

City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, April 20, 2020 (VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE)

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

Council Representative: Marjorie Fox

Guests: Fred Blau, Marian Glenn, Jen Milnes

Donna Goggin Patel called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM. The March minutes were approved.

New Date for May Meeting: Donna Goggin Patel

The May meeting will be held on the typical third Monday of the month, May 18, via videoconference. (Originally, the May meeting was on the second Monday due to a scheduling conflict with the Whitman Room, but we have switched it back to May 18 now that it will be another virtual meeting.)

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

With the COVID-19 restrictions currently in place, the city was not able to hold the annual Earth Day Clean-Up event. Instead, residents are encouraged to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day (which falls on April 22, 2020) by choosing your own green activity anytime in April. You may celebrate in a variety of ways: plant some seeds, start composting, make a poster or chalk the driveway with green messages or designs, have a backyard camp out, or just take a picture of a beautiful bird or blossom you see. Please remember to maintain a safe distance of at least 6 feet from anyone who is not in your immediate family while outside. The city encourages residents to track their participation by posting a picture or description on the EC's Facebook group page (Summit NJ Environmental Commission <https://www.facebook.com/groups/184758811555182/>) and to use the hashtag #earthday2020in07901 to record activity.

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. The planting has been put on hold until the current restrictions for COVID-19 have been lifted. The grant also extended the timing for planting based on COVID-19.

The tubelets and plants allocated to Summit would be better to plant in the spring, with the ideal window being before the end of June. We could do the planting with only 3 or 4 people engaging in physical distancing if allowed. Marian has drafted a potential protocol for the physically distanced plantings.

Rain Gardens at the Community Center: Donna Goggin Patel/Marian Glenn

Marian Glenn and Donna Goggin Patel are working with the city's grant writer to submit a grant application under the ANJEC Open Spaces grant. The proposal includes the creation of two rain gardens at the Community Center. Marian also has identified two other potential green infrastructure projects for the Community Center, as a second phase of green infrastructure for the site, including a reforestation project and demonstration retention ponds.

Park Line Updates: Jeff Hankinson

Jeff Hankinson has continued work on the Phase 1 section of the Park Line and finished a rock garden. Jeff also is transplanting pollinator plants there and is hoping the Garden Club will be able to assist in the future. The Park Line is considering re-illuminating the Togetherness Trail artwork by Sarah Langsham during COVID-19.

GreenFaith: Mimi Zukoff

The GreenFaith Bags to Benches collection is currently suspended as ACME has stopped accepting the stretched plastic film with the COVID-19 restrictions.

Other Business: Everyone

Marjorie Fox reported that the city is moving ahead with many of its sustainability projects, albeit at a slower pace with the COVID-19 restrictions. For instance, the city is identifying areas to maintain pesticide free. Also, with COVID-19, the single-use plastics restriction will not be enforced beginning on May 1.

Rick Bell applauded the possible move to an electronic distribution of the site review packets for the Planning and Zoning Board reviews.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Goggin Patel.

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

5/18 (date change) (via videoconference)

6/15

No meetings in July and August.

9/21

10/19

11/17 (Tuesday)

12/14 (2nd Monday)