

REGULAR MEETING

ROOSEVELT BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 7:00 P.M.

Roosevelt Borough Hall, 33 North Rochdale Avenue

The Regular Meeting of the Environmental Commission of the Borough of Roosevelt was called to order by Chairperson Ellen Silverman on Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 7:07 P.M.

SWEARING IN OF REAPPOINTED MEMBER: Sam Ashburner. Michael Ticktin swears in Sam Ashburner.

The Roll was called by Chairperson, Ellen Silverman

ROLL CALL:

Present: Sam Ashburner, Tim Hartley, Ben Johnson, Dave Teich, Michael Ticktin, Ellen Silverman

Absent: Michael Hamilton

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 on January 22, 2024 and the Times of Trenton on January 25, 2024 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. PFA'S are "forever" 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

Mary Tulloss reads the Land and People Acknowledgement

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 Michael Ticktin to approve the agenda and second was made by Sam Ashburner. This passed by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE AGENDA:

Chairperson Silverman opened the meeting to the public for comments on the agenda at 7:09pm.

No public comment.

Chairperson Silverman closes the public portion for the agenda at 7:09pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 17, 2024 – Michael Ticktin made a motion to approve the January 17, 2024, minutes with a second from Sam Ashburner. The Minutes passed by unanimous vote.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. **State of NJ** – Flood Mitigation and Financial Assistance for Homeowners
2. **The Watershed Institute** – January 2024 Watershed Professionals Newsletter
3. **ANJEC** – Virtual Roundtable: Goal Setting, Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 7:00pm, via Zoom Webinar
4. **The Watershed Institute** – Next Assunpink Watershed Workshop Session: February 7, 2024 at 5:00pm.
5. **NJ DEP** – Core Training – March 1 – April 5, 2024, Registration Fee \$30.00
6. **ANJEC** – Environmental News Digest, January 18, 2024
7. **ANJEC** – Confirming Roosevelt’s Membership Renewal
8. **Sustainable Jersey** – Announcing a new round of free technical assistance, resources and funding to help municipalities prioritize energy efficiency
9. **The Watershed** – Upcoming Events
10. **ANJEC** – Local Environment Matters
11. **NJ DEP** – NJUCF News & Updates 2/1/24
12. **The Watershed Institute** – Seventh Annual Watershed Conference – February 23, 2024
13. **ANJEC** – 2024 Environmental Commission Grants
14. **ANJEC** – Building Cleaner Communities through Stormwater Education – Webinar, Thursday, February 29, 2024 at noon
15. **ANJEC** – Action Alert – NJ is a Leader in Reducing Plastic Pollution

REPORT OF PLANNING BOARD LIAISON: Tim Hartley reports that the Planning Board met for their re-organization meeting and then we adjourned.

REPORT OF COUNCIL LIAISON: No report

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

- **Administrative:** None
- **Forest Management:** Sam Ashburner reports that he has been out on the trails the past couple days, first time in a while, and all the improvements are very noticeable but also well done. Ellen Silverman and everyone else that was out there did a great job. Sam Ashburner reads the trail assessment report. Note: Items in red are complete.

Section 1: The section between the waste treatment plant and Tamara is very muddy. It is under Assunpink's control, so whatever actions will require a special use permit with plans. Those plans would have to be approved by them. I would be unwilling to budget for a puncheon project in that area without that approval. I also don't think that puncheons would be the best solution for that trail section. So, we are still on the drawing board for that one.

Section 2: **The section between Tamara and School has one section of puncheons that need to be fixed and one puncheon, in the long new section that has to be stabilized. The section that was worked on looks great.** Determine if we want to make a stage area near the two art chairs. If so, order material for the decking. Trash needs to be removed from the stream. This is probably true of the other areas, but is more evident because the trail goes along the stream edge.

Section 3: The section between 571 and the Valley Bike path has its usual wet areas. Our past solution to use mulch is not working and this area is a candidate for a run of bog puncheons in that area. It would need to be measured to determine how many will be needed.

Section 4: The section between the bike path and the cemetery. **There is a tree down at the start of the trail near the bike path. It has a small trunk so it does not impede anyone from walking. There is also evidence that some bikers are using it as a jump. But still it can't all be fun and games, so we should remove it.** Throughout the length of this part of the trail are a series of grapevines and branches that are partially blocking the path. Mostly loper will be needed except for the tree.

There is indication of scouring on the banks of Empty Box Brook and in larger channels going into the brook. There are many areas where water is channeling through the woods and on to the trail causing erosion and damage to the trail structures. To better maintain the trail we need to understand the hydrology of this area. This would be found in the stormwater mapping of the outfalls for this area. With the absence of the completed stormwater map. I recommend that we map these ourselves to have as a planning tool.

Task to be done.

Section 4: Remove down tree, and woody material blocking the path.

Section 3: Measure muddy section if it is agreed on. budget item for material for bog puncheons.

Section 2: **Puncheon stabilization project**. Determine if stage area should be built. budget for material.

Section: 1: Area needs accurate measurement for trail improvement. Mapping for hydrology. Committee to develop plan, budget/fundraising for improvement, applying for special use permit and NJDEP permission to build.

All sections: Mulch piles need to be used up at trail heads. Stream Assessment walk needs to be performed. Trash in the stream needs to be removed. Mapping of outfall needs to be done in section 1, 2, and 3. Budget can signage about town trees based on information of the two new tree inventories.

Budget: Maintenance projects materials for trail, deer enclosure, signage, possible consultation fees for section 1 plans.

