

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

June 18, 2025
Meeting Minutes

The Regular Meeting of the Environmental Commission of the Borough of Roosevelt was called to order by Vice Chairman Sam Ashburner on Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at 7:02pm.

The Roll was called by Secretary, Maria Dellasala

ROLL CALL:

Present: Sam Ashburner, Lawrence Mendies, Maureen Parrott, Dave Teich, Kathleen Murphy, Arielle Debira (arrived at 7:03pm.)

Absent: Ben Johnson, Michael Ticktin

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

Sam Ashburner 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.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Motion was made by **Dave Teich** to approve the agenda and second was made by **Maureen Parrott**. Agenda was unanimously passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE AGENDA:

Vice Chairman Ashburner opens the meeting to the public for comments on the agenda at: 7:04pm.
No Public Comment

Vice Chairman Ashburner closes the meeting to the public for comments on the agenda at: 7:04pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 21, 2025 – **Kathleen Murphy** made a motion to approve the May 21, 2025, minutes with a second from **Dave Teich**.

Minutes were unanimously passed.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. **Sustainable Jersey** - Certification for the second 2025 applications deadline – May 16, 2025
2. **State of New Jersey** - NJ Updates, Events, Deadlines, Programs, Guidance and more
3. **ANJEC** – 2025 Summer ANJEC Report
4. **ANJEC** – Rutgers Water Resources Program Offers Free Municipal Stormwater Technical Assistance
5. **NJDEP** – Community Tree Project Award & Scholarship Applications
6. **ANJEC** – Sustainable Landscaping Seminars, June 3, June 10 and June 17
7. **Sustainable Jersey** – NJBPU Community Energy Planning Grant Announcement
8. **NJDEP** – NJUCF News and Updates 6/1/25
9. **ANJEC** – June Monthly Digest
10. **ANJEC** – Using Stormwater Resources for Water Quality Improvement, Monday, June 23, 7:00pm, via Zoom
11. **The Watershed** – Multi-jurisdictional support for NJDEP grant application

REPORT OF PLANNING BOARD LIAISON – No report at this time.

REPORT OF COUNCIL LIAISON – C/Warnick states currently there are 2 issues to be brought to your attention: 1- there are 3 ordinances which will have second readings they are the marijuana ordinance, the cat ordinance and the chicken ordinance. 2- A problem with the Woodland Trails, apparently it is not used that often and water freezes and if it is snowed on it becomes hazardous to walk on, this is not an issue because most people aren't using it, however, the one from the triangle to the school will be used, so there will be a problem. Sam Ashburner states we can discuss this with the Green Team and come up with some options; possibly some chicken wire can be added as a layer or some grip tape. We will look into it before the winter.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

- Administrative – No report at this time.

- Forest Management – Sam Ashburner states we can consider the report we just spoke about as the report.
- Invasive Plant Species – No Report at this time.
- Stream Monitoring – Mary Tulloss reports we are still monitoring the 3rd weekend of the month gathering our data. We have put ads in the bulletin asking for volunteers. Dave Teich states we have an email list and will send them a mailing to them.
- Sustainable Jersey – Hilary Wilder reports we are making progress with the puncheons on the school trail, hoping to get 20 points for the Sustainable Jersey. Our ERI has expired and is hoping the 2023 Forest Inventory Street Assessment and 2023 Tree Inventory Management Plan can be used for points. We need to know if we have NJUCF accreditation – Sam Ashburner will take a look at it and report back at our next meeting.
- Goals Committee – No report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Library Boxes – Dave Teich states that the 3 Library Boxes have been completed
2. Feral Cat Ordinance – Maureen Parrott states that the Environmental Commission recommended not approving the prior feral cat ordinance and doesn't understand how without getting our minutes how they moved forward; Secretary Maria Dellasala explained that on May 22, 2025 she sent an email to Clerk, Kathleen Hart advising that the Environmental Commission passed a motion at their May 21, 2025 meeting recommending that the Borough Council not approve the feral cat ordinance. Also, C/Warnick reported the same to the Borough Council. Maureen Parrott then states that another ordinance was passed 4 to 2 to make it a crime to feed a feral cat on your own property, and believes that that is animal cruelty. Lawrence Mendies states he was at the meeting and it is not over; second reading is coming. Lucy Craig is supposed to put together a program for a TNR program. The Mayor did say that the town is welcome to put these organizations together; and there is a possibility of an area on the farm where we can place these cats as rodent control, again as long as the organization commits. Ms. Parrott said she did some research and there is no difference between a feral cat and a stray cat, they are all cats and if this ordinance passes it will be a crime to feed the cats. C/Warnick said when they become available read the minutes from the borough council meeting, we talked about the number of songbirds that are decreasing in the country due to cats and other issues. Ms. Parrott again states we should urge the borough council to vote no on the ordinance. Rod Tullos states that there are 183 species of birds in this town many of them are easily assessable to a wild cat and you have to take into consideration the whole situation. If you want to feed the cats then you need to take care of those cats and being responsible for that cat. Then you won't have cats wandering around and you don't have this problem. You have to look at the whole problem and decide how are you going to handle the whole problem. Some residents will be happy and some will not, there has to be some medium solution in a humane manner. Dave Teich states the difference between a feral cat and an outdoor/stray cat – a feral cat has no experience with humans they are afraid of them; he does not approve of feeding feral cats but it's not criminal. Who's going to report you, your neighbors, someone who doesn't like you? Arielle Debira states whatever it is we need to acknowledge it's a multiprong approach and that needs to be defined and more research need to be done. Rod Tulloss

