



**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION
&
GREEN TEAM**

DATE/TIME/PLACE: **November 19, 2024 via ZOOM**

	Present	Absent
ENVIRONMENTAL MEMBERS:		
Patty Almberg	<u> X </u>	
David Kraft	<u> X </u>	
Brian Mitchell	<u> X </u>	
Mary Daly		<u> X </u>
Gary Barth		<u> X </u>
Pam Gould	<u> X </u>	
Chris Caslin	<u> X </u>	
Laura Hoogstrate, Alt.	<u> X </u>	
Aditi Puri, Alt.		<u> X </u>
Councilwoman Klodiana Malellari	<u> X </u>	

GREEN TEAM MEMBERS:

Marie Papaleo	_____	X
Laura Hoogstrate, Env. Rep.	X _____	
Chris Leishman	_____	X
Maryann Komar, Rec. Rep.	X _____	
Elizabeth Brown, School Bd. Rep.	_____	X
Ally Matthews	_____	X
Michael Lam	_____	X
Shu Lam	_____	X
Linda Mei	_____	X
Karen Glass	_____	X
Karen Clemments	_____	X
Noah Cole, Student Liaison	_____	X
Avani Dhariwal, Student Liaison	_____	X

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated on September 18th Pam attended the Hackensack River Nation Council and asked her to give a recap on the meeting.

PAM GOULD: Advised they were discussing how to encourage more people to use the river, how to create pathways to the river and they are doing a lot in Hackensack to access the river. Stated they also promoted an event for art and art related to water and discussed creating a summit in February and what types of workshops they wanted to have. They will have another meeting in December.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated the Hackensack River Sweep was held on October 5th and asked Laura to discuss that event.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated it was a successful sweep. Advised the boats went in at Oradell and came down the river and there was a land cleanup with 60 or more volunteers. Advised they did fill the dumpster.

DAVID KRAFT: Stated one thing to note for next time is they had a visit from the police as some volunteers were too close to the railroad tracks.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated the volunteers were sent in the general area of the tracks but they got too close trying to pick up all the trash, and they will have to be more explicit next year.

DAVID KRAFT: Questioned Klodiana if there is a way to coordinate with NJ Transit to get flagging to go along the tracks between the two stations as there is a tremendous amount of trash.

MARYANN KOMAR: Advised her husband works for NJT and can ask him who they can get in touch with.

DAVID KRAFT: Stated that would be great and would be a fantastic event.

KLODIANA MALELLARI: Stated she will send the Borough Administrator an email to see if she has any NJ Transit contacts.

PATTY ALMBERG: Advised the shredding event was also held on October 5th and questioned if anyone happened to be there.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Advised she was at the location and checked in with Jason, who said it was successful, but she doesn't have any details as the Commission was not running the event.

PATTY ALMBERG: Advised October 6th was the pop-up Styrofoam collection and both Laura and Linda were involved with that.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Suggested to wait until Linda is in the meeting as she has more details.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated October 6th was also River Edge Day and Linda and herself manned the booth from 1:00-4:00 and they talked to a lot of people and believes it was a good visual success. On October 12th was the storm drain painting and asked Laura to discuss that.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Advised they did 2 storm drains and there was a lot of high school volunteers. Stated the storm drains are located in the 2 Webb Cul-de-sacs and

they are going to be the last storm drains. She will reach out to Jason to see if they want to do a contest this year and how to display the artwork since they will not be painting any more storm rains. Stated Linda and Maria were willing to do the touch ups on the previously painted storm drains.

PATTY ALMBERG: Advised they will not be doing any more storm drains as they covered quite a few storm drains, plus with the road construction and putting in new gas lines, they are going to wait so their artwork is not painted over. Stated Jason suggested doing an artwork contest and have that artwork put on a large scale magnet that would go on a DPW truck. Questioned Laura if she will follow up with Jason on that.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated she will reach out to Jason to see what the costs would be and what the other options are and after that she needs to reach out to the Watershed Ambassador and the schools to see if it makes sense to do storm drain art if its going on a magnet. She will discuss with Jason to see what the best canvas would be for the artwork and how to proceed with the contest and how the Watershed Ambassador can be utilized.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated on October 23rd, Karen organized a Library program, where Tony from Bracco Farms spoke about keeping your harvest over the winter. Asked Karen to speak about that program.

KAREN CLEMENTS: Advised Tony Bracco and his wife went to the library to set up their slide show, but they only had 3 people show up for the presentation, but the presentation was interesting. Stated Tony Bracco's wife demonstrated how she uses the canning equipment and how she prepares the vegetables to put up for the winter and she told them about the people in their area are interested in canning because they are aware of the process going into their food and are not getting any excess sodium in their foods. She stated she thought it was very interesting and well presented.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated they did a wonderful presentation as they are passionate about what they do.

KAREN CLEMENTS: Advised Tony characterizes himself as a gentlemen farmer, with the idea of growing produce that is 100% organic and sells them in smaller allotments. Stated he sends out weekly emails what is available, and you are not tied into anything.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated October 28th was the Sustainable Bergen Hub Meeting held in Bogota. Advised herself, Laura and Pam attended.

PAM GOULD: Stated the individual who gave a presentation asked her how they can get River Edge to get an Ordinance for Skip the Stuff and asked if they should pursue an Ordinance.

