

# GREEN RIDGEWOOD MINUTES

February 15, 2024, 7:30-9:30 PM

RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL, SENIOR LOUNGE

**Attendees: Green Ridgewood:** David Refkin- Chair Beth Gould Creller-Vice Chair, Yvone Nava, Justin Jonsson, Sophia Florida, Vivan Ewell, Pamela Perron, Frank Mortimer, Jill Fasano; **Green Team:** Mike Faherty-Chair, Adam Peterseil, Joan Hubertus, Alina Mordkovich, Manpreet Tyagi; **Guests:** Miles Luo, George Wolfson, Carolyn Jacoby, Walter Rothaug, Rurik Hallaby

## Administration

1. Welcome and Attendee Introductions
2. Approve January 11, 2024, meeting minutes. Approved

## Updates/Discussion/Strategy

3. Chair Report, Green Ridgewood Activities since last meeting (David)  
Excited about the Columbia University
4. Village Council Liaison Report – Pam
  - Led service lines being replaced by Ridgewood Water.
  - Replacing the medium at the Twinney Pond facility
  - Bonded for a new garbage truck.
  - Passed an anti-nepotism ordinance.
  - Maple turf field being restored at a cost of \$41K.
  - Schedler update – application to be filed with SHPPA within 10 days: large field with artificial turf, playground, and parking.
  - Contamination of Schedler controversy as per below article:  
*NJ.com article Re: Schedler* <https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/realestate/state-orders-testing-of-soil-ridgewood-used-to-build-route-17-berm-piled-at-historic-site/ar-BB1hEJKS>
5. Daffodil Fair/Earth Day Fair – April 21, 2024 –
  - a. Theme, Logistics, Fund Raising -David/Pam (5-10 minutes)  
Theme: Butterflies, Brooks, and Batteries  
Pam to send digital copy of flyer and vendor form for posting on social media.  
Looking for volunteers to join Pam on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday to visit the business district to recruit businesses for sponsorship.

Vendors are encouraged to have a direct link to a sustainable product or topic – not an optional question.

Beth will reach out to her PSE&G contact.

Look into getting new shirts for the event. George will reach out to Bob to inquire if he has additional ones.

- b. Building on last year’s No Mow May – Mike (5-10 minutes)  
Evolving from 1000 acres and No Mow May, Mike is presenting a **Green Ridgewood Landscape Program**.

Objectives

1. Teach, promote, and implement sustainable landscape practices.
2. Build Ridgewood Resiliency: absorb more rainwater, use less groundwater.
3. Long term—change the landscape aesthetic paradigm of Ridgewood from non-native and environmentally destructive to native and regenerative.

Potential Project	Assessment/Next Step
No Mow May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repurpose to "Slow Mow Spring" ? ... mow every two weeks April-June</li> <li>• Cost effective and good for environment. Potential Parks&amp;Rec and Ridgewood Water cost savings.</li> <li>• Simpler program (no registration needed)...potentially wider impact.</li> <li>• Next Step: Green Ridgewood sign off, FAQ, promotion plan (Signage ED, Social, Council support?).</li> </ul>
Leave the Leaves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fall program, similar to Slow Mow Spring</li> <li>• Leave leaves on small portion of property (around trees or in flower/bush bed)</li> <li>• Next Step: Green Ridgewood sign off, FAQ, promotion plan (ED, Social, Council support?)</li> </ul>
Pollinator Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anchor Gardens: Ridgewood Water, Parks, Library exemplars (e.g. Linwood well, Hawes); Earth Day booth</li> <li>• Pocket Gardens:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small gardens for small green spaces around town.</li> <li>• Templates for different sizes and different approaches (ground cover, vs. pollinator flowers, vs. meadowing).</li> <li>• Neighborhood initiation: neighborhood lead, funded, maintained.</li> <li>• Process to be developed (contract, hold harmless waiver, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Project 1000 Acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue as repository for registration, mapping and information.</li> <li>• Incorporating the three projects above.</li> <li>• Earth Day linkage to water concerns (rain barrels, xeriscape)</li> <li>• Paid internship needed to maintain.</li> </ul>

The group recommends continuing to have the conversation under the 1000 acres umbrella and we are aligned to launch during the Earth Day Fair event, have a booth, signs and provide education. Also take the opportunity to publicize the progress made in our initiatives.