someone calling and reporting is not the way to go we are still a community and suggests it's something like can I help you solve the problem and not that I'm going to call the cops. Sam Ashburner states he doesn't know what that solution is but we can make a recommendation to the borough council to do some more homework or get more community feedback and we can as either a group or individually put some of those bullets points together at the next meeting or as individuals we can reach out to the council members and let them know what we think.

Maureen Parrott makes a motion to reject the criminalization of feeding a feral cat and that they form a committee to explore a comprehensive solution to deal with the feral cat problem, such as a TNR program, with a second from Dave Teich. The motion passed unanimously.

Maureen Parrott also speaks about banning gas powered leaf blowers and weed whackers. A gas-powered leaf blower running for 1 hour lets of as much pollution as driving a car for 1,000 miles, there are many municipalities in New Jersey and throughout the country have banned gas powered leaf blowers and weed whackers. Arielle Debira states you need to offer another options/choice, its someone's livelihood and not practical. Electric equipment are 2 times the price of a gas-powered lawnmower. Lawrence Mendies states it is not feasible. C/Warnick states his equipment is electric and he recently and to purchase a battery which cost 2 times the price of the lawnmower, and maybe he gets about ½ hour use of the battery. Sam Ashburner states additional research is needed and come back to the commission with a realistic solution. There is an assembly bill pending (1851) which will prohibit the sale of gas-powered lawn equipment within 3 years and its use within 5 years. Rob Tullos suggest letting the residents know by flyer/bulletin looks what's happening in the State if buying a lawn mower you may consider buying electric. Hilary Wilder states start encouraging people not to use a left blower and leave the leaves. Sam Ashburner states contact him for rick Pressler's number at the Boro Bulletin.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 4th. of July Picnic – Volunteers are needed for the table wheel game – Dave Teich and Lawrence Mendies volunteer.

C/Warnick stated that this year there will be food trucks – the borough will be picking up the tab. Lawrence Mendies can bring some vegetables

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Vice Chairman Ashburner opens the public comment at: 8:00pm.

1. Rod Tullos, 21 Lake Drive – States he has accumulated a lot of information over the years and would like to all his information over to the borough. There are lists of bugs, trees, reptiles and birds; it's a wonderful resource which can be added to the Borough website under the Environmental Commission. Sam Ashburner has a bookmark of the site and will forward to the members. Sam Ashburner makes a motion to host the content and will recommend to the Borough Council, with a second from Kathleen Murphy. The motion passed unanimously. We can also place articles from the bulletin on the Environmental Commission page on the website.

Vice Chairman Ashburner closes the public comment at: 8:12pm.

ADJOURNMENT: Dave Teich motioned to adjourn, Lawrence Mendies offered a second. It was unanimously passed to adjourn at 8:12pm.

Maria Dellasala, Secretary