

City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, February 12, 2018

Present: Beth Lovejoy, Marian Glenn, Kelly Moughalian, Rick Bell, Jeff Hankinson, Donna Patel, Chris Sprague, Greg Vartan

Green Team and Guests: Melissa Spurr, Karen Kaplan, Susan Haig, Mandana Arvandi

Common Council liaison: Marjorie Fox

City Engineer: Aaron Schrager

Beth Lovejoy called the meeting to order at 8 PM.

The January meeting minutes were approved.

Action items in red.

Earth Day Clean-Up: Beth Lovejoy, Kelly Moughalian

The 2018 Earth Day Clean-Up has been scheduled (and approved by Council) for April 21. Kelly is running the Clean-Up this year, with help from Beth. **She will be arranging for donations for supplies, including more bags and grabbers.** She also said that her company might be willing to purchase shirts for the site managers, which would make them more visible to participants.

The Briant Park Olmstead Conservancy will not be able to help out so Marian volunteered to manage the Briant Park site because that particular area of Summit is in the Rahway River Watershed, and Marian is President of the Rahway River Watershed Association.

Beth received an email from Nancy Muñoz about cleaning up an area of the reservation that is along Oak Ridge Avenue. **Beth will meet with Nancy to look over the area.** Beth also suggested asking members of Council and members of both the Democratic and Republican Committees in town to do a short clean-up at a designated location prior to the main Clean-Up as a way of publicizing the main clean-up and showing bipartisan support.

Planning Board Meeting: Beth Lovejoy, Melissa Spurr, Rick Bell

Beth, Melissa and Rick made a presentation to the Planning Board on Monday, January 22. They spoke briefly about what the EC does and then discussed the memo prepared by EC members and others with recommendations based on the Master Plan. The PB members were also willing to look into requiring people asking for approvals from the Planning Board to fill out a green development checklist.

Beth, Greg, and Marjorie will meet with Zoning Officer Christa Anderson to discuss how best to utilize the green development checklist. Marjorie reported that the City lawyer is formulating a stronger tree ordinance. Aaron said that he has ascertained that a fund is in place into which money for tree replacements can be put when people have to remove a tree to accommodate their building plans but don't have space to replace it on their own property.

Beth also reported that Mayor Radest has called her to commend the EC and others on the work done on the memo. Special thanks to Melissa Spurr for taking the lead on completing the memo.

Rahway River Watershed Association: Marian Glenn

Marian said the RRWA is sponsoring a free program (registration required) on February 28 (7-9 PM) on moths, to be held in the education center at the Turtleback Zoo. <http://www.rahwayriver.org/calendar.html>

GreenFaith: Marian Glenn

GreenFaith is focusing on the Passaic River and has been in touch with the [Great Swamp Watershed Association](#) about putting together a Stream Team to be trained to do water assessments. Contact Marian (marian.glenn@shu.edu) if you would like to participate. From the GS Watershed Association website:

For those who like to get their feet wet, volunteers are needed to help with our many stream monitoring programs, including visual stream assessments, chemical monitoring, and E. coli monitoring. Additional opportunities for volunteers include stream restoration events and other water quality-related programs and events. Our 'Stream Team' members meet a few times per year, and new members are always welcome. Stream Team members must be 15 or older. We offer public stream assessment training sessions in the spring and fall.

Green Team and Sustainable Jersey for Schools: Donna Patel

The Green Team will host another vegan cooking event on March 9, 11 AM – 1 PM. It may be held at Christ Church but that has not been confirmed yet.

The Green Team is working on a survey to be used to determine what people's priorities are on environmental issues.

Wilson Primary Center applied for a grant in the amount of \$2,000 from Sustainable Jersey for Schools to assist with the revitalization and rebuilding of its fenced garden. The determination will be made at the end of March.

Beth reported that she had received very positive feedback on the recycling posts that Donna prepared.

Celgene Earth Day Fairs: Beth Lovejoy, Marian Glenn, Donna Patel, Melissa Spurr

The EC will host a table at both of Celgene's Earth Day Fairs on April 19 and 20. Donna and Claire Cummins will each be available for one of those days to work with Beth and Patti Schneider Smith. A discussion ensued about doing a presentation separate from the fairs. The Green Team cannot do that this year, but **Marian will do a presentation perhaps in coordination with Civic Story and Susan Haig.**

Recycling Advisory Committee: Chris Sprague

In response to a discussion at the last EC meeting re confusion about whether plastic bags can be put into the co-mingled bin at the Transfer Station, Chris Sprague contacted Mike Caputo about changing the signage to make clear that plastic bags are allowed in the plastics recycling bin only if (a) they are not black and (b) they are filled with recyclable plastic items. Mike said he would order a new sign and add "no loose" plastic bags.

Marian reported that if a community group can collect 500 lbs of plastic bags and other thin plastics (about 40,500 plastic bags), the company [Trex](#) will create a bench made from the plastic bags to give back to the group. The collection must take place within a 6-month period. Perhaps a group might undertake this effort in order to obtain a bench made from recycled materials for the new Summit Free Market building. See Trex flyer attached to the minutes.

Park Line Foundation: Jeff Hankinson

Rob Rubino and a crew of 6 did a wonderful job establishing a trail from Lower Overlook Road down to the paved section of the Park Line trail. They used downed trees and wood chips, stone and landscape timber to allow pedestrian access from the junction of Morris Ave. and Lower Overlook Rd. Rob also met with a representative from the Iron Horse Preservation Society to discuss removal of the iron rails. According to Rob they come in and remove the iron for recycling and remove debris and establish a walkable surface before leaving.

<http://www.ironhorsepreservation.org/> It appears that if they engage this organization, things will move along quite

quickly given their expertise in removing and recycling the rails and ties. The cost is nominal for the amount of work they do.

Climate Change Meetings: Mandana Arvandi, Susan Haig

Mandana attended a Climate Action Summit in Bedford, NY on Saturday, February 3.

<http://bedford2020.org/climatesummit2018/> . She brought back a number of handouts and **will provide links to the speaker sessions when they are available online.**

Susan Haig reported on the Mayors' Climate Summit that took place at Rutgers on February 3.

<http://www.sustainablejersey.com/events-trainings/nj-mayors-climate-summit/>. She noted that, at the event, twelve mayors formally pledged to work with Sustainable Jersey to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in their towns.

There was a brief discussion about energy aggregation. **Beth will forward notes she took a few years back on a meeting that Sustainable Jersey held on energy aggregation.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Lovejoy

2018 EC meeting dates. All meetings take place in the Whitman Room at City Hall except as noted.

3/19

4/16

5/22 This is a Tuesday because no rooms were available on Monday, 5/21.

6/18

No meetings in July and August

9/18 This is a Tuesday because no rooms were available on Monday, 9/17.

10/15

11/12 Large Conference Room and a week early because of Thanksgiving.

12/17 Large Conference Room