

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

February 19, 2025

Meeting Minutes

The Regular Meeting of the Environmental Commission of the Borough of Roosevelt was called to order by Chairman Michael Ticktin on Wednesday, February 19, 2025 at 7:02 P.M.

The Roll was called by Secretary, Maria Dellasala

ROLL CALL:

Present: Sam Ashburner, Lawrence Mendies, Maureen Parrott, Dave Teich, Michael Ticktin, Ralph Warnick

Absent: Ben Johnson, Kathleen Murphy, Arielle Debira

ADEQUATE PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING STATEMENT: Adequate notice of this meeting has been given, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law, by notices published in the Asbury Park Press and the Times of Trenton on January 30, 2025 and posted on the bulletin boards in the Borough Hall and at the Roosevelt Post Office.

Environmental Commission Mission Statement

1. To protect, preserve, and enhance the natural environment within our jurisdiction.
2. To promote sustainable practices and responsible resource management for the benefit of present and future generations.
3. To Advocate for environmental justice, ensuring equitable access to clean air, water, and a healthy environment for all communities.

Goals: Short term goals for the next 18 months approved (approved by EC on 11/15/23)

Environmental Education and Outreach of these subjects:

1. Forever Chemicals are PFAS chemicals that disrupt the immune system and are carcinogenic.
2. Investigate Community Solar or other programs that allow households to use renewable energy without installing solar panels on their homes. Learn more about Clean Choice energy which allows a resident to select renewable energy as the source of energy for their home. Present results at a community meeting.
3. Advocate for safe and responsible waste management practices. Partnering with the Recycle Coordinator to get more information out on what is recyclable. Also encourage use of eco-friendly products

The Commission has a discussion on the Land and People Acknowledgement statement and it is a reminder of the people who were here before us and it should stay.

Land and People Acknowledgement

Mary Tulloss reads: The land and waterways upon which the residents of the Borough of Roosevelt gather and live are the ancestral and unceded Lenapehoking territory of the Lenni-Lenape nation. We honor the contributions of their ancestors, those now in the diaspora, and the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape, Ramapough Lenape and Powhatan Renape who continue to live in the

areas we call New Jersey. We honor this ancestral land of the Lenni-Lenape Nation. May we live in harmony, caring for this sacred land.

Hilary Wilder explains the Sustainable Jersey application; Roosevelt is not up this year; we have a year to prepare for our re-certification in 2026. The Green Team is a big proponent of sustainable jersey. We will also need a letter from the Mayor stating the Borough Council is in support of the Green Team initiatives for retaining Sustainable Jersey Bronze Certification. Hilary Wilder has handed out an outline to the Environmental Commission Members with the current situation, Re-submission of actions and new actions. Hilary Wilder states what it will take and how we need to work on the re-certification process. Some points will carry over other won't. There are specific actions that need to take place and we are always looking for volunteers. One example for a new action that Hilary Wilder has come up with is to do with Emergency Management. It will require collaboration with the Mayor, OEM, Millstone Fire Department, NJ Forest Fire Service - it has to do with the drought and wildfires, you can do community wildfire protection plans.

Dave Teich makes a motion that the Environmental Commission supports the Green Team with a second from Sam Ashburner. The motion passed unanimously.

Maureen Parrott asks who is on the Green Team and what do they do? Hilary Wilder states that she does the reporting part of the Sustainable Jersey as a volunteer. The whole group is made up of volunteers. Michael Merritt is on and he build puncheons, Dave Teich and Steve Taylor are on it and they design and build, they built the kiosk at the trail head, they are available at the July 4th celebration, they clean up around. They are the volunteer arm of the workforce on the trails and other places that get clean upped. Green Team is always looking for volunteers, it's on the borough website that we are looking for volunteers. Hilary Wilder states that one of the actions is buying local produce so we get points for that. Hilary Wilder states she can lead and get more ideas. Hilary speaks about possibly having a Styrofoam day – which will get us another 5 or 10 points because it is a non-mandated recycling. Hilary Wilder explains the look back period, so anything we do this year will count for the 2026 submission. Sam Ashburner states it is very hard to keep up with the points, so thank you Hilary Wilder. There are some points that are eternal. Eternal points are usually ordinances. NRI up for renewal. Maureen Parrott states that she would be willing to review and write new ordinances. Council member Ralph Warnick said after you put together send to him and he will present to the Borough Council. Hilary Wilder states we have 10 points for the tree protection ordinance and 20 points for the water story - which will expire in 2028. There is an action for re-certification.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE AGENDA:

Chairman Ticktin opens the meeting to the public for comments on the agenda at: 7:06P.M.

No Public Comment

Chairman Ticktin closes the meeting to the public for comments on the agenda at: 7:06P.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 18, 2024 – Carry to March 19, 2025 meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 15, 2025 – Maureen Parrott made a motion to approve the January 15, 2025, minutes with a second from **Dave Teich**. Minutes were unanimously passed.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. **ANJEC** – New Year, New Members Recruiting for Success – Thursday, February 6, 2025, 7:00pm Via Zoom Webinar
2. **The Watershed Institute** – Register for the 8th. Annual NJ Watershed Conference
3. **NJDEP** – Register for Spring Core Training Short Course – March 3 – April 4
Registration fee \$30
4. **NJDEP** – NJUCF News & Updates 2/1/25
5. **ANJEC** – Toxic Plastic Action Session – Thursday, February 27 at noon Via Zoom Meeting
6. **NJDEP** – Funding Opportunity – American Water & Environment Grant Program
7. **Sustainable Jersey** – First Municipal Certification Application Deadline February 23
8. **ANJEC** – Environmental News Digest February 11, 2025
9. **ANJEC** – 2025 Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions – Virtual Zoom Sessions

REPORT OF PLANNING BOARD LIAISON – None at this time.

