

## City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, June 20, 2016

Present: Beth Lovejoy, Marian Glenn, Marjorie Fox, John Kilby, Kelly Moughalian, Ruth Gais, Rick Bell  
Green Team and Guests: Jeff Hankinson, Christina Amundson, May Fridel, Marite Robinson

Beth Lovejoy called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM.

Action items in red.

### Committee/Project Updates:

#### Rain Gardens: Marian Glenn

Marian showed interested parties the new rain garden on the Morris Ave. side of City Hall before the meeting began. Over the last week, the Rutgers Cooperative Extension, with the help of the City Engineering Department, began installing rain gardens at the library and at City Hall. Rutgers has committed to taking care of them for two years. **Marian will confirm that plans have been made to water the rain gardens.**

**Christina Amundson, who is on the library board, will talk to the board about arranging for experts from Rutgers to present programs about how to create rain gardens, and possibly about lawn care as well.**

#### Backyard Hens: Marian Glenn, Beth Lovejoy

Beth checked with a Board of Health officer about chickens and he reported that this had been raised before and that the Board of Health had no problem with it at that time. He thought that the Zoning or Planning Board or Council would need to decide. Marian contacted the chair of the Zoning Board, who referred her to Council, so Marian contacted David Naidu, who requested that the EC vote on whether to support a plan based on Maplewood's regulated and successful plan. Maplewood (4 sq. mi.) allows up to 15 households to keep chickens, distributed across 5 neighborhoods. The actual demand currently is 3 households. Summit could divide the city into 5 neighborhoods based on the school districts.

**Marian and Beth will follow up with preparing information to give to David or Richard Sun to take to Council.**

#### Master Plan: Beth Lovejoy

Beth reminded everyone to spread the word that there are many ways for Summit residents to have input into the master plan process.

<https://www.cityofsummit.org/556/Master-Plan-Re-examination> or through [courb.org/summit](http://courb.org/summit)

#### Shade Tree Advisory Committee: John Kilby

SHS students have created posters about the Emerald Ash Borer which are now at the library and City Hall along with flyers. There have been press releases about it and there will be more. There will be a presentation tomorrow (June 21) at a Council meeting. The EAB are transmitted primarily in firewood so firewood sellers have been informed.

The cost of treating trees is everything, at \$9/inch, which lasts 1-2 years. The state is already checking two sites in Summit which may already have the EAB onsite.

At this stage, the STAC will be working on alerting residents about how to spot the EAB and what they can do about it on their own properties.

#### Lawn Care Brochure: Beth Lovejoy, Marian Glenn

We have been working on a lawn care brochure that addresses pesticides, the NJ fertilizer law, and runoff of chemicals into our water supply and waterways. It has been reviewed for accuracy by a pediatrician and by an expert from Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Beth asked the Board of Health to co-sponsor the brochure but they declined. Marian presented it to the Rahway River Watershed Association, of which she is a member, and they would like to work with the EC on the brochure and make it available to a wide range of communities. **Marian will continue to coordinate with them and their professional graphic designer.**

There was further discussion about how homeowners can get their soil testing, which is crucial to making sure that only the appropriate amendments are added to lawns. **John Kilby is looking into having soil test kits for Community Night. Kelly has also agreed to put together soil sampling kits for Community Night using the Rutgers questionnaire and soil sampling instructions (<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/soiltestinglab/howto.asp>).**

Community Outreach: Beth Lovejoy

The EC will have an educational table at the annual Community Night on Tuesday, July 26. **Kelly, Ruth, and John will help at Community Night.**

Rahway River Watershed Association: Marian Glenn

Marian encouraged people to attend the RRWA canoe race fundraiser on Saturday, July 12 in Cranford. More information is available at <http://www.rahwayriver.org/calendar.html>

Passaic River Park Trails: Judy Mandelbaum (via email), Jeff Hankinson

Jeff Hankinson has been working hard to keep the knotweed and other invasives at the trailhead at bay, and could use some help with this. Jeff envisions a trail and garden club with people willing to help with weeding in the trailhead area and on trail maintenance.

The City is watering the plantings at the trailhead twice a week. The hope is that after the plantings get better established, much less maintenance and watering will be required.

Scouts continue to be interested in doing Eagle Scout projects at the trails. Currently, Adam Dwyer, a student at Summit High School, is trying to get his proposal for a project there approved by Betty Ann Kelly, the Union County Environmental Specialist.

Beth and Judy are working with Rick Matias, a Summit City engineer, to produce a final version of the trail map in the kiosk.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.  
Respectfully submitted by Beth Lovejoy

**Remaining Meeting dates for 2016:**

All meetings will be held at 8 PM in the Whitman Room at City Hall.

No meetings in July and August

9/19

10/17

11/14 (second Monday due to conflicts)

12/12 (second Monday but better for most people)