



EWING GREEN TEAM

Promoting People, the Planet, and Prosperity in Ewing



September 27, 2017 Minutes

LOCATION: EWING SENIOR AND COMMUNITY CENTER

IN ATTENDANCE:

Judy Boughton
Pete Boughton
Evan Crumiller*
Ed DiFiglia
Lee Farnham
Lisa Feldman*
John Hoegl

Karen Kissel
Joe Mirabella*
Joanne Mullaney*
Karen Sarc
David Schroth*
Mark Wetherbee*

INTRODUCTION

The September 27, 2017 meeting was called to order by Joanne Mullaney at 6:40. The July and August minutes as posted on our website and hot-linked within the meeting reminder email were approved.

FEATURE PRESENTATION

The first part the evening featured a presentation by Green Team Member Joe Mirabella. This was the second in the three part series; following his initial program ***What Does It mean To Be an Environmentalist?*** last winter. In this, his second presentation, Joe had presented an ***Introduction to the Principles of Ecology***, with a goal of making the subject of ecology easy to understand for the non-scientist.

During the program he broke down the many components of this complex subject into layman's terms. With his many years of experience and knowledge he understood his audience, and made this interactive, interesting and easy to understand.

Joe started with the different facets that make someone into an 'Environmentalist'. He or she is an activist, some willing to make efforts to change, educated on issues. Environmentalists use science-based decision making. They are willing to make modest lifestyle changes to protect the environment and have a love of nature.

Why does someone become an 'environmentalist'? They recognize the destruction of natural environment as wrong, see the destruction of renewable resources and worry about quality of life. They understand the costs associated with waste and destruction, e.g. the medical costs caused by poor quality air/water/food. They also acknowledge that there will be unknown negative costs, unknown negative consequences and unknown benefits lost.

For an 'environmentalist' it's unnecessary to destroy nature to maintain decent standard of living.

Ewinggreenteam.org

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Every environmental activist needs to know the basic principles of ecology. Ecological principles include scientific analysis and study of complex interactions with animals and the environment. Environmentalists look at the whole system – from the vast to the very small ecosystems – from single drop of water to humans who are made of 10 trillion micro-organisms. There are thousands of various ecosystems.

It has taken thousands of years to form the current dynamic earth with its many species; each has its role or ecological niche. This is the relationship or the way it interacts with its environment, i.e. Predator/prey; parasitism is where one species lives off another; Commensalism is when one species actually lives on its host such as barnacles on a whale; mutualism when both species benefit such as when a hummingbird pollinates a flower.

Unfortunately we are now facing mass extinction of thousands of species. In the past, individual species and ecosystems have adapted to adjust to gradual changes in their environment but the rapid pace of global warming is having dire consequences and there is not enough time for many to adapt and they therefore face extinction. In evolutionary ecology relationships have formed over thousands of years and when there is a disturbance in the dynamics of how the systems work it causes the need for change and therefore evolution.

Biodiversity is the total sum of all living organisms; the greater the biodiversity, the healthier the ecosystem.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ARTS

Lisa Feldman reported that the Scarecrow Contest is gearing up for Saturday, Oct 28th. She and Joanne met with Ted Forst, Recreation Director, and brought a tentative budget for just over \$1,000.00 for the day's event which also ties into the Township's Trunk-or-Treat. The festivities include the contest with cash prizes, food and beverages, pumpkin painting for kids, decorations and people making their own scarecrows to take home. This has grown into a successful annual event of about 300-350 people.

BIKE COMMITTEE

Garry Keel reported that the Bike Ride was very successful and 45 people participated. This was the 3rd bike ride. There were 2 different lengths, either 8 miles or 18 miles. It was very well organized. Most of the participants completed at least one portion and the Ride was done by 10:00. There will be a follow-up meeting to review.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Joanne Mallowney and Joe Mirabella reported that Part III of Joe's presentation will be postponed until February. October's Green Team meeting will have a presentation by Dennis Nettleton of the Ewing Board of Education.



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ENVIRONMENTAL INSIGHTS PROGRAM

Our featured presentation of the meeting by Joe Mirabella.

EMERALD ASH BORER GRANT

Joanne Mallowney reported that the grant is winding down. We still need the Forrester's report. He is still doing inventory of trees. We also need to pay the contractor that installed the trees for the grant but there is a disagreement on the number of trees that survived. He, the contractor, is obligated to replant any trees that did not make it next spring.

