



# EWING GREEN TEAM

*Promoting People, the Planet, and Prosperity in Ewing*



## *Ewing Green Team Meeting Minutes*

May 26, 2021

### In Attendance

Joanne Mullowney	Caroline Steward	Sonya Travis
Jennifer Keyes-Malone	Priya Vimalassery	Lisa Feldman
Donna Morgan	Mark Wetherbee	Joe Mirabella
Heidi Furman	Kyle Stenger	Lynn Robbins

The Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:05 pm. The April minutes were voted on and approved.

### Committee Reports

#### Trails

Lynn Robbins updated the group on the status and work on trails in town. The Boy Scouts, along with Green Team volunteers helped on May 15<sup>th</sup> to clean the trails behind the Municipal Building. At the very end of the trail is an old wooden bridge. The bridge needs some work to straighten it out. We need to publicize that this trail is there; it is not very well known. It is off Jake Garzio Drive, off the sports fields track around field, end of parking lot, bleachers, Eagle Scout Trail #33.

It would be nice to memorialize Veterans' path, we had met with General Dutko from the Patriotic Committee over the winter. We need to find out if work on that project is in the planning stages.

#### The Arts

It's time for the Scarecrow Committee to start meeting to start planning for this year's Scarecrow 'Scavenger Hunt'. We welcome any who are interested in working on this event. Mark Wetherbee has been a key member of this group and we would love more people to help join the effort. Hopefully we'll be able to meet in person and Lisa promises to bake cookies for all the volunteers! An email will be sent to Ewing Green Team members as well as the Arts Commission inviting everyone to the first meeting.

#### Bike ride

Garry confirmed that the Township will be supporting the event with a financial estimation of \$1500 needed for the police support, advertising, t-shirts, miscellaneous expenses. Garry and Bike Committee will need to start the planning. They will also need to meet with Ted Forst.

#### Energy

Mark has nothing new to report. Has tried to reach out to Sandra Torres and has not heard back.

Maybe we could get points for Sustainable Jersey for our Solar Ordinance. With the last certification we were unable to get support to work on this. The solar power ordinance might need some adjustments to meet SJ's requirements. Joanne was unable to get momentum on this issue. The goal is to make it as easy as possible for residents to participate. Jennifer Keyes-Malone will look into the ordinance to see what SJ is requiring to see if we can comply.

#### Stormwater Control Education

Jennifer Keyes-Malone wrote an article and sent it to Jim McManimon for his approval. He has not responded yet. Hopefully this may appear in the July Observer issue.



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## ESCC Pollinator Garden

This is almost done thanks to Donna and Priya for their many hours of help and thanks to the other people who also helped. Joanne will send one more request for weeding help to finally get this done. The area was infested with field horsetail and it has taken considerable effort to get this all removed.

FYI – the spray at the Township in-between the trees is confirmed environmentally friendly. It is a vinegar solution. Does Public Works have a policy about green practices, i.e., about cleaners, paper, etc.? We have new managers in Public Works and Code Enforcement; it would be helpful if we became more interactive and introduced our more sustainable preferences.

## New and Continuing Business

### Green Amendment

Jennifer Keyes-Maloney has received a couple of letters in support of this amendment. High school student, Kyle Stenger sent a letter. Did the Environmental Club at the High School do a letter campaign? Maybe, Jack, our student ambassador, can help encourage members to send in letters to Council Members in support.

### Single Plastic Bag Ban Outreach

NJ Bagup.com had a lot of good resources that could be personalized. NJDEP also offered good materials. Melanie Willoughby from the Small Business Action Center is reaching out to Jennifer KM.

We need to start to decide what type of outreach we want to do. There are lots of publications, who and how to reach out - restaurants vs. retail stores. We will start to plan. Interested on working on this campaign? – Mark, Priya, Lisa, Joe, Jennifer K, Donna, Jack (will see if he has time) Kyle. One idea is to reach out to supermarkets in our area – to see if they would be willing to put signs out in parking lots – to remind people to BYOB. We'll send emails when we're ready to start working on this campaign.

### Sustainable Landscaping Education and Outreach

In support of stormwater control, new leaf and brush collection guidelines, and just sustainable living. **Love 'em and Leaf 'em – leaf campaign** – full set of resources from Westchester County, NY - <http://www.leleny.org/p/lele-toolkit.html> meant to be a template for other communities to use. Need to get out new brush guidelines. New DEP regulations, mulching leaves better than putting them in bags for collection. Paper bags just not feasible for the large amount. A better alternatives would be leaving mulched leaves on property. Code enforcement – Public Works will be responsible for enforcement. Let's start campaign soon so that by fall people will be prepared and less angry.

Westchester County, NY has a great online program (Love'em and leave'em) that has some good ideas we could adopt for Ewing. It seems there are lots of places to get good ideas.

**Healthy Yards Campaign** - help to reduce organic yard waste and promote healthier waterways, reduce stormwater pollution, reduce pesticide and herbicide usage, promote the planting of trees throughout the community on public and private lands, and incidentally, aid Ewing in our quest to become a community certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a Community Wildlife Habitat and perhaps also aid in our quest to become a Tree City USA.

### Trees

No Net Loss trees were planted for the I-95 construction. Mercer County is required to do some tree planting to make up for trees being removed from around the airport. Administration feels there is no more room on



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public property for trees. Jennifer Keyes-Malone will follow-up with County to see if they are still willing to give out trees to compensate for tree loss in town. These can be given out to homeowners.

When trees are replaced, they are supposed to be with native trees. There should be some education to prepare people when given free trees so that they are cared for properly. Questions to be answered before free trees are just given out -what variety of trees, caliper, how many, if you are willing to do the training, promise no tree volcanoes, what type of monitoring, prepare for invasive bug species.

FYI, the County was giving out traps for the spotted lantern fly if you were willing to take training.

Wawa had committed to replace trees lost due to their construction; do we know if those were replaced, and if so, where?

Heidi mentioned that she noticed spraying in-between the trees at the Senior and Community Center. Concerned about the nature of the spray; Heidi asked the person doing the spraying what was the mixture being spraying? It was an environmentally friendly liquid vinegar solution.

Does Ewing Township Public Works have a policy about green practices? This would cover all cleaning solutions, paper, etc. We have new managers in Public Works and Code Enforcement. Now would be a good time to introduce our group and our interest in promoting more environmental products and practices and starting off positive relations with these new managers. Jennifer K-M will look into green practices and report back to our group.

## Sustainable Jersey Recertification

A leadership team consisting of Donna, Heidi, Priya and Lisa have generously agreed to work with elected EGT officials to lead this effort in the coming year and a half.

## Outside Committees and Commissions

### Council

Subgroup about Cannabis, Township will have to decide before Aug 21<sup>st</sup> whether Ewing ops in or out to allow any sales facility in town. It has to be zoned. We do have the one medicinal facility. There is a lot to decide, how do we tax it? How will we be affected by surrounding towns and what they decide? What if surrounding towns opt in- how would this affect Ewing? Regardless of what we do, we will need to regulate appropriately. This is a big decision.

Planning bike lanes in conjunction with County. 2 Green acres grants at Community Center were applied for.

### Environmental Commission

Did not meet this month.

## Closing

The Meeting adjourned at 8:38

Respectfully submitted,

*Lisa Feldman*

Secretary

