



EWING GREEN TEAM

Promoting People, the Planet, and Prosperity in Ewing



MINUTES

APRIL 28, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

Joanne Mullowney*	Jennifer Keyes-Malone, Council	Kyle Stenger
Evan Crumiller*	Liaison	Maritza McGraw, Facilities
Mark Wetherbee*	Donna Morgan*	Director, TCNJ
Heidi Furman*	Priya Vimalassery*	Pat Stalteri, CYO Teacher
Lisa Feldman*	Jonathon Cloyd	
Joe Mirabella*	Lynn Robbins	

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Joanne Mullowney. Minutes from February and March voted on and approved.

GUESTS

Mark Wetherbee introduced **Maritza McGraw**, Facilities Director from TCNJ hoping we can work together on some projects. She is very open to working with our group. TCNJ is working on some different green initiatives, i.e., changing all lighting on the campus to Led by 2030. They are about 60% done changing all the lighting in campus garages. It is very helpful that they can use their own staff for these changes. TCNJ is looking for Director of Sustainability to help address their carbon footprint, campus trees, green areas, balancing amount of pavement/concrete vs green. They are trying to be as green as possible.

Pat Stalteri, the CYO teacher at Hollowbrook attended hoping that we could collaborate on some projects with her young students. Two of her classes created bird feeders during our 'upcycling contest' to decorate milk cartons. Pictures will be on our website. Lisa gave Pat 10 lb. bags of bird food for each of the classes for participating.

Pat is hoping that we can help with their gardens at their school. Maybe one of our gardeners can help give some suggestions. They also want to create a butterfly/rain garden behind Hollowbrook and need some help with that as well. Pat is very interested in the environment and want to bring this to the children, i.e., how important gardening and the arts are and asking if we can work with her on some special projects. She is very grateful of how Ewing Township has been so supportive and thinks working with the Green Team would be a great way of thanking the Township for their support.

Jonathan Cloyd does podcasts. He is somewhat new to Ewing. He has varied interests, concerned about water levels, political interests, senior citizens, aligning vision. He does various social media - Facebook, streaming network. Worried about 'F' rating on air quality. How to hold Trenton Water accountable and worries about water quality.

Kyle Stenger, new guest at tonight's meeting, is interested in environmental history, environmental justice, environmental advocacy, in the 7th Street area of Ewing.

COMMITTEE REPORTS



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CLEAN COMMUNITY

STREAM CLEANUP

Donna Morgan reported on the successful stream cleanup at the Hollowbrook Community Center grounds on Saturday, April 24th. We collected almost 900 pounds of trash. The Watershed Institute, which partnered with us has not shared all of the details; but we had about 60-70 volunteers for the 2-hour clean-up. Included were wood pallets, chairs, steel framing, and a tent which was blocking the stream flow. The people from The Watershed were impressed with the wonderful community involvement which included students from TCNJ and boy scouts.

JOHNSON TROLLEY TRAIL

Donna also provided an update on the cleanup at the Johnson Trolley Trail. We need an option to help address the on-going dumping of trash, kids on ATVs,... It was suggested that big boulders be set in the center of the path to stop people. Cameras could be placed strategically to see who is dumping – but could we enforce illegal dumping on private property, and the cost of the cameras is an issue. Access by the 6th Street entrance is difficult to get onto the trail. We need someone who might help with dumping and maybe some upcycling ideas for the trash?

The group has interest in more proactively pursuing more clean-up activity, maybe once a month or once a quarter. Suggestions:

- Behind Pete's Diner on Pershing and Broadway? Parkside and Olden? Might be another good area to do clean-up. We could review at our May meeting. Maybe we could suggest a fall clean-up. Residents in Glendale suggested to other residents to clean up around each of their properties.
- New idea – adopt a storm drains. Would this be allowed; would people want to do this?

Potential violation

Solterra is cleaning their garbage collection trash trucks by spraying with water and then that dirty water goes into the local stream. This is a violation according to Joe M.; he suggested calling DEP; he's not sure which department.

GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE

We have been working on cleanups of the front pollinator gardens at Community Center at Lower Ferry Road. There is an invasive weed that has spread all over. Township used landscaping fabric which provides moist environment for weeds to spread.

Joanne worked with 2 classes at TCNJ, a sociology class and an English class, Professors Diane Bates and Glenn Steinberg, respectively, who are working on a joint project that we can use for Gardening for Wildlife. The sociology class did a survey of certified and non-certified gardeners and we can analyze their data to get helpful information to possibly adjust our outreach to residents about the National Wildlife Federation certification program.

The English class will create a press release to submit to the Trenton Times, which will get us points for Education and outreach for the NWF program. To be certified as a community we need 250 certified properties.

The English class will also provide web content for the program aimed at children, as well as an interactive brochure. This would be ideal to provide to young students who might be able to influence their parents to participate in the program and certify their gardens.



