**Green Ridgewood Meeting Minutes 20220505** Held at The Stable

Attendance:

Green Ridgewood: Bob Upton, George Wolfson, Christine Amundsen, Beth Creller,  David Refkin

Green Team: Justin Manger, Ellie Gruber, Mike Faherty

Guests: Miles Luo, Carolyn Jacoby, Nurhan Ezik, Justin Jonsson

**1. Welcome/Introductions/Apologies**

As always for this Green Ridgewood meeting Green Team members are encouraged to attend and the public is invited.

We welcomed regular and first time guests.

Apologies had been received from Yvone Nava, Pam Perron, Roman SanDoval and Sofia Morino.

**2. Approve April Meeting Minutes**

The meeting had no quorum so this item will pass to our next meeting.

**3. Membership & Election of Officers**

No update since last meeting.

**4. Communications:**

No update.

**5. Project 1,000 Acres**

Mike has been publicizing this project widely to schools, Ridgewood Moms & Dads, etc. A total of 64 1/2 acres have been registered including 9 residential properties totaling about 4 or 5 acres and a number of the Village's parks. We need more people to register their property on the Project 1,000 Acres website. Participants get a certificate and a thankyou letter. Carolyn offered to help people identify plants on their property (native vs non-native). Nurhan expressed interest in supporting the project team.

**6. Leaf Blowers/Gas Powered Lawn Equipment**

Ellie had addressed the Village Council Workshop in public comments on April 27th on behalf of LWV Climate Committee proposing that the Village adopt a noise control ordinance with a goal of reducing noise and environmental pollution from gas powered lawn equipment (GPLE). Her comments and FAQ's were distributed to members with the agenda for this meeting. Since no Green Ridgewood meeting was scheduled before her remarks we were unable to take a position in support or otherwise.

Ellie reviewed the limitations of noise control laws in the state and other options for restricting GPLE use such as restricting hours or dates. The capability of current electric leaf blowers to adequately handle fall leaf volume was questioned. Several towns have adopted noise ordinances and gas leaf blower restrictions and the state DEP offers a model noise ordinance. However, it was noted, even if an ordinance is passed enforcement is difficult due to the need to measure the noise for a prolonged period of time.

Ellie, Mike, Nurhan and Justin J expressed interest in working as a sub-committee on this issue.

**7. Schools**

a. Ridge Block Party Friday May 13th 5:30 - 8:00 pm. We received an invitation to participate in this event and Mike has agreed to lead a group taking a table focusing on Project 1,000 Acres and other Green Ridgewood activities.

b. We were approached on behalf of one of the RHS Applied Engineering Teams, the ChemPost Team, to provide feedback on their project. They provided videos and information and decided to create a questionnaire to go out to our members. Further, as AP Seniors try to tackle environmental issues we may be called upon for financial support for them.

**8. Ridgewood Daffodil Festival & Earth Day Fair Review**

Overall, in spite of cooler (but dry) weather than is ideal the event was judged a great success but no doubt would have benefited from warmer conditions. Our three exhibits were Green Ridgewood/Green Team actions, Project 1,000 Acres and EV cars (8 cars displayed). The use of QR codes to disseminate information and get feedback was an innovation this year and enabled conducting a quiz resulting in awarding 3 electric leaf blower prizes. After final accounting and sharing of the proceeds with the Ridgewood Conservancy for Public Lands Green Ridgewood will add about $2,300 to its funds so members should give thought to how we can employ our resources to benefit the Village and the planet.

**9. Conversation with Sean Hamlin, Sanitation/Recycling Supervisor**

a. We are most grateful to Sean for taking time on Saturday morning, April 30th to meet with Yvone, David, Pam & Bob to review various programs for which he is responsible. Bob wrote a summary that was distributed to members. Key points: (1) Food scrap pilot program was successful and informative, participants can continue and it is hoped to expand their number, (2) Composting in the Village faces some obstacles including the need for state legislation, (3) Solid Waste Reduction was reviewed (see 9b), (4) Electrification of municipal vehicle fleet, it is planned to request an EV pick-up truck next year, (5) Plastics recycling challenges including (6) the EPS densifier - Sean agreeable to a demonstration for GR/GT members and SJ Bergen Hub Green Teams and DPW's, hopefully on a Wednesday in June.

b. Sean shared his thoughts on ways to improve recycling and David has expanded on them in his e-mail to members. At our April meeting David had invited members to join him and Christine, Justin M and Miles to focus on this issue.

**10. Grants**

Limited discussion - we need to be vigilant for grant opportunities and match them with needs identified in these minutes.

**11. Planning Board**

a. Bob and Beth try to monitor PB agenda topics for those with significant environmental impact. None identified recently.

b. Master Plan draft is awaiting the Open Space Plan to be incorporated. The Parks, Recreation & Conservation Board and the Open Space Committee held a joint public meeting on April 21st to provide their and public input to the Land Conservancy of NJ to guide it in its writing of the Open Space Plan.

**12. NJ Plastics Ban**

This NJ law became effective May 4th. Pam and Bob had visited just about every retail and food establishment in the Village, mostly ahead of the Earth Day Fair to promote that event and also make them aware of the requirements of the Plastic Ban.

**13. EAGER (Encouraging Alternative Green Energy for Ridgewood)**

The first RFP for a consultant to steer this program for Ridgewood was unsuccessful and the Village leadership will try again.

**14. Green Team/SJ Silver Recertification - no update.**

**15. SJ Bergen Hub Meetings** - neither the Hub Committee nor sub-committees have met this month.

**16. New/Other Business**

a. Carolyn reported that the Village's Tree Protection Ordinance became effective 2 days previously, requiring a permit for removal of qualified (non-exempt) trees. She noted that carbon absorption of younger trees is good but it depends mostly on size, bigger is better.

b. George wants to look into remedies to address flooding with Chris Rutishauser, including tree planting. Beth noted that pickleball and baseball groups would be willing to participate in such efforts.

**17. Next Meeting will be Thursday June 2nd 2022 at 7:00 pm.** Bob will check with Parks & Recreation to confirm availability of an appropriate venue for future meetings since, with Covid still very active in the community, it is not ideal to return to the confined space of the Garden Room.

Minutes submitted by: Bob Upton, May 18th, 2022.