ENERGY COMMITTEE

John Hoegl reported that Mark and Pete are still on board as volunteer members. Direct Install money was removed by the state. We need to be ready to go as soon as new money is in place. So we should get our community outreach program planned. For homes we're talking about home energy audits. Businesses have their own cost savings programs.

Some townships in Mercer County are working on solar programs. Dave Schroth mentioned that Ewing has passed a Solar Ordinance. This is to clarify what is allowed to be installed in Ewing, i.e. ground panel installation is now prohibited. The building inspectors are educated in what are the best practices so the people in Ewing should be protected from shoddy contractors.

PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT

John was going to look into having Ewing join the growing movement of local cities and states pledge to ratify the Paris Accord. This is involving working on our carbon footprint and Mike Winka from the Mercer County Sustainability Coalition has offered to help us with this.

GARDEN TOUR & CONTEST

Joanne reported that this was the 2nd year for our participation in the tour and the first year for the contest and seemed to be well received. There were 17 people who participated in the contest and 45 people who took the tour. Our partners included the Girl Scout Troop #70138 and the West Trenton Garden Club and we split the profits three ways. Our portion helps pay the cash prizes for the Scarecrow Contest.

The Garden Contest has 5 different categories. Eirini's Restaurant won for the business category. Each winner got a rain barrel and a gift card. Surveys sent out showed more people are interested in participating next year.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

There will be an end of season clean up Saturday, September 30. This will be last of Community Gardens for season. There will be Bonner students helping. There will also be clean-up at the Johnson Trolley trail (JTT) at the end of Whitehead Ext from 9-1:00. Jim McManimon will have gloves and bags. We are looking for

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volunteers to help supervise students at the JTT. A suggestion made instead of putting weeds in bags put them on tarps and leave in sun. The weeds will dry up and easier to move.

GREEN BUSINESS RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Evan Crumiller reported that he has some good business leads such as OCM; a church may be interested; and possibly Erini's Restaurant. He has also been trying to work with Elements Hotel. There has been a change of management so he has to start all over.

Joanne has a list of churches that may be worth checking out. FYI – Megan is no longer in charge of the Bonner students at TCNJ. Evan hopes to get Bonner students to help him as they have in the past.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE

Caroline reported that she was pleased with nice turnout of individuals to help with the ***Ewing Welcome Booklet*** project. She asked for volunteers to take on different areas of interest, i.e. arts, government, churches, organizations, all the different components that make up the town of Ewing. The idea is for everyone to be responsible for gathering necessary information for their individual section and then we get it put together. Our goal is to complete by end of year.

We may print a couple of copies, but basically it will be online for people to access. We will take into consideration people who are not comfortable on the computer such as senior citizens and have copies at library, municipal building and senior center.

REPORTS FROM OTHER BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

Dave Schroth reported that Nicemi Builders for the Naval Warfare Center have pulled out and the Walmart project is now dead. Apparently it needs another \$10 Million in clean-up and that might be why. General Motors is moving forward.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

The new brochure on invasive plants that we collaborated with them on has been published and was made available online and distributed at Community Fest. Joanne's ***Ecological Benefits of the Not So Perfect Yard: recommendations for sustainable fall landscaping care*** was published in an additional tri-fold handout also distributed and will be in our newsletter, as well as in a blog post.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

COMMUNITY FEST

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General comments from all who participated reported that it was well organized. There was great help getting us to our table, very well done in the way it was set up. Some felt the layout was too disconnected and that we were not part of the mainstream. But on the positive side, it was not too loud and we were able to talk with people who visited our booths without shouting.

GUESTS

Attendee Ed DiFiglia from the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association reported that the Watershed has extended its range and that water testing is now being conducted at Shabakunk Creek. The Watershed is now a Certified Water testing lab. Also, October 14th is the annual Watershed Festival beginning at 5:00 pm.

NEXT MONTH POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS

We are looking for a report from the Membership Committee (Evan and Caroline). We asked them to contact Cait Versella and Malissa Arnold to see what their status is and if they are still interested in appointments to the Green Team.

CONCLUSION

John Hoegl moved to end meeting and Mark Wetherbee seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Feldman, Acting Secretary