PATTY ALMBERG: Advised Skip the Stuff is when you order take-out from a restaurant, and they can only include the plasticware and napkins upon request. Stated 5 towns in NJ have passed an Ordinance for Skip the Stuff.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Questioned how you would enforce the Ordinance and maybe the local businesses just need to be given the information. Suggested start with the businesses before the Ordinance, as it would be a savings for them.

PAM GOULD: Stated she could write up a letter, similar to the letter regarding the plastic bags, and ask the Mayor sign it and forward it to all the businesses instead of doing an Ordinance.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated she believes that is the way to go, as it is a small town and does not believe an Ordinance is necessary.

PAM GOULD: Stated it will not be that much work, so she will draft a letter to all the businesses so the Commission can read it before getting a signature.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Suggested making a sign for the businesses to have in their store that states if you would like utensils to ask for them as they are going green.

KAREN CLEMENTS: Stated she likes that idea.

DAVID KRAFT: Stated you can put out something on social media to see if there is random compliance.

PATTY ALMBERG: Advised she emailed everyone information about Skip the Stuff. Questioned Karen if she would speak about the Master Gardeners program.

KAREN CLEMENTS: Advised she is a master Gardener and gets a monthly newsletter, and the latest newsletter had a link to 4 Master Gardeners who are willing to give talks. Stated she looked through the list and selected several that were more environmentally targeted and to let her know which ones are interesting and she will get in touch with Daragh to see what times are available for the meeting rooms and will set up the connection with the speaker. Advised evening meetings will be difficult for some people to attend as the time is usually around dinner time.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated they may have to look at a Saturday meeting.

KAREN CLEMENTS: Stated they want to encourage as many people as possible to go to the presentation and one of the bonuses is the speakers provide any Master Gardener present at the meeting continuing education credits, so it would be important to open it up to those individuals.

PATTY ALMBERG: Questioned if the library has any discussion on the table about extending their hours until 9:00 p.m.

KLODIANA MALELLARI: Advised that is not going to happen as of now, but they will see what happens with the new budget.

PATTY ALMBERG: Questioned if anyone has any other ideas for Library series.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated she would like to circle back to food waste.

PATTY ALMBERG: Questioned if that would be a Saturday morning program.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated that could be anytime, they need to find an outside speaker or she can give the presentation.

PATTY ALMBERG: Advised Addison from Neighborhood Compositing gave a speech at the RD Middle School about composting and the students were fascinated by the composting process. Suggested she may be a good person if you wanted someone from outside to give the talk.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated that is one component of food waste, and maybe a stop too far from some people, as opposed to eating leftovers or purchasing less food.

PATTY ALMBERG: Suggested a better series would be food waste or food rescue, and then composting afterward. Stated there is some interest and Claire O'Connor, RDMS teacher and River Edge resident, who would like to see a townwide composting program. Advised she will reach out to Addison to see how it works in the other towns and what the cost is, but you need to educate people first.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated some people may not want the townwide composting but people can subscribe to pay to have their compost picked up.

PATTY ALMBERG: Questioned Maryann what is happening with Recreation.

MARYANN KOMAR: Advised they did not have a meeting last month, but they are having a meeting tomorrow and questioned if there is anything they would like her to report to the Recreation Committee.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated maybe an equipment swap and it may have to have it once or twice a year to see how it works.

MARYANN KOMAR: Said a lot of people trade it on the Free Trade site and if there is an actual event in town, maybe put it out there that you have equipment to give away.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Advised you would need to have someone to take the stuff that gets left and you will get stuff that is not usable. Stated there are teracycle programs that will take broken sports equipment, which will cost some money, but it may be worth having that as a standby.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated there is a change in the Ridgefield Park employee that was doing the Styrofoam program, so the transition is up in the air. The densifier is owned by Bergen County but housed at Ridgefield Park, but the first Sunday for collection is no longer in play. Advised she will need to do some work to see who is responsible, but she offered her services. Questioned Klodiana if having the DPW take the Styrofoam to the densifier during the week if Sundays are no longer viable would be doable.

KLODIANA MALELLARI: Stated she would talk to the liaison, which is Lisa, or to Jason.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated she will check to see if there is a way to get the Sunday's collection back. Questioned if anyone has anything to discuss.

PAM GOULD: Stated she went through the documentation and videos regarding the Adopt a Storm Drain program out of Minnesota. Advised NJ is one of the bigger States involved in this program and if you want to participate in this particular program, it costs \$1800 to get started, with a yearly fee of .8 per person in your town. Stated Berkeley Heights are involved in this program and they got a Grant to help pay for the program and once it was up and running the town thought it was a good thing, so they made it a line item in the DPW budget to pay for the program annually. Stated she is not sure what the interest would be in our town and it is a lot of money, but she will keep looking at other programs.

PATTY ALMBERG: Questioned Chris if there are any new regulations coming into effect through Land Use.

CHRIS CASLIN: Advised DEP came out with new regulations mostly effecting shore communities, due to rising sea levels.

PATTY ALMBERG: Advised in the River Dell newspaper in fall of 2024 there was a blurb in there of Noah Cole's poem, will be published in a book called American HS Poets. Stated the 2025 meeting dates are out and their meeting dates are still going to be the 3rd Tuesday of the month, so the next meeting is January 21, 2025.

MEETING ENDED