



EWING GREEN TEAM

Promoting People, the Planet, and Prosperity in Ewing



AUGUST 26, 2020 MINUTES

VIRTUAL MEETING

IN ATTENDANCE

Pete Boughton
Lisa Feldman
Heidi Furman
Corissa Kazar, Advocate for Child Welfare
Jennifer Keyes-Maloney
Joe Mirabella
Donna Morgan

Joanne Mullowney
Mike Pisaud – Policy Director, Watershed Institute
Lynn Robbins
Caroline Steward
Priya Vimalassery
Mark Wetherbee

The meeting began at 7:06 PM. The minutes for the July Meeting were approved and will be so noted on our website.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

THE ARTS COMMITTEE

Scavenger Hunt – Lisa Feldman

Plans are coming along for our 2nd Annual Scarecrow Scavenger Hunt. The Committee members have been meeting and working to get businesses and organizations, as well as residents, to host this year. We believe the current situation with the pandemic will be a great opportunity for people to focus on something positive.

The Township has helped with ads in the Observer. They paid for a ¼ page ad in the August edition and were able to negotiate a free ¼ page for September. However, we need to take care of the October edition. Lisa will speak with the Observer to get a price; we're estimating \$250. Maybe we can see if they would negotiate a trade for some of Mark's great photos in lieu of payment?

We're grateful to all the people who have pledged money to help us bring this event to fruition. We won't need the money until we're actually close to the end of October when we're getting ready to announce the winners. We're figuring \$200 for the grand raffle prize; a runner-up at \$100; \$100 each for People's Choice awards. And new this year, we're asking the Green Team members to select their favorite Scarecrow based on which one demonstrates the best use of recycled materials. Once we receive confirmed registrations from scarecrow hosts; we'll be able to start working on creating the clues which is the hardest part of this.

RECYCLING

We want to thank Priya for her review of the various ordinances different municipalities have implemented. One example was Cranford who took their ordinance the furthest (1-8 items) including the simple use of straws. How far do we want to go in Ewing? Do we want to ban just plastic bags, and ban Styrofoam? What can be done now, especially in the light of the current situation with dealing with Covid-19? Council will be bringing the ordinance to the Agenda in December.



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With straws there is the worry of disease transference, i.e. the virus stays 3-7 days. Do we need to do any education on what is fact vs. fiction? It might be good to put into effect with a lead time of implementation of 18 months to give people time to be better educated. It's helpful that we can see how successful towns have been who have already put these ordinances into effect.

The community is scared by the pandemic situation; so it would be better handled mentally if we start to prepare residents soon. Review how people get their news in Ewing to help plan educational aspect of whatever ban of plastics is passed.

Lambertville had a \$20K grant that helped them with their educational outreach to their citizens. Joanne is thinking about the campaign in Ewing, who we need to reach out to; planning anything we can do in-house like printing informational aids. The current down-time with Covid19 may actually be helping with getting us ready.

One of the first things needed is training clerks not to automatically put items into single-use plastic bags. Educating them to ask customers first may be key in successful rethinking. It would helpful to let them know 'you' appreciate them asking your preference without assuming. 'Thank you for asking'.

Hopewell Borough/Pennington have passed 'plastic bans.' Mike Pisauro of the Watershed Institute has helped them with educational materials.

Maybe we could use positive advertisements at restaurants to help get the word out. A great example of a sustainable restaurant in Ewing is 'Indie Girl' located in Campus Town. They are very careful in their packaging and truly follow sustainable practices in their restaurant. In fact, they might be a good candidate for our 'Green Business Recognition' program.

Jennifer Keyes-Maloney said that Council would like to partner with GT and EC and start meeting to start planning educational materials for our future 'plastics ban.'

CLEAN COMMUNITIES

Keep America Beautiful has an event coming up on September 20th, 'Plogging'. This is a national event where people can combine outdoor activities such as jogging or walking and concurrently picking up litter. It can be done with our current need for social distancing. We'll have to see who is interested in participating to see how our group wants to participate. We may just want to do this in our own neighborhoods rather than getting together in a group. Donna would be happy to take this on. She will follow up to discuss a flyer that we can post on our Facebook page.

RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

River Horse has multiple barrels – 35-40 that they would donate to help us run a rain barrel workshop. We would need to discuss with them if they could store them until we're ready. We've held successful workshops at the Community Center, but it is currently closed and we're not sure how we could do this with social distancing. Perhaps we could do this outside as long as we had access to electrical outlet.

The Water Ambassador could help us next spring with a rain barrel workshop. Joanne has a power-point presentation that could be used as part of the event.



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DISCUSSION – EGT & EC MERGER

Discussion to see if the Green Team would be interested in merging with the Environmental Commission: Joe Mirabella, Chair of Environmental Commission would like to discuss the feasibility and interest in doing this. He believes this will help get more people to get involved. The EC has trouble filling vacancies with good people interested in leadership, as does the Green Team.

Several people spoke with the concerns being that the Green Team would be taking on more responsibilities and work and overburden the people who 'step up'. Not everyone helps, so again it may be a few people get even more work?

- If current economic situation improves perhaps this may help turnout of volunteers?
- We need more participation and not sure how to get it?

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATES

- **Planning Board**- airport – ordinance? Check expanding Olden Avenue Redevelopment.
- **Tree Ordinance** – wasn't much left in the ordinance and went back to Council. Not sure what the hold-up is. This has been going on for 12 years. Our thinking is we just want to get something passed and then work to improve it.
- **ETRA** - September second meeting nothing new. Town Center project has moved up phases of GM Coordinating cross over of railroad with Silvia?

FINAL DISCUSSIONS

- **Priya asked about HOAs and sustainable practices** Do we have any recommendations? E.g. use native plantings; landscapers should use battery powered equipment, not gas; no pesticides. ANJEC might have recommendations? She also had questions on Gardening for Wildlife as this is something she would like to promote. Watershed has river friendly recommendations. Stormwater specialist also native plants? Sustainable Princeton might have a program comparing battery powered vs. gas powered equipment.
- Please check out show on You Tube – New Jersey's climate, we'll discuss at September meeting. "Accountability for Climate Change Harms in New Jersey: Scientific, Policy and Legal Perspectives"
- At the October meeting we will host the Delaware River Keeper who will discuss the Green Amendment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Feldman

Secretary