

City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, March 16, 2020 (VIA TELECONFERENCE)

Participating: Donna Goggin Patel, John Kilby, Jeff Hankinson, Kelly Moughalian, Rick Bell, Melissa Spurr, Mimi Zukoff

Council Representative: Marjorie Fox

Guests: Marian Glenn

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

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

As of now, the Earth Day Clean-Up is staying on the calendar on April 18, but there is a strong likelihood this will need to be rescheduled or restructured. Scouting groups and Brennan Environmental have reached out to register for the clean-up, but there are limitations to how many people can meet in one place for the next eight weeks (at least).

One idea is to facilitate a do-it-yourself trash clean-up. As people are out walking daily as a result of the coronavirus limitations anyway, we are considering having bags and release forms for individuals to pick-up. They could then scan and return the Union County forms detailing the amount of bags/trash. We can market this as an everyday Earth Day project. We can also recommend that folks take a selfie or a before/after shot while plogging. We can try to determine what most of the trash is, maybe even do a brand identification. Melissa Spurr volunteered to help Kelly and Donna brainstorm this idea.

Roots for Rivers: Marian Glenn/John Kilby

Marian Glenn, John Kilby and Donna Goggin Patel plan to plant 200 trees in various sites in floodplains around Summit, including at the Transfer Station (both along the driveway into the Station 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 plan to coordinate the tree planting on April 25 in the morning and would be looking for small 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. Assuming we can still get the trees and shrubs from the nursery, this may be able to take place on April 25 even with the current coronavirus restrictions.

John has 14 potential volunteers from Shade Tree's table at Reeves-Reed Arboretum's Maple Sugar Fest, and Donna has 3 families who have agreed to help plant the trees. Marian would like to go try out the auger with John Linson and see if it is sufficiently strong to penetrate the Transfer Station soil. The coronavirus restrictions may limit John L's availability, and the Transfer Station is currently closed, so we will see if this is possible in the next few weeks. Marian also is preparing educational materials detailing the various native plantings expected.

Green Summit: Courtney Cordaro

Green Summit has canceled all in-person meetings and events for the near future, including the March 28 Repair Café. Email greensummitnj@gmail.com for details.

GreenFaith: Mimi Zukoff

The public collection bin for the Trex bench program is currently located at St. Teresa of Avila Parish (306 Morris Avenue). The blue collection bin is located outside of Memorial Hall adjacent to the Cedar Street parking lot. 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.

Other Business: Everyone

Marian Glenn shared Green Streets resources which will be shared with the Environmental Commission members. We welcome any other big-picture ideas to ponder.

The group also brainstormed some educational ideas for the Summit NJ Environmental Commission Group on Facebook. These include (1) the DIY trash clean-up; (2) explaining bulk food shopping/refilling; (3) encouraging planting native species; (4) planting vegetables/greening your gardens (Mimi Zukoff volunteered to assist); (5) reducing plastics (Melissa Spurr volunteered to assist); (6) moving away from bottled water (may need to wait); and (7) reducing food waste.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Goggin Patel.

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

4/20 (via teleconference)

5/11 (2nd Monday)

6/15

No meetings in July and August.

9/21

10/19

11/17 (Tuesday)

12/14 (2nd Monday)