

City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, April 18, 2022  
(VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE)

Participating: Donna Goggin Patel, Rick Bell, Dan Crisafulli, John Kilby, Kelly Moughalian, Mimi Zukoff

Council Liaison: Marjorie Fox

Guests: Fred Blau, Helen Campanha, Marian Glenn

Donna Goggin Patel called the meeting to order at 8:02 PM. The March minutes were approved.

“Tiny Forest” Reforestation: Donna Goggin Patel

The ribbon-cutting on Saturday, April 2, was a success with over 40 people attending, including Mayor Radest, all of the Common Council members, representatives from NJ American Water, the Summit Conservancy, Bristol-Myers Squibb and the Summit Garden Club. Thank you to all who attended and helped plant trees. Marian Glenn, Jeff Hankinson and John Kilby all coordinated the volunteers and the planting of 150 trees and shrubs from the NJ Forestry Nursery were planted on April 2. Jeff Hankinson and Jay Cho picked up the next group of trees, shrubs and understory from Pinelands Nursery on April 18. These will be planted on April 23. With the help of Millennium, we are applying for a \$1,500 grant from ANJEC to fund the signage at the Tiny Forest.

Marian met with Christina Perez and Mandana Arvandi about the medicine garden. They are hoping to plant the garden on April 30. Marian will circulate the sketch when she receives it from Christina.

Earth Day Clean-Up: Kelly Moughalian

Summit’s Earth Day Clean-Up was a success. In total, 220 people collected 640 lbs. of trash and 352 lbs. recycling. Wood chips were added at Wilson Park.

On Saturday, April 2, participants cleaned at 11 sites around town. Group participants on Saturday included the Summit Garden Club, PEP, Kent Place School, Cub Scout Pack 301, Boy Scout Troop 67, St. Teresa’s Daisy Scouts, Washington School Daisy and Girl Scouts, and the Summit Democrats. A Brayton Girl Scout troop cleaned the Glenside soccer fields on Sunday, April 3. And a group of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders from St. Teresa’s and their parents cleaned the Village Green on April 9. The sites cleaned included Briant Park, Glenside soccer fields, Martin’s Brook Park/Tatlock, Memorial Field, Oak Ridge, Overlook “triangle,” Passaic River Trails (off Chatham Rd), Passaic River Trails (Risk Ave – Transfer Station), Passaic River Trails (Transfer

Station – Mount Vernon Ave), Passaic River Trails (Mount Vernon Ave – Stanley Ave), Village Green, Washington School playground, and Wilson Park. Special thanks to Kelly Moughalian for her coordination efforts. And thanks to Kelly, Dan Crisafulli, Chris Sprague and Mimi Zukoff for leading sites.

Recycling Advisory Committee: Mimi Zukoff

Danny O’Sullivan updated about the Food Waste pilot. The city will be partnering with Green Bucket to start a voluntary pilot for drop off of food waste at the Transfer Station. The details are still in process, but the cost should not be prohibitive, especially since there will be an equivalent reduction in tipping fees. Once the pilot starts, we will need volunteers to stand at the Transfer Station collection point at busy times and educate/supervise what people are dumping into the container.

RAC is working on setting up a contact lens packaging collection through TerraCycle; have been speaking with Summit Eye and Optical and they seem possibly interested. Mimi Zukoff updated on info from ANJEC Countdown to NJ’s Full Plastic Pollution Reduction Law Webinar. There is Clean Communities money coming to the municipalities to spend on outreach, education and purchase of reusable bags for distribution. Danny is going to find out from the city if they have received money and, if so, how it will be used.

On the Deliver Zero/Reusable Take out Container program, there are enough interested restaurants to schedule the informational zoom. Mimi will reach out to Deliver Zero to set up the date. Once there is a date and time, RAC will need volunteers to visit the restaurants to drop off a flyer/postcard with that information. Mimi will also ask if a participating restaurant owner from NYC can attend the meeting to answer logistical questions.

RAC is looking into a cork collection program. Westfield Green Team has partnered with Whole Foods Clark on this. The program is called “Cork Reharvest.” Danny is going to look into it and see if he can get a few wine stores in town to participate. Fiorino’s currently collects corks, but it was not sure of the name of the collection group.

Shade Tree Advisory Committee: John Kilby

STAC is moving ahead with work on a revised tree ordinance for Summit. The city plans to plant 125 shade trees this Spring. The Arbor Day event will be on April 29 with a weeping cherry being planted at SHS. STAC is working with The Summit Conservancy on a project to highlight the Landmark Trees throughout town. John Linson is working with STAC’s forestry intern on the street tree inventory. STAC is meeting with Reeves-Reed Arboretum to plan the Fall in Love with Trees lecture series for the Fall with tentative dates of events on 9/22, 10/6, and 10/20. For previously-planted shade trees that no longer need the supporting stakes, volunteers (like the

Summit Suckers) are going to remove the tree supports by cutting and removing the stakes. STAC hosted a table at Reeves-Reed Arboretum's Daffodil Day that was successful.

#### Multi-Town Environmental Commission Meetings: Donna Goggin Patel

The NJSMA working group topics are energy aggregation; stormwater; climate action plans; green transportation/green fleets; green building and energy efficiency; pollinators/pesticides; environmental justice and zero waste initiatives. The Great Swamp Watershed Association's Native Plant sale is underway and available at <https://www.greatswamp.org/native-plant-sale/garden-resources/>. You can receive links to the recordings of the related Zoom webinars by emailing [plantsale@greatswamp.org](mailto:plantsale@greatswamp.org). The sale will be live from April 1-22. Assembling the orders will take place the last week in April and the pick-up day for Summit will be on Saturday, April 30. The SignUp Genius is: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040e4cfa82aa7fc1-2022>.

