

## Millburn Township Environmental Commission

Tuesday October 12, 2021 @ 7:00 pm  
(Virtual meeting via Zoom)

### MINUTES

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**Members:** Edward Hilzenrath, Reade Kem, Jorge Mastropietro, Wendy Minocha, Noah Packman, Priya Patel (chair), Odarka Stockert, Elizabeth Vollavanh  
Absent: Joseph Barbanel

**Township Committee Liaison:** Tara Prupis

**Secretary:** Carolyn Scannelli

Call to Order: 7:03 pm

#### Commission Business:

- a. Open public meeting statement: *This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6-10: 4-21. Notice of this meeting has been published in the Item of Millburn and Short Hills, and on Tap as filed by the Environmental Commission and on bulletin board at Millburn Town Hall*
- b. **Master Plan Environmental Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations:**
  - i. Protect and manage critical environmental resources in the township.
  - ii. Improve the quality of life for residents.
  - iii. Minimize the environmental impact of the township on the environment.
- c. Acceptance of September 14, 2021, minutes – Elizabeth Vollavanh motion to accept the minutes, Edward Hilzenrath 2<sup>nd</sup>, Jorge Mastropietro abstain, others in attendance were in favor.
- d. Treasurer Report – No funds were dispersed. Treasurer position open, interested committee member should contact Chair Patel.

#### Public Comment

Roberto Prieto, Colleen Kirk and Karen Blumenfeld were present on the zoom.

#### Communication

- a. Millburn Green Team (tbd) No update.
- b. Millburn High School E-Club (NP)
  1. 1<sup>st</sup> meeting had 40 + attending, mostly freshman, additional members attended through Google classroom. Next meeting Friday October 16.
  2. They are collecting data on the lantern fly – such as how many they are killing.
  3. Some members will get together to help residents with fall tree plantings.
  4. Discussed the green house which is not part of the E-Club. The Green House Club uses the green house. It is unknown if the Green House Club is active this year. Karen Blumenfeld's father ran the green house when he was a teacher in town. Noah will check to see if the club is meeting this year.
- c. Millburn Township Green Schools Team (JM) – Some schools are working together to achieve Bronze Certification from NJ Sustainable Jersey Schools. Due date January 2022. A Glenwood teacher has started a composting project and is using it to grow vegetables as a school project. Glenwood is holding a crayon drop off for reuse/recycle donations.
- d. Pedestrian Safety Advisory Board (TP) – Next meeting is Wednesday October 13. Zoom link on Township webpage.

- e. Bike Walk Millburn (JM) – Sunday, October 17. Tour De Millburn Sunday, bike or walk 2 miles, 7 miles or 15 miles. Over 450 people signed up; registration is closed. Volunteers are needed.
- f. Downtown Area Vision Plan (PP) – Consists of three subcommittees:
- 1) Taylor Park Gateway – Request for Proposals (RFP's) for a Landscape Architect are due back October 21, 2021.
  - 2) Two-way traffic – A display board for Essex Street and Main Avenue will be available on Sunday October 17 during Tour De Millburn at the Town Hall. The Engineer will be presenting the conceptual design plan on Tuesday, October 19 at the Township Committee meeting.
  - 3) Redevelopment Study Area Review

### **Township Committee Report (TP)**

At the last meeting the Township Committee voted to designate the Hessian House, Parsil House and the Parsil Cemetery as historic properties.

Conversation has taken place regarding flood mitigation; an information session on Blue Acre funding was held. Letters regarding drainage were sent to residents on Ridgewood and Locust. Other projects are being explored regarding flood mitigation. Mayor Prupis has been speaking with mayors of the Rahway River Mayors Council and the NJDEP.

Odarka expressed concerns regarding the east branch of the Rahway River – stating that the east branch of the river is part of a greenway project that runs through Millburn. This is concerning because the east branch causes flooding at Locust and Ridgewood. Mayor Prupis stated that the Mayors Council is working on a consensus plan which is a bypass at the Orange Reservoir, which is part of the west branch of the river. The mayor is not aware of the greenway project. The mayor suggested to reach out to all Township Committee members with concerns involving all flood mitigation issues. The mayor asked Odarka to send her information on the greenway.