Note: this assessment does not have invasive plant target areas for this year or plans for expansion or creation of new sections for deer enclosure as per CFMP (Community Forest Management Plan) schedule. Ellen Silverman asks Sam Ashburner if he has sent in the CFMP report? Sam Ashburner responds he has not and will take a look at it tonight.

Email Newsletter (10)

- **Invasive Plant Species:** None
- **Stream Monitoring:** Mary Tulloss reports that this past weekend we did our stream monitoring; the weather has been very cold lately. Corki and Jane did the monitoring. Ellen Silverman reports on the Salt monitoring at Rocky Brook, she has done it 3 times this winter and always after an event of rain or snow. On January 27 – it was 43 which is ok, February 14 – it was 49 and again February 20 – it was back at 43. None of those numbers are considered exceptionally high. Tim Hartley reports on the water levels in the streams, we have a total of 6 readings which we have been doing monthly since last summer, we have no gauge at the sewer plant but at the other 3 locations we have been taking reading every month. No major changes, except for the one Tim Hartley took yesterday at the South Valley Road level is down 11 inches since we began monitoring in the summer. All other are either 2 inches up or down. Have no idea where that water may be going. Sam Ashburner states it is noticeable, very odd.
- **Sustainable Jersey:** Ellen Silverman reports 2 actions which expired 12/31/23 were updated and resubmitted and awaiting Sustainable Jersey approval - Community Partnership Outreach Green and Natural Resource Environmental Commission. We are currently looking into the feasibility of tackling a few new Sustainable Jersey actions for our re-certification in 2026. These may include public information engagement communication, municipality communication strategies, which would involve working with the mayor and town hall staff, emergency management and resilient community wildlife protection plan, fire community ready – set – go, fire company wildfire, safety council, emergency communication planning and vulnerability population identification

for emergencies. These would involve working with the new OEM Coordinator and the Millstone Fire Department and Assunpink. Other actions may be the passing of the municipal natural resource conservation protection ordinance, these actions have the advantage that once approved, they never expire, as opposed to the most other actions which expire in the year following the approval. We are also planning to work towards the gold star standard and water designations; this build on our water story, (which was approved in 2023), action and would work with our municipality stormwater coordinator. Also possibility of working with the school on a water education. Certifications are good for 3 years. In 2024 we will focus on getting things set up and in place so we can hit the ground running in January 2025.

- **Dessert and Discussion:** Ellen Silverman reports for Dave Teich, we will be starting up again February 27, 2024 at 7:00pm, it will take place here and we will have the tree video.
- **Community Outreach/Communication Calendar**
 - Bulletin Articles – (Environmental Commission Report: Date of EC meeting, Dessert and Discussion date and subject, First Friday, Compost Display and Seed Library event dates and subject. Trail news. Partnering events with School, Millstone, The Watershed institute).
 - You Tube Channel currently has 4 items and we should continue to build it up
 - Develop email newsletter (maybe 10 a year) such as:
 - 1. Roosevelt Trees
 - 2. Water Story concentration on Stormwater
 - 3. Water conservation (In the house Fix a Leak)
 - 4. Water conservation (in the yard)
 - 5. Fun in Nature for All Ages
 - 6. Compost
 - 7. Native plant
 - 8. Growing a Food Garden
 - 9. Know your Environment: Wetlands
 - 10. Sustainable energy source. Wind and Solar
 - Informative Speakers such as Recycling Coordinator

OLD BUSINESS: Tim Hartley states the Environmental Commission needs to figure out what the next steps are in regards to the recommendations from the tree inventory. Tim Hartley feels the Environmental Commission needs to be pro-active which specific recommendations to the Borough Council. Ellen Silverman states she agrees especially in regard to the hazardous trees, however, right now there is confusion if they are responsible, we are waiting to hear back from the council. The commission continues to discuss how to move forward, a prioritization list, who is responsible for trees in right-a-way, can we ask for a status report from the council. Tim Hartley will draft a letter to the council.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. School and Environmental Commission rain garden collaboration – Ellen Silverman, as a green team member, and will be the lead, will work with the school and apply to ANJEC for a grant for little native plants. This will be brought up at the next school board meeting.
2. Request for help for the Roosevelt Seed Library – Ellen Silverman asks for a second librarian and if anyone would like to help.

Budget research:

1. Trail Maintenance
2. Mailed out newsletter 3 times a year
Research the development for a new Roosevelt Field Guide – Ellen Silverman would like to 2 or 3 mail out bulletins/newsletters to everyone, instead of just all residents on our email list. Maybe like a field guide book, which was mailed out about 20 years ago, this would be an extension of that. Hopefully we can fundraise for that. Also what you would like to see in this field guide.
3. Time Hartley asks if the Environmental Commission is going to make any recommendations to the Amphitheater Committee on tree replacements? Ellen Silverman responds there are no trees in the project, they have been pulled.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairperson Ellen Silverman opens the public comment at: 8:10 P.M.

1. Mary Tulloss, 21 Lake Drive asks about trash on the trail? Ellen Silverman states there were some small items that were picked up. Sam Ashburner states he noticed that someone recovered the slippery when wet sign that was thrown in the brook. Ellen Silverman states someone also threw in one of the signs that told you what trees you were looking in the brook. Tim Hartley asks did some puncheons also float away and thought we spoke about some ground anchors to keep them in place. Ellen Silverman states we put those in in November or December. Mary Tulloss states that we had some residents notice trash on 571 going out of town - they removed the trash themselves, Michele Guye-Hillis and Theresa Secks. Mary Tulloss asks ask where is the runoff coming from.

Chairperson Ellen Silverman closes the public comment at: 8:17 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT: Tim Hartley motioned to adjourn Michael Ticktin offered a second. It was unanimously passed to adjourn at 8:17 P.M.