects. The next meeting of the renewable energy subgroup will be held on January 29, at 8:00 pm in the Large Conference Room.

GreenFaith/Bags to Benches: Marian Glenn

Donna reported from Marian that Congregation Ohr Shalom successfully collected 500 lbs. of stretched plastic. GreenFaith's stretched plastic collection as part of the Trex bench program has moved to Congregation Beth Hatikvah located at 36 Chatham Road. The blue collection bin is located behind the building. Trex accepts these types of clean and dry stretched plastics: grocery bags, bread bags, case overwrap, dry cleaning bags, newspaper sleeves, ice bags, Ziploc baggies, produce bags, bubble wrap, salt and cereal bags.

Community Garden Applications: Marian Glenn

Donna reported for Marian that applications for plots during the 2019 season at Summit's Community Garden are now available. There is a new online registration page available now through March 4, 2019 on the Community Garden page of the Summit Area YMCA website. (<https://www.thesay.org/Summit-Achieve-Organic-Community-Garden>) (There are also paper applications if needed.)

Green Infrastructure Champions: Marian Glenn

Donna reported for Marian that there is a new and free program that will provide training sessions for Green Infrastructure Champions. Dr. Chris Obropta, head of Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program, has developed a training program for self-identified GI Champions interested in becoming key players to implement GI in their towns. If this appeals to you, please see the attached schedule of workshops. Marian is attending and has offered to help with transportation. (Donna will check that Marian sent (or will send) this to information to Rick Mattais, Aaron Schragger and Chris Nicola.) The flyer with the upcoming trainings is attached. You can register here <https://goo.gl/forms/rQtXUQnS80kKA47T2>.

Creation of a Passaic River Trails Subgroup: Donna Goggin Patel

The EC is evaluating of the section of the Passaic River by River Road to complete Summit's trail system. The EC would plan to complete the trail sections first and then connect it back to the existing trails closer to the Transfer Station. Marian Glenn and Jeff Hankinson have done a preliminary walk beside the river to get a sense of the feasibility and potential problem spots. The next steps are to speak with Betty Ann Kelly from Union County and to meet with the city engineers with the maps and formulate a plan. Beth suggested inviting Betty Ann to walk along the proposed trail areas with the city engineers. If anyone is interested in joining Donna, Marian and Jeff on this project, let Donna know.

Creation of Subgroup to Consider Solar Panels on City Property: Donna Goggin Patel

The EC is beginning an evaluation of areas where the city may be able to add solar panels. Some potential sites are parking canopy solar structures at the Deforest Ave lots and the Aquatic Center lot. There also may be an option to add them on top of a garage. (This is an effort that will be coordinated with Matt

Gould and Greg Vartan on the Community Programs and Parking Committee.) Rick Bell and Chris Sprague agreed to assist Donna with this subgroup. If anyone else is interested in working on this project, please let Donna know.

Other News:

David Naidu anticipates Common Council's focus will be on the city budget through April and then turn to the redevelopment plan for Broad Street. He also noted that the recycling market is changing. The best step for everyone (individuals and the city) is to reduce the use of plastics as recycling is not providing the same economic cost-benefit analysis it has in the past.

Rick Bell explained that some of the recent applications he reviewed request a variance for residential generators. Instead of the current practice of frequently granting these, he wondered whether there could be a stronger stance against the generators from a noise and fuel perspective. Or perhaps the homeowners could be asked for something offsetting in exchange such as tree plantings.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Goggin Patel

2019 EC meeting dates. All meetings take place on the 3rd Monday of the month except as noted.

3/18

4/22 (4th Mon)

5/13 (2nd Mon)

6/17

No meetings in July and August.

9/16

10/21

11/19 (Tues)

12/16



Green Infrastructure Champions Training Program

Green Infrastructure Champions are key players in implementing green infrastructure as a stormwater management approach town by town.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program and Jersey Water Works are holding the following three training sessions:

1. “How to identify green infrastructure projects in your town”

Friday, February 1st from 9:30- 11:30; at the EcoComplex- 1200 Florence Columbus Rd, Bordentown, NJ 08505

This workshop will provide an overview on green infrastructure practices and how to identify sites that can be retrofitted with green infrastructure. The variables that should be considered in selecting the most appropriate green infrastructure practice will be discussed. A green infrastructure site assessment checklist will be provided to all attendees.

2. “Moving from planning to implementation of green infrastructure”

Friday, February 15th from 1:30- 3:30 pm; at the EcoComplex- 1200 Florence Columbus Rd, Bordentown, NJ 08505

The various components of green infrastructure planning will be discussed including tools that can be used to help prepare these plans. The implementation of green infrastructure projects that have been identified through the planning process will be the main focus of this workshop. Leveraging existing projects, building partnerships, writing grants and project costs will be discussed. Lessons learned during implementation will also be covered.

3. “Maintaining green infrastructure practices/projects”

Wednesday, March 6th from 1:30 – 3:30 pm; at the EcoComplex- 1200 Florence Columbus Rd, Bordentown, NJ 08505

The key to long-term success of green infrastructure is maintenance. This workshop will discuss the maintenance requirements for each green infrastructure practice. Model maintenance agreements will be shared and discussed. Cost of maintenance will be covered in the workshop as well.

We must have 12 people signed up to hold the training session. If we do not have 12 registered, we will look to reschedule.

To sign up to attend please visit:

<http://water.rutgers.edu/> or <https://goo.gl/forms/rQtXUQnS80kKA47T2>