

DRAFT Minutes of the Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission
8-22-2016

Attendees: Richard Leister, Ed Delia, Kinan Tadmori, Ed Delia, Ron Loria, Christine Lewis, Kevin Hall

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from 8-1-2016 approved

Meeting called to order 7:33 PM

Community Garden: Christine went to New Providence community garden ribbon cutting, they received grant from BASF, it is located in front of tennis courts near New Providence Community Pool. New Providence offered to support us. They have 24/28 plots have been rented out. Berkeley Heights 5K coming up in September, good opportunity to get environmental commission members and recruit people for community garden. Ron will call Dr. Patrick Smith to find out if we can get a spot for after the 5K.

Deleted: in meetings to advocate/show that it has been done

At this point we need the resolution from the town council allowing us to use the site for the community garden. We lost the Union County Means Green grant because we did not have the location set. Still need to have follow up meeting with Anita (head gardener), Kevin, Christine, and Richard. Christine will send follow up email to find a date that works. Kevin spoke with John, doesn't seem to see any issues with the garden. Would make sense to talk to town council before budget is set up in Q4 (which starts next month). Kevin putting community garden on agenda for September 20th town council meeting. Kevin, Christine, Richard will meet 7:30 PM Wednesday 8/24/16.

Environmental Movies: Nothing to report.

Scout Projects: Ron will email scout who reached out to him to next meeting. Signage for labeling plants may be good starting point for scout project. Ron will serve as point of contact for scouts.

Rain gardens: Rutgers started work on double rain garden at Governor Livingston today (digging out area in front of high school), hired contractor to do the digging. No decision on when Columbia Middle School rain garden will be started.

Residential rain gardens: Richard reached out to residents and visited one in progress, made suggestions on how to build the berm around the edge, how many plants to get, etc. Rain gardens are complex, may need more help from Rutgers. Richard going to ask grantor if we can increase rebate amount (from \$450 to \$900). If more people want to do it, Rutgers would have to hold another information session. This is an important project to benefit downstream areas suffering from flooding.

Peppertown Park: Light weeding remains to be done. Next step is to get a sign made pointing out that this is a mostly native plant garden.

Stormwater Ordinance: Richard has been reminding Bob Bocchino to move forward with it.

CSIP Grant for EAB: We have received a \$25,000 grant to take care of the ash trees in town. Awarded by state for Community Forestry Management. We are only treating the ash trees on the town Right of Way. Treatment is by injection (should last two years), we will select which trees are treated, which are to be removed (money for tree removal is already in budget). We have location of ash trees on map. Town can put it out for bid. We have 600 ash trees on right of way.

Other tree removal, risk trees, (not ash tree): Kevin said it is 80% complete, remaining scheduled to be removed before the end of the year (must be by end of this year as part of the grant). Ron has seen some trees that seem hazardous, on county right of way.

Sustainable Jersey: Ron looked at Animals in the Community education (10 points): grant money available, must have performed this activity within 2.5 years of June 2017. Can we reach out to schools to see if they've participated in any of those actions? Some of this may have been done at school level. Start with Donna Felizolla (Board of Ed), Helen is chairwoman of School board. Sincaglia may be good contact as well. Look into what schools are doing as Sustainable Jersey programs (for schools), clarify that this is for township SJ certification.

Sustainable Jersey pledge: Some edits/changes to list of actions on pledge. Kevin suggested putting biweekly blurb in the TAP, council member will talk few minutes about environmental activities/Sustainable Jersey to keep it in people's minds. Benefit of being Sustainable Jersey certified: helps when applying for grants for projects (dog park, trails, reusable bags, etc.). Reach out to Deborah about BHEC website. Kinan will ask Environmental Steward instructor if we can use qualtrics for the online pledge form.

Pipeline: Marlene Sincaglia email about survey that pipeline company is proposing to do – want to make sure that whatever they do is honest and accurate. She needs wetlands maps (we have them, not NJDEP official), natural resources list in Berkeley Heights. Richard will provide her with the information. Berkeley Heights township committed money for community lawsuit fund against the pipeline.

Lot 8, Block 610: They have applied for TWA-1 treatment works permit application has been applied to NJDEP for sewer extension. Will need dry wells to compensate for runoff.

New Business

Watershed ambassador – Katie's term has ended, she sent us stream evaluation for Berkeley Heights (Richard sent out to commission). Looking for environmental position. Everyone should speak with her about jobs in the environmental area.

Rain barrel: resident who won it at the street fair moving out of town, will give it to another resident. Richard pulled another raffle ticket. 1st: Stephanie, 41 Summit Ave. #2: John McGrath, 201 Washington

Plans

Summit Medical Group: 1 story addition building, using part of the parking lot to build it (current impervious cover). Applicant not requesting any variances. Asking for waivers, there will be increase in flow from runoff but increase is less than 1%, but previous improvements at Summit Medical have increased flow already. Properties downstream have already been impacted by runoff from the complex. They are requesting waiver from Environmental Impact Assessment requirement. Environmental Commission concerns must be addressed. Environmental commission's position: the request for waivers are environmentally unacceptable. Decrease in parking is an issue of concern as well.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM

Next meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2016 at 7:30 PM

Respectfully submitted by Kinan Tadmori on August 30, 2016