

Green Ridgewood-Green Team Virtual Meeting Minutes 20210304

Attendance:

Green Ridgewood: Bob Upton, George Wolfson, Christine Amundsen, Yvone Nava, Beth Creller, Saurabh Dani (School Board Rep), Pam Perron (Village Council Liaison), Jill Fasano (Village Staff Rep).

Green Team: George Wolfson, Bob Upton, Anthea Zito, Diala Pharaon, Tony Mauriello, Abby Clothier (Student Liaison), Michael Sedon (Village Council Liaison)

Additional: Miles Luo (RHS), Dianne Kidwell, David Refkin, Carolyn Jacoby (Shade Tree Commission), Ian Hertzler, Ralph Deplet, Dianne O'Brien (Planning Board), Sean Hamlin (Ridgewood Recycling/Sanitation).

1. Welcome/Introductions:

Apologies had been received from Ellie Gruber, Mary Mogerley and Justin Manger for being unable to attend.

The Green Ridgewood Committee welcomed Jill Fasano, a Senior Engineer, with Ridgewood Water for 5 years, as the newly appointed Village Staff representative.

The Village Council, at its February 24th Special Public Meeting created the position of Student Liaison Representative to the Green Team and appointed Abby Clothier to that position. She was also welcomed.

The committees also extended welcome to the exceptionally large number of well qualified guests and expressed appreciation for their presence and contribution to our conversations.

Again, we extend thanks to Dylan Hansen for hosting us on Zoom.

2. Approve February meeting minutes:

Pam proposed and Christine seconded approval of the draft minutes from the February meeting which had been e-mailed to members on 2/12. Motion passed with no objections.

3. Membership/Recruitment:

Mike advised that the Village Council will fill the open Green Team resident member position shortly.

4. Communications: Website, Social Media, Sustainable Ridgewood, etc:

No update.

5. Green Team/Sustainable Jersey

Silver Recertification: Justin was not present for an update but Mike advised he has been updating our application. It was again emphasized that we need the owners of SJ Actions to work on them.

Wildlife Action Plan: Mike confirmed the resolution was passed by the Council at the February 10th Public Meeting.

6. Sustainable Bergen Hub:

(a) Ramsey hosted a Hub meeting on Zoom on February 22nd. Topics included a presentation about Ramsey's newly implemented Adopt-a-Drain program. Next meeting will be hosted by Allendale in March, date to be determined.

(b) The Single Use Plastics sub-committee met via Zoom on February 8th. Guest speaker Gary Sondermeyer spoke about the recycling industry, emphasizing the need to continue to aggressively reduce plastics use and reduce waste overall. The committee meets again on March 8th.

(c) The Hub Styrofoam Sub-Committee met on March 2nd. The upcoming Hub/Ridgewood collection event was reviewed (see below) and various proposals discussed for creating permanent collections and densifying locations in the County.

(d) Creative Bergen – Anthea has held a Zoom meeting to plan the Ridgewood component of the June Arts Amble. She has created a proposal document which she will distribute to committee members. So far she lists George, Pam, Mike, Ellie & Abby as offering to work on the project.

7. Green Ridgewood Styrofoam Sub-Committee:

The planned Ridgewood/Bergen Hub Styrofoam collection is confirmed for Saturday April 17th, rain date April 24th, in the Graydon parking lot. Yvone hosted a planning meeting on Zoom with Ridgewood and Hub members. Each will provide one truck. Collection starts for Ridgewood residents only at 10 am and opens up to all County residents at 11 am until 1 pm or when trucks are full. We need as many volunteers as possible and Yvone asks committee members to advise her of their availability. The suggestion of collecting donations at the event was viewed favorably.

8. RGEA (Renewable Government Energy Aggregation) sub-committee:

Pam, Christine, Beth and George are gathering information to present to the Council and plan a Town Hall meeting for residents for April 29th.

9. Earth Day

Following our last meeting Diala explored the suggestion to create a virtual Earth Day event with the board of the United Nations Association of the United States, Northern New Jersey Chapter where she leads the Youth & Community Engagement Committee. The committee will create "Earth Day 2021", a multimedia presentation celebrating NNJ towns and Diala e-mailed a project outline to our committee members already.

Another Earth Day suggestion of a walking tour has now been merged into the Creative Bergen June event described above.

10. Planning Board:

The Planning Board met on February 16th and March 2nd. We appreciated Dianne O'Brien providing comment on their discussions about the requirement to incorporate Climate Change into the Master Plan and the input from several of our guests on this topic. Mike noted that the Village had already invested substantially in infrastructure upgrades. A Planning Board Master Plan sub-committee will be working on this project starting on Open Space with the Land Use element incorporating climate change to follow. Questions about the timeline for this process will need to be addressed at the sub-committee. Comments on this issue noted that communication will be critical and numerous disciplines will need to be involved such as architecture, building codes, etc.

11. Grants:

Sustainable Jersey has announced that their annual PSEG Foundation grant cycle is now open for applications. There will be an informational webinar on March 16th and the deadline for applications is April 9th. No projects have been identified (except perhaps a EPS densifier). Bob will contact Parks & Rec for suggestions.

12. Food Waste Pilot:

It was noted that the Recycling Dept has started the pilot program. It is believed there are still some places open to participate.

13. Leaf Blowers:

Pam reported she & Ellie are researching what ordinances have passed in other towns. Focus appears to be on the noise abatement aspect.

14. Ridgewood Library Sustainability Series:

The latest Library newsletter lists events in this series in March, April & May. The April 21st event will be a presentation "Geothermal Energy Demystified" which Green Ridgewood has been asked to promote and assist.

15. Adopt-a-Drain:

At our last meeting Pam had introduced information, suggested at CBDAC, about the State Adopt-a-Drain program and Westfield's participation. We now know about Ramsey's similar program as noted above. Bob asked if any of our members had an interest in creating a program in Ridgewood. It was noted that the Village Engineer said such a program would be helpful to his department.

16. Schools:

It was noted that Miles had inquired as whether the grant money previously given to RHS could be redirected to a different project. It was agreed that he should provide a proposal which we would expect to view favorably.

17. New Business:

The Village has paid our annual ANJEC membership which includes 7 individual memberships. It was also noted that the ANJEC virtual training sessions, in place of their usual “2021 Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions” in-person training, are ongoing.

Bob had forwarded an e-mail about CSA's (Community Supported Agriculture) and asked members to review it for our next meeting.

14. Next Joint Meeting will be Thursday April 1st at 7:00 PM, venue to be advised.