

**City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, June 15, 2020 (VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE)**

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

Council Representative: Marjorie Fox

Guests: Fred Blau, Jan Graff, Jen Milnes, Aaron Schrager, Karen Venturella

Donna Goggin Patel called the meeting to order at 8:03 PM. The May minutes were approved.

Roots for Rivers: John Kilby

Marian Glenn and John Kilby coordinated with Union County and the city and enlisted the help of city staff and several volunteers to plant just over 200 Roots for Rivers trees and shrubs. Plantings have been made at the Transfer Station (both along the driveway into the Station and around the new Free Market Building) and the first section of the new Passaic River Trail off of Chatham Road behind the DPW Shed. At the Transfer Station, we are experimenting with weed block and some transplanted soil from Tatlock to assist with keeping the Japanese knotweed at bay. Thank you to everyone who assisted with the plantings.

Rain Gardens at the New Free Market Building: Donna Goggin Patel

The design for the parking lot at the new Free Market Building anticipates the inclusion of rain gardens. These rain gardens will need to be designed in more detail and installed. Donna, Marian Glenn, Jeff Hankinson and Jan Graff volunteered to form a subcommittee to implement the rain gardens. Please let Donna know if you are interested in joining it at [summit.nj.ec@gmail.com](mailto:summit.nj.ec@gmail.com).

Green Infrastructure at the Community Center: Donna Goggin Patel

We learned that we did not receive the ANJEC Open Spaces grant for the creation of two rain gardens at the Community Center. We are considering the cost and the feasibility of funding this from the remaining Sustainable Jersey 2019 grant funds. Marian Glenn and Jan Graff are also still exploring other potential green infrastructure projects for the Community Center.

Recycling Advisory Committee: Mimi Zukoff

RAC discussed the recycling changes coming July 1 and how best to publicize them. The biggest changes are (1) only plastics numbered 1, 2 & 5 can be recycled; (2) no wet paper or cardboard will be collected; and (3) nothing in plastic bags will be collected. The city communications office is drafting a flyer for residents which will be mailed out to residents. RAC also may create its own simplified flyer (with city approval). Then we will be asked to actively share on our social media and in any other ways, such as email.

RAC is looking for volunteers to assist with tennis ball recycling, specifically the volunteers would retrieve, box and ship the tennis balls collected at Tatlock and Memorial tennis courts. (This is an ideal opportunity for a green-minded volunteer looking for a discrete project.) Karen Raihofer is looking into nominating a salon in town for a NJ Dept of Recycling award. This salon takes part in the Green Circle salon program.

Mimi Zukoff and Jin Blades (from DPW) sat in on a webinar hosted by the Dept of Agriculture about a grant they are offering for cities to develop food waste composting and strategies food waste management. The grants range from \$45,000-90,000 with a total of \$900,000 to be granted to at least 10 local governments in 10 different states. The city is evaluating whether it can apply.

Shade Tree Advisory Committee: John Kilby

In addition to helping with the Roots for Rivers logistics and plantings, STAC is continuing to work on other projects. STAC is rolling out informational tags to residents who received city trees with the type of tree and tips for caring for the new tree. STAC also hopes to have another educational series of talks at Reeves-Reed Arboretum this Fall if possible with the COVID-19 restrictions.

GreenFaith: Mimi Zukoff

The Trex collection for Bags to Benches is currently on hold as ACME is not accepting the stretched plastic film at this time. The school collections in Summit also are on hold.

Solar Opportunities: Dr. Frederick P. Blau

Dr. Blau discussed the potential for Summit to utilize solar panels. His slides highlighted key rooftops throughout town, including parking structures, the library, and schools, that may be prime candidates for solar panels. Overlook Medical Center has a lot of potential rooftop if it could be utilized. Dr. Blau also calculated estimated solar potential and how much money's worth of electricity could be generated with these solar arrays. New Jersey seeks to vastly increase the percentage of its energy from solar by 2050. As Pennsylvania and New York share similar goals, the competition for the solar resources will only get greater as time continues. Dr. Blau urges the city to view its rooftops and parking structures as assets to be capitalized on now which can greatly benefit Summit.

Plan Review: Rick Bell

In years of recommending permeable pavers in response to variance requests, no one has installed them. The residents cite concerns about cost and maintenance. Under Summit's current DRO, there is no incentive to homeowners to install permeable pavers. Rick, Donna and Melissa Spurr will look for other exemplary ordinances with respect to pavers for potential consideration during DRO revisions.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Goggin Patel.

**2020 EC meeting dates. All meetings take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month except as noted.**

No meetings in July and August.

9/21 (likely via videoconference)

10/19

11/17 (Tuesday)

12/14 (2nd Monday)