REPORT OF COUNCIL LIAISON – No report at this time.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

- Administrative – No report at this time.
- Forest Management – Sam Ashburner has brought one of the bird houses that will go up on the trail, will be up by the spring. There are 6 for Bluebirds and 3 for Screech Owls. Michael Merritt put together a cost grid for us, he is seeking funds for 10 new sections of puncheons on Rochdale to Tamara part of the trail – that would complete the larger 2 sections – this will be in the middle and connect everything for us. Sam Ashburner gives background information on the land next to Empty Box Brook it is very wet almost throughout the year; then it floods a couple times a year, Michael Merritt has been great in trying to get the puncheons to stay where they are supposed to. Cost of \$1694.53 for 10 sections for the Rochdale to Tamara section and potentially another 3 for School trail, between Tamara and the school.

Sam Ashburner motions to approve the costs, subject to the availability of funds, also increasing the appropriations to \$5,000 with a second from Dave Teich. Discussion takes place regarding the budget and previous budgets and how it should be spent. Maureen Parrott brings up how the path by the school should be the priority. Ralph Warnick states that the Board of Education should also be involved in any discussions regarding the school property. The commission members have a lengthy discussion regarding the trails, how wet the trail by the school is and believes the school trail should be the priority. The commission also discussed the Safe Routes to Schools Grant that the Engineer applied for. Again, the motion is 1 - increase the appropriations to \$5,000 and 2 – approve the costs for the work on the path (school section), as the priority and then the trail, subject to the availability of funds. Steve Taylor states that there was an email about the kids who rides their bikes on the trail from Tamara to the school, and putting bicyclists on the puncheons is not the best idea, solution needs to address the cyclists.

Sam Ashburner states that Michael Merritt did take that into consideration, the ends would have a gentler slope. The motion was unanimously passed.

- Invasive Plant Species – Steve Taylor reports that everyone should go to the Vermont Fish and Game Wildlife Webpage and read about how great fallen trees are for stream health. We got in December name tags to put on the invasive and native plants along the trail, which will be put on sometime this spring. Next week is National Invasive Species Week. There are a lot of invasive species at the trail head by the amphitheater in the next week or two Steve Taylor will mark them with yellow tape and then will set up a date to remove them (when the weather improves).
- Stream Monitoring – Mary Tulloss reports monitoring is being done on the 3 weekend of the month; Jean and Corki are doing all the monitoring. We are still trying to recruit members and will also place notices in the bulletin and the website.
- Sustainable Jersey Hilary Wilder spoke earlier in the meeting.
- Goals Committee – None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Little library project:** Approve plan to have one installed at school trailhead and one at each of the triangles in town (3 total). One is currently being painted by a teenage artist in town. The other two would also be painted by an artist in town. This was approved last year but wanted to discuss it again so it can move forward. Dave Teich is willing to store these until installation/painting is complete. Michael Merritt and the green team would then install.
- **Funds for additional punchons for the Woodland Trail.** Discussed earlier.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairman Ticktin opens the public comment at: 8:11P.M.

1. Mary Tulloss, 21 Lake Drive asks about the Assunpink Zoom meeting. Anyone can sign up; it's to redo the dams and run off at the Assunpink Watershed. Maureen Parrott states someone from town contacted her; and asked about the idea of the commission soliciting or being involved with the Assunpink. Staffing not up to previous levels – she was very vague – but would we be interested in some kind of upkeep. Sam Ashburner states that we are involved, each year we get a special work permit which gives us permission for trail maintenance on the land that is the woodland trails – our permit allows us to mulch and light pruning. We can contact the Assunpink to see if they have some kind of volunteer group. Sam Ashburner explains what our work permit permits us to do. Michael Ticktin details the Assunpink property.

Chairman Ticktin closes the public comment at: 8:17P.M.

Sam Ashburner brings up some items from Ben: for new members the Community Forestry Management Plan – it tracks volunteer efforts; send an email to Ben and Sam that you have attended a seminar, and they will log your hours.

Watershed conference tomorrow also in person on the 21st. Ben would like us to approve \$65 for him to attend. Sam Ashburner makes a motion to approve the \$65 with a second from Maureen Parrott, motion passed unanimously.

ANJEC - Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions – Virtual Zoom Sessions conference is March 18-20.

Maureen Parrott wanted a follow up about the bats. Lawrence Mendies states that Maria Dellasala did send out email regarding JCP&L application. Representative Smith spoke with Lawrence about the bats, they are Roosevelts bats and no one is telling us anything about where these bats are going. And what they are doing and what is the impact to Roosevelt. Maria will again forward the application to all members. Sam Ashburner will try to reach out.

ADJOURNMENT: Maureen Parrott motioned to adjourn, **Dave Teich** offered a second. It was unanimously passed to adjourn at 8:30P.M.

Maria Dellasala, Secretary