

City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, September 17, 2018

Present: Beth Lovejoy, Marian Glenn, Donna Patel, Rick Bell, Kelly Moughalian, Chris Sprague, Jeff Hankinson
Guests: Courtney Cordaro, Patricia Palermo, Gio Sce, Rob Lubin

Beth Lovejoy called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM.

The June meeting minutes were approved.

Action items in red.

Earth Day Clean-Up, 2019: Beth Lovejoy, Kelly Moughalian

After a brief discussion, it was agreed that a good date for the 2019 annual Earth Day Clean-Up would be Saturday, April 27. (The weekend of April 20th includes Easter and Passover, and the weekend before that begins the week of Summit Schools break.) **Kelly will prepare a letter asking for Council's approval of the date to send to Paul Cascais.**

Repair Café, Saturday, Sept 22: Courtney Cordaro

Green Summit will be hosting a Repair Café on Saturday, September 22, 1-4 pm, at St. John's Lutheran Church, 587 Springfield Ave. in Summit. It's an event where volunteers fix beloved but broken items the community brings in. There will be volunteers there to repair bicycles, wood/furniture, small engines, textiles, and jewelry (from 3-4pm). There will also be a person to give plants/gardening tips, and a volunteer doing knife sharpening. The repairs are free but donations will be accepted. Donna will also be there to sell reused tee shirts.

Note from Beth: Thanks to Courtney for all her hard work organizing this event.

Green Summit NJ: Donna Patel

In addition to the Repair Café, Green Summit is joining with The Film Society of Summit to promote the showing of "Bag It" on October 12 @MONDO at 8 pm. Tickets are \$12 in advance or \$14 at the door. Email Summitfilm@gmail.com to reserve advance tickets. On November 3, there will be a showing of the movie *Before the Flood* at the Arboretum. Green Summit is also working on a presentation about home solar use for November 15.

Green Summit reached over 500 unique responses to its 2-question survey about Summit residents' priorities for green actions on the municipal and household levels. The breakdown of responses is:

Municipal Level: Plastic Bag Restriction (39.3%); Tree Canopy Restoration (22.5%); City-Wide Food Composting (18.3%); Leaf Blower Restriction (9.6%); EV Charging Stations (4.1%).

Home Level: Pesticide-Free Lawn Care (26%); Solar Panels and Other Renewable Energy (20.8%); Home Energy Savings (19%); Backyard Composting (14.2%); Rain Gardens (9%); Eating Less Meat (5.5%)

All those present agreed that the EC is in support of all of these policies. **Donna will look into creating a pie chart graphic and considering how best to present the results both to Council and via social media.**

There has been a positive response to the initial outreach on the joint RAC/EC plastic straw project from businesses that were approached about it. Work on this project is ongoing. The goal is to encourage businesses to voluntarily reduce their plastic straw use either by not offering straws at all or by offering only paper straws.

Green Business Recognition: Donna Patel, Beth Lovejoy

The outreach for the plastic straw project led to the realization that a number of businesses are already implementing a variety of green practices. So instead of continuing the labor-intensive current Summit Green Star Program, it might

make more sense to highlight the current green practices of businesses, community organizations and houses of faith on a monthly basis. Examples of exemplary projects include GreenFaith's Bags to Benches Program, Grand Summit Hotel's practices of not offering bottled water for free (pitchers of water instead) at its conferences, and Hilltop Auto's varied green practices. **For now, members and friends of the EC can submit names of places that they learn about to Donna and Kelly, and discussions will continue.**

Bags to Benches: Marian Glenn

During the Bags to Benches Campaign, various houses of worship in Summit will collect clean plastic bags and stretchable plastic film products to support the recycling of plastic into lumber by Trex, which awards each 500 lb. donation with a bench made of recycled plastic. 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. Starting on Sunday, Sept 23, an outdoor collection bin will be placed at Summit United Methodist Church in the driveway off Deforest Ave.

Renewable Energy Group: Marian Glenn

Over the summer, Marian reached out to ask if there were people interested in researching renewable energy for either the municipality as a whole and/or for individuals. She has emailed some information from outside sources to interested people. She also noted that the governor is putting together a new state [energy master plan](#) with the goal of setting New Jersey on the path to a conversion to 100 percent clean energy by 2050. That would be a good resource as well. **Marian will work on setting up a time when the group can meet to decide where its focus should be.**

Storm Water Management; Green Infrastructure: Marian Glenn

Marian will attend two upcoming workshops led by Dr. Christopher Obropta, Director of Water Resources Program at Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Both will be held at Duke Farms.

1. Sept 19: 8:30- noon, on how to get Sustainable Jersey points for Green Infrastructure (landscape solutions to stormwater management.)
2. Using Green Infrastructure as a Stormwater Management Strategy, Sept 20, 7-9 pm.

It was noted that green infrastructure should be considered as part of the Broad Street Redevelopment Project, especially now that the project has moved into the concept stage.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Lovejoy

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

10/15

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

12/17 Large Conference Room