**Planning Board Report (JM)** – Two new ordinances will be proposed at the next meeting: 1<sup>st</sup> Ordinance - Woodmont Project Bl. 5302 Lot 5. Low & moderate income housing. The Woodmont ordinance does not mention green infrastructure, stormwater management, native plants, and similar details. Lot coverage is at 90%, lot size is 5-8 acres. Jorge, who is a member of the Planning Board and the EC, expressed that the EC should contribute more input into new projects that come before the Planning Board. The township previously did not meet its affordable housing obligation and there is mandated by the state to do so. Jorge suggests sending a letter to the Township Committee addressing EC concerns with this project. Liz stated that the township needs ordinances that designate areas in need of redevelopment and the Township should control the developer and ordinances need to be made regarding green development. Mayor Prupis agreed with Liz and would like the EC members to stay focused and voice their concerns to all Township Committee members. Jorge stated that the EC should work together to create ordinances for green infrastructure and set a deadline.

2<sup>nd</sup> Ordinance – Annie Sez site

### **Old Business**

- ⇒ Stormwater Management/Green Infrastructure Ordinance (EH/EV) members received by email a draft with updates to make a positive impact and strengthen the existing ordinance. Updates includes major developments, reduce 1 acre to ½ acre, and minor development threshold set at 200 square feet.  
Members agreed to add in additional amendment to include reducing impervious surface by including use of rain gardens or similarities.  
Jorge motioned to accept proposed Stormwater ordinance and submit to the Township Committee and Odarka Stockard 2<sup>nd</sup> with all in favor.
- ⇒ Food Waste Recycling Pilot (PP) – 16,825 pounds of food waste has been diverted. A few new households have been added as some have dropped off. Further discussion next month as to the future of this project.
- ⇒ Whittingham Triangle Pollinator Garden (EV/OD) – Waiting on new signage. There is a water spigot on sight. A maintenance schedule needs to be figured out. Odarka stated that the

Township needs to make a strong commitment to maintain the gardens around the Township. Noah can make an announcement to the high school EC to help with spring maintenance.

- ⇒ Community Choice Energy Aggregation (PP) – As pricing was not competitive enough at the last energy auction, the consultants (Concord Engineering) are in the process of getting new pricing, due in October. Set to start March 2022. Everyone will be automatically opted in; residents will need to actively opt out. That is a NJ state law. There will be a chance for residents to opt up to 100% renewal (wind energy).

### **New Business**

- ⇒ Native & Invasive Plants Resolution (OS) – Ed stated draft resolution was terrific and needed small edits. Odarka will resend as a word document rather than a google document. Further discussion at the November meeting.  
Odarka mentioned that the TC recently approved placement of a large sculpture in Taylor Park which has a cement base, which prevents rainwater from draining.  
Mayor Prupis mentioned that the TC passed a pilot program on a dog park.
- ⇒ Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee – The proposed ordinance for the Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee was tabled at the last TC meeting. Mayor Prupis suggested that EC members voice their concerns to all Township Committee members. Some members of the EC would like to join this committee.
- ⇒ 11 Main Street (DPW site) 75-unit Affordable Housing Development (JM, PP) – The Township has until December 31 to present proposed plans to the Fair Share Housing Center. Jorge presented architectural plans that he designed pro bono for the township use, which includes two buildings: a DPW facility and a 5 story/mixed use building. There will be a buffer between the two properties. The mixed use building provides ground level parking with a 4 story apartment structure above. The property is small and is at 90% lot coverage. This location will include green infrastructure and green building while making the most of it permeable surface. The Township should enforce use of the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code and pursue Passive House Certification or LEED Certification.  
Members will review and send comments to Jorge by October 19, as he will present this plan to the Township Committee at the November 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- Next MEC Meeting: Wednesday November 10, 7:00 PM.
- Edward Hilzenrath and Joseph Barbanell are not seeking re-appointment for 2022.

Wendy Minocha motion to adjourn, Jorge Mastropietro 2<sup>nd</sup> with all in favor.  
Adjourn 8:43

Carolyn Scannelli  
Minutes Secretary