

City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, February 10, 2020

Present: Donna Goggin Patel, Chris Sprague, Jeff Hankinson, Rick Bell, Rich Fiore, Melissa Spurr, Mimi Zukoff

Guests: Courtney Cordaro, Dr. Frederick P. Blau, Karin Pittle-Gale, Sarah Meiring

Donna Goggin Patel called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM. The January minutes were approved.

Earth Day Clean-Up: Donna Goggin Patel/Kelly Moughalian

Kelly Moughalian and Donna Goggin Patel are preparing for the Earth Day Clean-Up on Saturday, April 18, and Sunday, April 19, 2020.

Roots for Rivers: Donna Goggin Patel

After another round of funding, the City was awarded a grant in an amount just over \$2,300 through the Roots for Rivers grant program. Donna Goggin Patel, John Kilby and Marian Glenn met with John Linson, the City Forester, on January 31. The intention is to plant 200 trees in various sites in floodplains around Summit, including at the Transfer Station (both near the trailhead kiosk and around the new Free Market Building), the Municipal Golf Course and the first section of the new Passaic River Trail off of Chatham Road behind the DPW Shed. We hope to coordinate the tree planting on Earth Day and would be looking for groups to help with the plantings. We also received an offer of 50 additional trees from a business located in Summit that we hope to plant at the same time.

Fire Station Plans: Dr. Frederick P. Blau/Rick Bell

Dr. Frederick P. Blau, Rick Bell, Rich Fiore, David Naidu and Donna Goggin Patel have held two meetings (with several phone participants) with Chief Evers to see if there any modifications that can improve the solar capability of the design of the Fire Station. One of these included the architects. At this time, the architect looking at the current design of the building estimates the current solar potential for the building of about 5% of the building's energy use (and it is recommended for the solar to provide about 25% of the building's energy to be worth doing). There is one additional section of the roof that could be flattened to increase solar potential, but it is not clear even that would result in enough of an increase in the solar potential to hit the 25% threshold. The building is equipped with the conduits and electrical space and structural support (at least on the south-facing roof) to support solar in the future if the efficiency of the panels increases to change these numbers. It was suggested that the City maintain its exploration of placing solar panels on the Broad St garage adjoining this lot to power the Fire Station instead of placing panels on the Fire Station if it's not providing the sufficient amount of energy.

EC members are deliberating about the best actions to take to make solar canopies a reality. We will revisit the list of nearby solar canopies to research and consider the best design for the existing parking structure at Broad Street and Summit Avenue.

Shade Tree Advisory Committee: Karin Pittle-Gale/Sarah Meiring

STAC is working on a number of initiatives. They are working with John Linson on developing recommendations to update the city's tree ordinances. The current one is thirteen years old and does not sufficiently disincentivize homeowners from removing trees. Their next steps are to speak with Beth Little who will bring it to the appropriate Council committee. STAC is also revising the letters that go out to residents and door tags informing them of tree removals and plantings to give residents a fuller picture of the process. There also is a second hangtag that offers residents easy-to-follow tree care instructions for their new tree. For Arbor Day, STAC is planning festivities surrounding tree planting at Summit High School on Friday, April 24. They are also planning to engage in outreach and education at Reeves-Reed Arboretum through another speaker series and possibly hosting a table at the Maple Sugar Fest on March 1. Summit's tree canopy coverage was recently estimated to be over 40% by iTree software.

Green Summit: Courtney Cordaro

Green Summit collected just around 2,000 bags as part of its reusable bag drive. These bags will be distributed to seniors, food pantries and other service organizations around town. GS also collected 44 mascara wands and 116 gift cards for recycling. Green Summit is hosting a series of talks about sustainable living at the Summit Free Public Library. The final talk will be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2020, at 7:30 pm and will provide tips for creating a more sustainable laundry and bathroom. The next Repair Café will be held on Saturday, March 28, from 11am- 2pm at Christ Church (including repairers for bicycles, jewelry, sewing, lamps, electronics and digital cameras, furniture, and things made of wood). Email greensummitnj@gmail.com for details.

GreenFaith: Mimi Zukoff

In cooperation with Green Summit's Gio Sce, Mimi Zukoff approached the Chambers of Commerce about distributing the signs that Green Summit put together reminding people to bring their reusable bags. They were very supportive of our efforts and requested a draft article for this month's "The Collection" which mailed last week. It was a brief overview of the plastics ordinances and announcing that these signs are available. Karen Hadley at the Chamber agreed to collect names of businesses that want signs.

Some GreenFaith members are getting training on stream monitoring from Great Swamp Watershed Association for part of the Passaic River near Stanley Park. Marian Glenn from Christ Church and Karen Venturella from St. Teresa's are leading this project.

Betsy Lavela, a former member of the Summit Area GreenFaith Circle, is returning to lead another GreenFaith Kids camp (vacation bible school). She will debut the Hungry Gardens camp, exploring the nexus between hunger and gardening. The camp will be held at St. Paul's Church in Chatham next door to the Library of the Chathams. She is seeking additional teens and adults to round out her team. The Hungry Gardens Camp will be held the week of June 22-26 from 9 AM to noon for campers ages 4-12. If anyone wants to volunteer, let Mimi Zukoff know at morahzukoff@gmail.com and she will put you in touch with Betsy

The public collection bin for the Trex bench program is currently located at the United Methodist Church (17 Kent Place Blvd). The blue collection bin is outside the door to the church office - look for the driveway on Deforest Ave that has the "Church Office" sign and the office is about halfway up the driveway on the right. 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. The public collection will be moving to St. Teresa of Avila on March 1.

Other Business: Everyone

The Garden Club has extended an invitation to hear Liz Putnam speak about the Student Conservation Association (SCA) on March 26 at 9:00 am at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morristown. RSVP by March 20 to chicks4con@gmail.com.

Donna reserved the library display cases for September for the Environmental Commission. Melissa Spurr ran through the Union County Hub ideas for collective projects again to report back to the Hub. The projects we thought best-suited to county-wide initiatives included composting, walkable paths connecting the towns and exploring recycling options for plastics numbered 3, 4, 6 and 7.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Goggin Patel.

2020 EC meeting dates. All meetings take place on the 3rd Monday of the month except as noted.

3/16

4/20

5/11 (2nd Monday)

6/15

No meetings in July and August.

9/21

10/19

11/17 (Tuesday)

12/14 (2nd Monday)