**Green Ridgewood-Green Team Virtual Meeting Minutes 20200616**

Attendance:

Green Ridgewood: Bob Upton, George Wolfson, Ellie Gruber, Pam Perron, Christine Amundsen, Yvone Nava, Saurabh Dani (School Board Rep), Robert Kearney (Village Staff Rep), Michael Sedon (Village Council Liaison).

Green Team: Justin Manger, George Wolfson, Ellie Gruber, Bob Upton, Serena Iacoviello, Anthea Zito, Michael Sedon (Village Council Liaison).

Additional: Miles Luo (RHS), Joanna Hanrahan.

**1. Welcome/Introductions:**

This was the second virtual meeting on Zoom facilitated by Dylan Hansen with our thanks. We were pleased to welcome Saurabh Dani as the School Board representative to Green Ridgewood. We learned that Mike will continue as Village Council representative to the Green Team and Pam will continue to be a member of Green Ridgewood but now, as she takes her seat on the Council, will take over the role of Green Ridgewood Council representative from Mike. We appreciate their continuing service to the committees.

**2. Approve May meeting minutes:**

Rob & George proposed and seconded approval of the May minutes with one correction and they were approved.

**3. The Way Ahead:**

Mike had reported to the Council on our discussion last month and the suggestion we take a greater interest in the work of the planning Board received favorable comment. To facilitate that, Bob will look into alternative meeting dates, so we do not conflict with Planning Board meetings.

Moving ahead with a new Council, and as we cope with ongoing COVID issues, we will identify topics where we will try to work more closely with the Council and Village staff. One such area is recruitment to committees where we expect to utilize our enhanced communication efforts. To that end, we appreciate Yvone’s agreement to assume and expand on our social media & web site outreach, which Justin has been handling to date.

**4. Short Term Plans/Goals**

We discussed the option to use web-based technology for educational events in spite of restrictions imposed due to COVID. Aspects to address are the specific medium (how), the topic (what) and how to attract attendance (who). It was noted that Glen Rock EC and the SJ Bergen Hub recently held successful on-line events about back-yard composting, a possible topic for a Ridgewood event. Other topics mentioned at our last meeting: movies, geothermal, EVs etc, were not discussed. Several possible partner organizations were suggested to expand our message.

**5. Grants**

Grant opportunities arise frequently but often we become aware too late. We need to develop suitable project plans in advance of grant offerings. The lack of a Village grant writer was noted with the suggestion we may be able to recruit someone with suitable expertise, either as a volunteer or paid by the Village on commission. It was noted some ECs/Green Teams have purchased EVs with grants but large grants are highly competitive and more innovative proposals may be needed now.

Bob will look into grant websites/directories and try to compile a calendar of opportunities.

**6. ERI (Environmental Resource Inventory)**

Expanding on last month’s short review, Rob is continuing to work solo using his mapping expertise. Justin offered to confer with him, and Pam offered potential contacts to assist. Rob would welcome assistance in any of the 10 categories: (1) Introduction, (2) History, (3) Climatology, (4) Geology, (5) Soils, (6) Water Resources, (7) Air Quality, (8) Wetlands, (9) Land Use, (10) Wildlife.

**7. Sustainable Families Proposal**

Ellie proposed creating a program to recognize sustainable families/households that meet certain criteria. She will develop the concept for future discussion. Joanna, Christine, Mike & Miles expressed interest in helping.

**8. Green Ridgewood Funds**

There is some concern that municipal and grant funds may become tight following the COVID slow-down, so it may be necessary to consider how our own funds might be best deployed. Mike said it is too early to say how the Village will be impacted, so this conversation is perhaps premature.

**9. Sustainable Jersey**

a. Silver Recertification.

Justin reminded everyone to review the spreadsheet indicating who is responsible for SJ Actions and to consider what additional Actions we might pursue.

b. Bergen Hub.

Bob participated in a Zoom meeting with Hub member towns interested in determining how to use the balance of the Styrofoam Grant of about $3,000. After discussion with Justin we suggested one option should be to extend the current program for which the grant was originally awarded. The majority of participants favored a proposal from Ridgefield Park to submit to SJ a plan to pursue 3 art related actions. Member towns are invited to participate. Bob circulated the proposal to committee members and Anthea has undertaken to seek others interested in Ridgewood’s participation. It should be noted that SJ requires that funds be devoted to activities earning SJ Action points.

Next Hub virtual meeting will be in July, date to be determined.

 **10. Schools**

a. RHS Green Club: No change since last meeting. Miles will keep us updated when school resumes.

b. Bob will follow up with the middle school administrators re: our grant program. Perhaps we can explore their interest over the summer.

c. SJFS Grant for Somerville: Congratulations were extended to Joanna and the Somerville Green Team and others who secured a $2,000 grant from SJ to be used to fund the school’s 2021 Green Fair which will focus on the importance of trees.

d. Saurabh provided an update on several projects with environmental implications: Orchard soil, Stevens Field and RHS gym floor replacement.

**11. E-mails to Green Ridgewood/Green Team**

Two e-mails had been shared with the committees. One suggests banning gas powered leaf blowers. Some members recalled this issue had been addressed by the Village in the past. Bob will check with the Village attorney before taking further action, perhaps seeking wider public input. The second e-mail concerned the use of pesticides at one location, which alone does not require action by our committees.

**12. Food Waste**

The Recycling Dept advises the Food Waste Pilot is still delayed but not cancelled. About 20 households have volunteered and the program will be promoted prior to start up. It is hoped the NJ Food Waste Recycling Act, aimed at large institutional generators, will spur more infrastructure development and updated legislation.

**13. Wild Duck Pond Improvement** – Anthea’s requests for details of this project continue to be met with delay and lack of knowledge. She will persevere.

**14. New Business.**

It was noted that there is a lot of trash/vegetative waste around the Duck Pond and Dunham Trail and other areas. Members are asked to check if Girl/Boy Scouts could help.

**15. Next Joint Meeting will be Tuesday July 21st at 7:00 PM, details to be advised.**