Motion to support "Slow Mow May" – Approved by all Green Ridgewood Members present.

Mike is working on an initiative to convert specific areas in Ridgewood neighborhoods into gardens funded by those neighborhoods. More to come in the next session.

Looking for an intern to help maintain the 1000 acres website.

6. School Activities – Miles/Vivian (5 minutes)

Tested water at RHS for PFOS with Green Club resources. This will be displayed during earth day at the High School (acknowledging that the results can be affected by the season)

Green Club is working on auditing the garbage at the middle schools to see if they are recycling properly and gather data for improvement.

RHS is applying for a Collaborative Grant worth up to \$32K. They need a letter of support from Green Ridgewood, due in two weeks. DR/PP will support.

Earth Day @ RHS April 19<sup>th</sup>: Miles to share a list of the current tables / topics being proposed. Mike F will host a table and needs a couple volunteers to join him (Yvone & Pam volunteered so far)

Beth update: art contest for Earth Day. The library will display, and Pam will judge. Need a receptacle, ideas on how to display and ideas for prizes.

7. Climate Fresk – Feedback, Input, Next Steps – Group discussion (10 minutes).

Feedback: positive feedback, encouraged teamwork and dialogue, need more time to reflect on it.

Idea for discussion: should we do it at the schools? Should key people in town also take it?

Next Steps: David to create a list of key stakeholders and decision makers that should participate in the next Climate Fresk (likely May). Green Building and Sustainability Sub to review recommendations from the Climate Fresk and prioritize.

We will assess if this should be part of our Green Ridgewood table at the Earth Day Festival.

Explore if a few Green Ridgewood team members can train to become facilitators and hold regular Climate Fresks for residents starting in the Fall.

8. Collaboration with Columbia University: (Graduate School of International and Public Policy – SIPA) Status Report – Alina (10-15 minutes)

- a. Review Progress to Date: two students came to Climate Fresk and visited the Village. First deliverable is in (20 pages). Alina will share the document and a recap. A hydrologist will also be involved and collaborate in the project.
  - b. Plan for Feb. 17 Students visit Ridgewood. They will visit the flooding sites, brook and solar panel and EV locations and other key infrastructure. The meeting will take place in the Caucus Room in Village Hall between 1-3pm.
  - c. Sustainable NJ Data request – challenging to get all the data to assist the Columbia students.  
David calls for a motion to approve up to \$750 (in addition to the \$120 approved by e-mail chain) that can be allocated for transportation, lunch on 2/17 and other minor expenses. Motion Approved by all Green Ridgewood Members present.
9. Bergen Hub and County Outreach – (David) New Resilience/Climate Subcommittee set up. Plan is to meet in March and have outreach to Bergen County Comm. Tracy Zur.
10. Planning Board – Stormwater Ordinance (Pam, Sophia, Joan – 10 minutes)  
Initial proposal went to the planning board. DEP Enhanced control water ways ordinance Sustainable Jersey put out a briefing with recommendations to go beyond minimum requirements.  
Watershed Institute document with many recommendations. This sub-committee will review and make proposal for key topics to address in Ridgewood.
11. Village Council Presentation – Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> (David- 5 minutes)
12. NJ DEP Re: Schedler filing. – see 4 above.
13. Subcommittee Report Outs (20 minutes) – see notes above for most.
- a. Resilience, Flooding and Stormwater – Joan/George/David
  - b. Communications (Newsletter)- Caitlin, Sophia – will meet with the new Village Communications leader to assist.
  - c. Green Building & Sustainability – Beth – to review Climate Fresk suggestions.
  - d. Resource Management – Justin M/David –
  - e. Green Team Update (Sustainable NJ)– Committee Member Update
  - f. Finance – Pam/Justin J -Meeting with Bob Rooney TBD.

#### **Future Events (5 minutes)**

- 14. Columbia Students Visit Ridgewood – February 17<sup>th</sup> (10AM to 3 PM)
- 15. Potential Field Trips: Recycling Center/MRF; Sewage Treatment Plant
- 16. Future Meeting Dates 2024: March 7, April 4, April 21 Earth Day (11-2:30 PM with prior set-up), May 2, June 6, July 11.

#### **Other**

- 17. Other/New Business – Super Science Saturday at RHS. George and Pam to host GR table.

Justin J motion to adjourn. Adam P seconds.