As part of a Westfield collaboration, Wonder is running a reusable container program around Earth Day with the children's meals. Starting April 22, customers will be able to receive children's meals in reusable containers and then return the containers to Sustainable Haus (221 Broad St).

#### Union County Hub: Donna Goggin Patel

There will be an in-person meeting of the Union County Hub on Wednesday, April 27, at 7 pm in Rahway (at The Merchants and Drovers Tavern Museum; 1632 St. Georges Ave.). The speaker will be Clea Carchia, Executive Director of the Rahway River Watershed Association (RRWA). She will give a brief presentation of the purpose and goals of the RRWA and talk about some upcoming events.

#### Sustainable Jersey: Donna Goggin Patel

Donna continues to meet with Dan Crisafulli, Chris Sprague, Melissa Spurr and Mimi Zukoff to discuss and plan the Sustainable Jersey certification that is due May 22. Summit applied for a Community Energy Plan grant that would provide \$10,000 toward the creation of an energy plan document.

#### GreenFaith: Mimi Zukoff

The webinar on Green Investing on April 5 with Peter Krull was informative. Forty people registered and will get the recording. It is available on the Library's YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/8YjS7Nz-vHA>.

On Tuesday, April 26, at 7 pm, Jen Milnes will present a talk on “Sustainable Living.” This is taking place at Memorial Hall at St. Teresa of Avila (across from the main church at 306 Morris Ave.) GreenFaith is working to resume the Trex stretched plastics collection.

#### Repair Café: Courtney Cordaro

The March 26 Repair Café handled 149 repair requests from 112 people. The event successfully repaired 96 items fully, with knife sharpening and lamps being the two most popular categories for repair requests. Four items were partially repaired, with specific parts not being on hand being the most common reason the repair wasn't fully completed. Due to varying circumstances 37 items were not able to be repaired at the event. Overall this event helped to divert 480 lbs of items from the landfill and keep them in working order.

#### Green Schools: Donna Goggin Patel

If you would like to join the green parent group, please contact [karin.pittle.gale@gmail.com](mailto:karin.pittle.gale@gmail.com). The next meeting will be via Zoom on Friday, May 6, at 9 AM. We will be promoting a Walk/Bike/Carpool to School week during May 23-27. Washington School currently has collection bins outside the front entrance for discarded sneakers and printer cartridges. Franklin School and LCJSMS have collection bins to recycle used disposable face masks.

Brayton School is collecting stretched plastic for a Trex collection on a DIY basis. Weigh your plastics, drop them off at a store and then complete this Google form to record their total weight. (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfW18L1c5tTmwXb8SmOFzy5oBa5YwU9IeNALw9GBHoc7Q8xkw/viewform?gxids=7628>) You do not need to be a Brayton School family to participate. The schools rotate to receive benches. When they have an active collection, the following stores participate in the Trex program: ACME; Home Depot; Kohl's; King's; Stop & Shop; Wegmans; and Whole Foods. COVID has halted collections at many of these. From recent experience, Home Depot (Vauxhaul) and Stop & Shop (Madison) are the most receptive to taking collections of these plastics.

#### New Business: Everyone

Dr. Fred Blau explained that the CBS TV show, “60 Minutes,” produced a 13-minute segment on April 17, 2022 about the serious possibility of Russian cyberattacks. The US government has the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), which is headed by Jen Easterly, a West Point graduate, Rhodes Scholar, and decorated retired army officer. Within this agency is an initiative called “Shields Up” that deals with cyberattacks. Easterly says that US critical infrastructure, particularly the energy sector, is a primary target for Russian cyberattack. She also recommends that all Americans use multifactor authentication (MFA) on their computers and phones. The FBI has a cyber division with 1000 employees which discovered that Russian

government hackers had breached the computer network of a Kansas nuclear power plant. In a cyber war between Russia and the US, Russia has the advantage, because the US, as a rich nation, has so many more critical infrastructure targets than Russia does.

Fred also asked about the status of solar panels on the Broad Street West proposal. Marjorie Fox explained that the images shown at the February public meeting included solar panels, but the exact size of the arrays will depend on the final size of the building. Fred also asked about the status of the 2021 gas-powered leaf blower restrictions. Summit is not extending the pilot this summer. The state legislature is considering two related bills. Fred also asked about the state-wide single-use plastics bill taking effect on May 4. The site <https://www.nj.gov/dep/get-past-plastic/> contains a helpful chart of what will and will not be allowed in terms of single-use bags in New Jersey going forward.

Rick Bell mentioned that the next Green Cities lecture will be held on Thursday, May 5, at 12 noon. The guest speaker will be from central Turkey. Rick provided an update on the Hobart steep slope property we discussed previously. He also mentioned the Passaic River Trails off of Chatham Road. Summit is waiting to discuss the project with attorneys for Union County. Mimi Zukoff mentioned that Livingston has been improving its river access and now has a boat launch.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Goggin Patel.

2022 Meeting Dates. For the present time, these meetings will be held via Zoom. These are typically the 3rd Monday of the month. Any changes to that schedule are noted:

5/16

6/20

No meetings in July and August

9/19

10/17

11/21

12/19