

GREEN RIDGEWOOD MEETING MINUTES
September 14, 2023 7:30-9:30 PM
RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL, SENIOR LOUNGE

Administration

1. Attendee Introductions

Green Ridgewood: Justin Jonsson, Nurhan Ezik, David Refkin, Sophia Florida, Caitlin O’Leary, Pamela Perron (Village Council Liaison), Vivian Ewell (Student Liaison)

Green Team: Derek White, Adam Peterseil, Sofia Morino (Student Liaison)

Others: Alina Mordkovich, Walter Rothaug, Manpreet Tyagi, Miles Luo,

2. July 13 minutes could not be approved - no quorum

Updates/Discussion

3. Chair Report - David

Welcome Vivian Ewell, our new student liaison a junior at Ridgewood High School.

Keith Kazmark, the new Ridgewood Village Manager, was unable to join us today but he will in the future. Look out for possible rescheduling to accommodate his visit.

4. Village Council Liaison Report - Pam

The Ridgewood Library is hosting a Leaf blower Panel on September 20th. Frank Mortimer (Parks & Rec. liaison) will be one of the panelists; Green Ridgewood is encouraged to attend. Some additional notes:

- Green Ridgewood has been encouraged by other towns to advise Village Council to double the fines related to a potential leaf blower ordinance.
- Batteries cost \$95 to recycle; this is a potential sticking point if landscapers go through batteries quickly. Are there ways we might defray these costs?

Action: Adam Peterseil to provide Pam Perron with a guide to differentiating 2- and 4-stroke equipment

Idea: Could we entice landscaping companies by offering them extended service hours if using electric equipment?

Ridgewood Water (RW) has an Open House at Ridgewood Library on October 16. RW is building two more PFAS treatment centers, bonding for \$11M to help finance them.

Hudson Street Garage has four electric vehicle charging stations that have been available gratis since their installation. The Village intends to charge for them going forward, at an hourly rate.

Action: Pam to explore charging for energy (kilowatt-hours or kWh) rather than time (hours).

The Schedler property's park plans have been approved to go forward for historical approval at the state level. Village Council members Siobhan Winograd and Pam Perron have talked to turf companies to understand if there are greener alternatives to typical crumb rubber turf fields and to ensure the alternative products are legitimately healthier. GR had a discussion about the recent Village Council Meeting where the Schedler issues were discussed and public comments made by GR Chair Refkin about our health and safety concerns related to artificial turf.

5. Report on Bergen Hub Meeting - David

Ridgefield Park can now recycle styrofoam.

We are now sharing styrofoam recycling services with three more towns: Paramus, Oradell and Garfield. Can Ridgewood pursue other joint service agreements with other communities?

A Bergen County Commissioner will be invited to attend the next Bergen Hub meeting, October in Allendale. This is an opportunity to bring focus to county-wide problems with the appropriate audience rather than each town discussing local matters.

6. Leaf blower Forum - Pam

See section 4 above; this was discussed earlier in the meeting.

7. Pollinator Pathway Proposal - Green Team

This item was not discussed as we had insufficient attendance. It will be discussed at our next meeting.

8. 2024 Budget Meetings - David / Pam

David and Justin Manger met with Rich Calbi, CEO of RW, to discuss what he might need in order to start outfitting Ridgewood Water with electric vehicles. Discussion focused on budgeting for chargers at RW offices as a first step before EVs could be purchased in 2025.

David intends to ensure sustainability and the master plan is considered in budget discussions rather than budgeting for short-term solutions.

David, Pam and Beth Creller met with Chris Rutishauser to discuss stormwater issues and related budgetary concerns. The issue of impervious pavement, the limited capacity and age of the stormwater system and the related impact on flooding were discussed

Idea: Flooding and stormwater are key topics to discuss at the next Bergen Hub meeting because the Bergen County Commissioner will be in attendance.

9. EAGER / Community Solar - Pam

EAGER is on hold due to costs, the need to opt-out and the minimal increase in renewable energy. Community Solar is worth exploring.

How else might we reduce energy consumption without the EAGER program?

Actions: Beth will work with schools, but we should identify other areas.

10. Planning Board Activities - David

David has been working with the Planning board to identify six key areas of the Master Plan that they can focus on for the biggest impact.

The Local Emergency Management Council was recently formed. It includes members from various local organizations, from the hospital to Ridgewood Water. The goal is for a key group to be able to handle communications effectively in the event of an emergency. What role the group plays in planning for future extreme weather is unclear.

11. Master Plan & Green Ridgewood Subcommittee Priorities

Actions: Subcommittees to resume meeting regularly

- a. Communications - Caitlin
Newsletter still in progress. We will probably need funding to do this as well as it deserves.
- b. Sustainable New Jersey, Grants & Applications - Mike
Unavailable. Update at Oct. 5 meeting.
- c. Green Building & Sustainability - Beth
Unavailable – Subcommittee to meet in September
- d. Resource Management - Justin M
Unavailable
- e. Resilience, Flooding & Stormwater - David

Discussed earlier in sections 5 and 8.

12. Artificial Turf & Schedler - Pam / David

This was discussed earlier in section 4.

Discussion/Strategy

13. Priorities for 2023-2024 and GR role for Budget formulation

No discussion of note.

14. Students/Board of Ed role for 2023-2024

No discussion of note. David to reach out to Saurabh Dani (BOE liaison).

15. Finances - Where to invest our funds?

What about purchasing an electric leaf blower for Ridgewood Library's Library of Things?

Action: Justin Jonsson to see if Glen Rock's gets used.

16. Moving forward on a newsletter

This will probably need funding, as discussed in 11a.

17. Potential Field Trip: Leaf Composting

This was identified as something members still want to do.

18. Future Meeting Dates

These are October 5, November 2 and December 7

19. Any other Business

No discussion of note.