

GREEN RIDGEWOOD AGENDA

May 7, 2026, 7:30-9:30 PM

RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL, SENIOR LOUNGE

Attendees: Green Ridgewood: David Refkin – Chair; Justin Manger – Vice Chair; Jane Rouse, Peter Jerdee, Alina Mordkovich, Pam Perron – Village Council liaison; Julia Buckley – Parks & Rec liaison; Mary Lou Handy – Board of Education liaison; Jill Fasano – Village/Ridgewood Water-liaison; Anika Mukkatira - Student liaison; Miles Luo – RHS staff; Green Team: Geri Atwood - Chair; Rich Krauser; Julia Grant – Student liaison; Guests: Carolyn Jacoby, Robert Zeller, Frank Farrell, Clarissa Gubb, George Wolfson, Gia Battaglia and Devyn Letscher (RHS students)

Administration

1. Welcome and Attendee Introductions
2. April 9, 2026 meeting minutes unanimously approved.

Updates/Discussion/Strategy

3. Chair Report, Green Ridgewood highlights (David)
 - Daffodil Festival and Earth Day Fair was a resounding success, believed to be best attended ever.
 - 1 opening on Green Ridgewood and 2 on Green Team. There are at least 3 applicants; others can apply through next week. Interview process late May/early June.
4. Village Council Liaison Report (Pam)
 - Successful Sustainability Day at RHS; well-attended and impressive panel discussion.
 - 2 additional collection bins delivered for Village food scraps program
 - Recycling Department is buying a hybrid Ford Maverick
 - Waldwick is new user of Village styrofoam densifier (8 towns now); revenue source
 - Removal of contaminated berm at Schedler property in process
5. Earth Day Fair Review (All)
 - The Committee provided feedback on what worked well at Fair and suggestions for improvement.
6. Village Council Annual Review (David, Pam)

- 10–12-minute presentation yesterday mostly focused on flooding issues, also leaf blower issue and food scraps program. Discussed 2025 accomplishments and 2026 goals. Well received by Village Council members.
7. Saddle River Watershed Alliance/NJ Climate Resiliency Planning Grant (David)
- Productive March 14 meeting for 3 hours organized and hosted by Ridgewood and April 20 Zoom call regarding next grant application round – original 6 communities plus Lodi
 - New grants being applied for: \$200,000 for the 7 communities and \$150,000 for community-based organization(s) (CBO). Also, up to \$1.8 million for consultants.
 - Hackensack Riverkeeper and Passaic River Coalition have agreed to be co-CBOs for this application.
 - Who will be the prime applicant this time is to be determined. Bergen County is interested in that role in collaboration with key personnel from the 7 communities.
 - Application is due July 7.
8. Potential New Columbia University Study (Alina)
- Application in process for primarily an urban heat preparedness study with the Columbia Climate School in the first half of 2027. Project would focus on heat island assessment and development of extreme heat health risk mitigation plan for Ridgewood. Project to be aligned with Sustainable Jersey points criteria.
9. Parks & Rec. Joint Projects Activities (Geri, Julia, David, Carolyn)
- Habernickel – last Saturday, Carolyn and others redefined the trails in the sloped area near the water and defined areas where native plantings will go.
 - Vets Field rain garden improvement – last Saturday, Geri worked with around 20 Grace Church volunteers and 2 Parks personnel, installed rocks delivered by Village and pulled weeds.
 - Upcoming efforts: Kings Pond (McKinley entrance to Gypsy Pond, Oct 4); Grove Park
10. Students Update: Sustainability Day, Future Initiatives (Julia, Anika, Miles)
- Successful ongoing maintenance of Vets Field rain garden
 - Student group planting native plants in RHS courtyard
 - Travell & Hawes – 2 RHS students talking on importance of trees and giving away trees
 - Travell Sustainability Day – 3 hours on April 22 (Earth Day), presented on same topics as RHS Sustainability Day, including skit by theater students.

11. Resource Management & Conservation Subcommittee (Peter, Pam)

- Leaf blowers – Village staff trip to Maplewood to meet with their DPW rescheduled to May 19; seeking to raise public awareness through Earth Day Fair (prizes, poster, questions), newsletter article, and website
- Food Scraps – New collection containers for Habernickel and the Stable (1 funded by GR); discussed further promotion of food scrap program, GR's role, source reduction
- Skip the Stuff – GR's outreach to local business community and public is ongoing.
- Drought Data (David) – rainfall down 29% over last 20 months and down 34% over last 11 months, raising major concerns about fires and air quality.

12. Green Team Meeting - Strategy (Geri)

- Each Green Team member's topical areas of focus for Sustainable Jersey points were identified. Additional topics need to be covered by members outside of Green Team. Two open Green Team slots to fill would also help.

13. Communications Subcommittee (Justin)

- Discussion of website and newsletter usage data, updating membership list, growing newsletter mailing list requiring MailChimp subscription service, migrating website onto another server, and Project 1000 acres web pages

14. Green Building/Sustainability Subcommittee (Justin, David)

- There has been substantial progress on data gathering for Sustainable Jersey (SJ) energy audit grant. Conference call with SJ next week to discuss energy planning grant.
- Separately, there's been a lot of data collection in connection with PSE&G Direct Install Program (PSE&G now encouraging lower energy use through interest free loans).

15. Finance – “Pro-Forma” 2026 Revenue/Expenses (Jane, David)

- GR made \$3,990 in net revenue from Earth Day Fair. This was below last years “net profit.”

Other

16. Future Meeting Dates 2026: June 4, July 9, September 3

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Jerdee