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THE ARTS

Lisa reported that the birdfeeder project did not seem too popular since we only had Pat Salteri, the CYO teacher at Hollowbrook, have 2 of her classes do bird feeders and submit their pictures. Joanne will post on our website. Each class received a 10 lb. bag of bird seed.

Idea for summer program.- now that Covid restrictions are easing up a bit. Let's try a day with a variety of arts & crafts, i.e., outdoor upcycling activities. We could use all the bird feeders (milk cartons left over from the contest). We could offer a couple of different times on a Saturday with a variety of fun projects; Lisa could supply the materials and kids could make their own bird feeders. Maybe offer a couple of different times plus a couple of other projects. Let's see if we get a lot of people interested.

While the kids are doing projects; it might be fun to offer adults some projects at the same time. We could do it at behind the Municipal Building (under the covered pavilion). This way it could be rain or shine. We would hope members of the Arts Commission and Green Team will help volunteer to run the different projects.

BIKE TOUR

Gary sent email to Jim McManimon asking if the Township will support this effort and help fund the police for the safety of the event.

Pete attended a bike event from multiple towns in county and represented our group. It was a group involved in bike safety and advising towns on safer pathways and walkways. Mark may represent Ewing in future meetings.

ENERGY COMMITTEE

Mark didn't have anything new to report.

GREEN FEST

The event this year was virtual. Ewing did not participate, and we have not heard any feedback on how it went. John Hoegl had been our representative for this effort but since his move no one else wanted to take this on. Joanne will get information at next MCSC meeting as to the success. Hopefully, we'll get someone next year interested in this event and willing to represent our group at their meetings.

RECYCLING

Reminder that the Township will have Shred Day, Saturday, May 15th and a Sign-up Genius will go out asking for volunteers to help during the event. We normally ask for 4 volunteers, 2 for each 2-hour shift- 9-11 am and 11-1:00. It's basically checking ID for Ewing residents and handing out information on various programs. This event we will distribute information about grass recycling and the new stormwater/brush disposal policy.

SUSTAINABLE JERSEY CERTIFICATION

It was felt that their requirements seem to be getting to be a bit unreasonable. To get credit now for shredding days, they require the trucks to have cameras inside to monitor the shredding. Jennifer Keyes-Malone is going to call on our behalf to see if this is a true requirement or if this is just a suggested criteria. If this is required in-order to get credit; we will have to re-evaluate our certification process. This is getting more difficult and unrealistic for what we can hope to accomplish. Joanne suggested Jennifer call Lauren Skowronski at SJ to try to get a better picture of how strict they will be for this next certification. This will be helpful in our decisions of which actions are reasonable to pursue; and whether silver is too far out of reach.



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STORMWATER EDUCATION

Joanne was tasked with creating a flyer for Ewing Twp. and it will be in the Observer starting in June to start an informational outreach on the new leaf pickup guidelines. Joanne will share with our group.

Jennifer KM will draft a press release; opportunity to create a campaign explaining new policies for handling yard waste such as leaves, grass and branches. It will help explain why it's important. It will also have to be enforced. But it will help if people understand the why's behind the new policy. The Department of Public Works will be responsible for curb enforcement.

WALKING TRAILS

Lynn Robbins provided an update on Ewing trail work. She has been coordinating with the Boy Scouts and Saturday morning, May 15th is the date they are scheduled for working on the trail clean-up. They hope to get 10-12 people. Volunteers from our Green Team – Joe, Evan, Lynn and Donna.

Lynn has been in touch with Chuck Latini; they have been discussing a possible trail around Watson Park. But first she'll concentrate on the Scouts Trail.

Another potential trail would be behind the Benjamin Temple House. Property owned by TCNJ. So, we would need to work in conjunction with them.

GREEN AMENDMENT

Priya has nothing new to report. She hopes to ask Environmental Club members to write letters to Council members in support. She will contact Cassidy Burns, the teacher in charge of the H.S. Environmental Club, plus other student groups in support of the Green Amendment. Council Members had tabled the support resolution for concerns that this might bind the Township to difficult to meet commitments.

The group supporting the Green Amendment in New Jersey are trying to get this put on the ballot for November. It would be helpful if Green Team members and members of the public would send letters to the Council members in support of this resolution for Ewing.

MERCER COUNTY

The County is looking for input due to federal money coming. Don't know parameters, or rules. Maybe vaccine outreach hard to reach populations. Covid support – mobile units for homebound. It was also mentioned that Mercer County will need to replace trees taken down around the airport. Jennifer spoke to County authorities and said that we would take the trees. We could give them to homeowners if there is no room on public lands. We can possibly do education for homeowners about care and planting this fall.

OTHER BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Joe and Evan reported that they met for the 1st time in 6 months in person, but outdoors. The meeting featured a discussion on lawns, use of fertilizers, educate how to handle. Bob Kirby reported on a planned development in



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Hopewell off Bull Run Road. It will require major water-sewer issues.

The ELSA Pumping station is at capacity. Went to ELSA for help with hook-up. Money for light/maintenance? Could not force developer to pay in court?

CONCLUSION

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Feldman