**Green Ridgewood Meeting Minutes 20220203** Held on Zoom

Attendance:

Green Ridgewood: Bob Upton, George Wolfson, Christine Amundsen, Yvone Nava, Beth Creller, Pam Perron (Village Council Liaison).

Green Team: Justin Manger, Krisha Anant (Student Liaison).

Guests: Miles Luo (RHS), David Refkin, Dianne Kidwell, Mark Kossick.

**1. Welcome/Introductions/Apologies**

Yvone arrived midway through the meeting for which she had apologized in advance.

We welcomed all our guests, in particular David, who we expect to be appointed to Green Ridgewood at the next Village Council meeting, and Mark as guest speaker.

Bob noted that the Green Team held a separate meeting recently this meeting is a Green Ridgewood meeting only, however Green Team members were invited.

**2. Approve January Meeting Minutes**

The January final draft minutes had been distributed to members by e-mail onJanuary 31st. Pam motioned to approve the January minutes, seconded by Christine and passed unanimously.

**3. Membership & Election of Officers**

It has been our practice to elect officers each year. Nominations for Chair were invited, Pam nominated Bob, George seconded, approved unanimously. There were no candidates for Vice-Chair. George’s past service as Vice-Chair is appreciated but he suggested it’s time for someone new to take on that role. This position may be revisited when all committee positions are filled. Bob also suggested the committee appoint a Secretary if a member will take it on.

**4. Communications:**

Justin has made some changes to the website format to accommodate proposed communications of Earth Day Fair information. See below.

Mark Kossick presented an overview of the GroupSpot app and described how a number of organizations use it, including our schools and HSA’s. We need to explore further if it can help us in our internal communications and with the schools.

**5. Earth Day Fair**

The Village Daffodil Festival & Earth Day Fair committee met on January 18th and will soon issue the promotional flyer and registration form which members are asked to distribute and solicit exhibitors and sponsors. Next meeting February 15th.

Members of our own Earth Day sub-committee continue to plan how their topics will be presented. Justin has created a demo of how a QR code can be used to link to web pages and a questionnaire.

a. Project 1,000 Acres – This program continues in development. The plan to create a sustainable yard with native plants in front of the new Ridgewood Water HQ was presented to the Village Council workshop February 2nd by Elaine Silverstein of the Native Plant Society of NJ – see the video on Swagit on the Village website.

b. EVs & Charging – We believe the Village has approved space for an EV exhibit but this must be verified. George has identified some information sources that could be used to create web content, in particular Sustainable Princeton’s page.

c. Schools – Beth continues to liaise with the schools & HSA’s.

d. Climate Change – Discussion later in the meeting will help develop this topic.

e. Other Earth Day topics – EAGER info, Plastic Ban info, Master Plan info.

**6. EAGER (Encouraging Alternative Green Energy for Ridgewood)**

At the Village Council workshop on February 2nd, Christine Amundsen spoke in support of the EAGER ordinance, which is required to start the process to create an energy aggregation program by authorizing an RFP to engage a consultant. [Council voted 5/0 to pass the ordinance at the February 9th public meeting.]

**7. Planning Board**

a. Hopper Ridge NJDEP Permit Approval – Bob had forwarded to members Chris Rutishauser’s e-mail inviting comment or questions about the subject approval.

The principal engineer presenting the application commented in an e-mail to the Shade Tree Commission that “A condition of the PB Approval is that any Tree Removal be approved by the Village Arborist, Shade Tree Commission and Environmental Commission”. The STC, after clarifying plans for tree replacement and landscaping, has already indicated it has no further comment on the permit.

Green Ridgewood is unclear on the requirement to comment on the permit but agreed by consensus that no comment was necessary. For future reference we will attempt to clarify our obligations for similar eventualities.

b. Master Plan Sustainability/Resiliency Content – As the Master Plan development progresses, with an update to be presented on February 15th, David has been leading our effort to ensure that concerns about sustainability and resiliency are addressed as we also endeavor to clarify the requirements of the State in this respect. David led a Zoom conversation with the Village leadership (Village Manager, Office of Emergency Management, Police, Fire & Health Departments), also attended by Pam & Bob, and provided a draft of our recommendations which was distributed to committee members and discussed. David will incorporate our suggestions into a final version to be distributed for approval before presenting it to the Master Plan team. [The recommendation letter was distributed to Green Ridgewood members by e-mail on February 11th and by February 14th 7 responses had been received all approving the letter].

In ANJEC’s January 27th webinar “Local Planning for Climate Change Toolkit” speakers reviewed the NJ Business Action Center’s “Municipal Climate Resilience Plan Guide” (see <https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/pdf/resilience-plan-guide.pdf>) which discusses how Municipal Land Use Law requires a “climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment” be included in any new Master Plan Land Use Element. This requirement will be noted in our recommendations.

We discussed concern about the lack of clarity as to which, if any, authority takes responsibility for addressing flooding problems regionally and the option to encourage the County’s development of a plan.

**8. Green Team Sub-Committee/Sustainable Jersey**

Mike Sedon has agreed to assume leadership of our Sustainable Jersey recertification effort and in doing so becomes de facto Green Team leader. The Green Team met on January 25th and Mike will be sending out the list of SJ Actions we are pursuing with assignments.

**9. Sustainable Bergen Hub**

a. Glen Rock hosted a Zoom Hub meeting on January 25th, with guest speaker Tracey Woods of SJ, on the subject of EV charging and funding Clean Fleets. Minutes and video can be accessed via Basecamp. (Also see Tracy’s SJ webinar “Funding for Transitioning Fleets to EVs” on SJ website). Allendale will host next meeting on February 28th. Bob encouraged other GR & GT members to get involved in Hub meetings.

b. Plastics Sub-Committee (Single Use Plastics merged with Styrofoam) met via Zoom on January 11th with a wide-ranging discussion about goals and options to reduce and recycle SU Plastics.

It was noted that Poly Molding (EPS recycler) has increased its charge to drop off EPS to $125 a truckload leading some municipalities to question the monetary value of recycling. This increases interest in Ridgewood’s proposed recycling trial.

**10. Tree Ordinance**

The proposed tree ordinance was discussed in detail at the February 2nd Village Council workshop and will be continued at a forthcoming workshop.

**11. Leaf Blowers, etc**

Ellie sent an e-mail to all Village Council members and Village Manager addressing the harm caused by Gas Powered Lawn Equipment ending with a comment that “both the Green Team and League of Women Voters Climate Committee will be sending out more information.”

**12. Adopt-A-Drain**

During the Zoom discussion with Village leaders (see para. 7b above), the Police Chief remarked on the benefits of Adopt-A-Drain programs. In the past, concern had been expressed about their safety aspects but the Village Manager felt that limiting a program to side streets should be acceptable. Conversations continue about how to get this program going in Ridgewood.

**13. Other Business**

a. Pam noted that the Village ordinance concerning “Power Tools, Tools, Landscaping, Machinery, and Yard Maintenance Equipment” is proposed to change by reducing hours when operation is allowed.

b. Green Ridgewood received an e-mail from a Wyckoff Junior Environmental Commissioner who ran a successful Trex Plastic Film Recycling Challenge in her town offering support and training assistance if Ridgewood wants to conduct a similar program. We have discussed Trex programs in the past and there has not been support from our committees. That is not to suggest that we will not continue to promote single use plastic recycling and education on this subject.

**14. Next Joint Meeting will be Thursday March 3rd 2022 at 7:00 pm, via Zoom.**

We will reconsider the option to revert to in-person meetings (possibly outside) for meetings after March.

Minutes submitted by: Bob Upton, February 14th, 2022.