

GREEN RIDGEWOOD AGENDA

November 2, 2023 7:30-9:30 PM

RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL, SENIOR LOUNGE

Administration

1. Attendees

Green Ridgewood: Yvone Nava, Caitlin O’Leary, Sophia Florida, Beth Gould Creller, David Refkin, Justin Jonsson, Nurhan Ezik, Justin Manger.

Green Team: Adam Peterseil, Joan Hubertus, Alina Mordkovich, Mike Faherty

Liaisons: Pam Perron (Village Council), Jill Fasano (RW and VC staff), Frank Mortimer (Parks & Rec), Vivian Ewell (RHS), Sofia Morino (RHS), Saurabh Dani (BOE).

Other Guests: Carolyn Jacoby (STC), Lisa Becker (resident), Manpreet Tyagi (resident), George Wolfson (STC).

Keith Kazmark – Ridgewood Village Manager joined the meeting at 8:15 PM

2. Approve October 5 meeting minutes.

Approved

Updates/Discussion/Strategy

3. Chair Report and Green Ridgewood Committee Membership (Terms) – David

Reflection on the multiple natural disasters and impacts from Global Warming this year.
Urgency to do more actionable things as a group to create impact.

4 openings in the Green Team (Citizen volunteer form is on the Village Website)

2 official new Green Team members introduced: Alina Mordkovich and Joan Hubertus

4. Village Council Liaison Report – Pam

The village is planting 120 trees in the residential areas and 37 trees in the CBD.

Sustainable Jersey formally recognized Ridgewood with the Bronze level. Ceremony will take place Nov 24th,

Johanna Luttrell was recognized as Member of the year at the Association of NJ recyclers. STC planted 31 saplings.

Heating Unit for village hall (Powered by natural gas) and a new generator. Pam is challenging the council to consider Heat Pumps. Request for GR to give a Heat Pump statement during a council meeting.

Millennium will likely be the new Grant writer service. Discussion around how it will be used by the village and the different commissions and teams.

In the future Green Ridgewood could consider using some of their funds to pay Millennium for a specific grant/topics.

5. Parks and Recreation Report (Frank Mortimer)
Open Space Committee and Parks and Rec had a meeting last spring and created a list of parks in Ridgewood. This will get published in the Village website and there will be tours offered.

6. Report on Bergen Hub Activities/Priorities – David (2 minutes)
Bergen Hub meeting on 10/30. Their focus is on smaller sustainability items. This past meeting was focused on composting. Next meeting location TBD.

7. School Activities – Sofia/Vivian / Beth
Meeting with teachers to put in place a monitoring system of the recycling bins.
Some water controversy at RHS regarding bottled water vs filtered water. Look to brainstorm ideas to campaign for less bottled water consumption at the high school.
Students will do more research around the filters and will connect with the principal with alternatives to selling plastic bottle water.
Green Club is doing a tree inventory around campus.

Elementary Schools are doing an athletic equipment exchange campaign that will likely happen in the Spring. Reminder meetings happen on the 3rd Friday of each month (location: American Bulldog café in town)

8. Daffodil Festival/Earth Day Fair (4/21/24) Steering Committee – Pam/David
Steering committee met in October. Sourabh reached out to super intendent and there's a meeting on the 21st with the head of curriculum to discuss how involved schools will be on Earth Day to educate and involve the student body (example: poster competition, bee unit, etc.).

9. Village Manager Report – Keith Kazmark
Discussion around the Master Plan and the connection with the Planning Board and how Green Ridgewood wants to support those efforts.
Into 2024 there's interest in communicating more about the different initiatives, investments and progress happening around town.
Keith has been discussing with U.S. Congressman, Josh Gottheimer's office about flooding issues in the village including mall initiatives and fixes as well as medium and larger size topics such as fields and properties around Ridgewood. Also, looking to engage the Army Corp of Engineers to discuss what larger initiatives need to take place to solve for flooding from the HHK brook. Example of this is the bridge by the High School which the village is currently exploring to expand.
There's a list of homes that are in the Severe repetitive flood loss. This gets reported to FEMA.

The new village website will launch January 1st, 2024 which will have a new look and better functionalities.

Mr. Kazmark can be followed on social media: Facebook (Ridgewood Village Manager) and Instagram (Ridgewood_Manager_07450). Email: kkazmark@ridgewoodnj.net

10. Climate Fresk – David/Pam

Reading Material:

- [In France, 'Climate Fresk' Global Warming Workshops Are a Hit - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

- [Climate Fresk – All the cards are in your hands!](#)

Pam and David met with the co-lead of Climate Fresk and the idea would be to host a session in Ridgewood over the winter (3-hour commitment). Potentially in January'24.

11. Potential Collaboration with Columbia University (Alina)

Objective: Our primary objectives for the consulting project with Columbia University would be creating a detailed survey of best environmentally focused practices to assist Green Ridgewood as they develop a community resiliency statement and carbon neutrality goal. Additionally, we would be interested in obtaining the following deliverables:

- A comprehensive three-year decarbonization plan with short-term and long-term goals.
- Sustainability roadmap outlining actions, responsibilities, and KPIs.
- Comparative analysis of environmental ordinances and initiatives in similar towns in NJ.
- Guidance on potential funding sources and financial mechanisms for sustainability projects.

Decision will come mid-November and it could officially start as early as January.

12. Planning Board/Master Plan Update, Community Resiliency Statement – David/Joan

David met with the head of the Planning Board to continue to reiterate our message. Next official Planning Board meeting will be on Tuesday November 7th.

Community resiliency statement context:

Joan researched what other communities have done in developing their Community Resilience Statement / Plan. Starting point was the Rockefeller Foundation, which in 2013 pioneered a global initiative of 100 Resilient Cities. As part of this effort, they funded a Chief Resilience Officer for each of the selected cities and developed a Resiliency Framework.

Two cities that participated in 100 Resilient Cities were NYC and Pittsburg. Both of their plans were reviewed.

NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) has also developed a Resiliency Planning Guide. We reviewed Nashua NH's Plan (of similar size to Ridgewood).

Additionally, the Biden Administration is gearing up to publish a National Climate Resiliency Framework later this year.

The key takeaways from looking across these plans are:

- Gather pertinent facts to guide priorities. This enables communication of our "why".
- Establish priorities, define scope goals, strategy, and actions.
- Identify and engage stakeholders. The plans have great ideas of the types of stakeholders we need to think about.
- Education and communication are key
- Engage a third party to help. All the cities we looked at engaged a third party to help them with an outside-in view for resiliency planning.

13. Priorities for 2023-2024 and Earth Day - David/All (15 minutes)

To be determined but focus is likely to be on energy savings/carbon emissions reduction and potentially working with the schools. More next meeting

14. Subcommittee Report Outs (20 minutes)

- a. Communications- Caitlin
Newsletter is almost complete. Release date TBD.
- b. Green Building & Sustainability – Beth: sub-committee met and discussed a broad array of issues with a focus on reducing energy use.
- c. Resource Management – Justin M – concern about contamination in CBD public space recycling needs to be addressed.
- d. Resilience, Flooding and Stormwater – David – building upon a suggestion from George Wolfson, the subcommittee is undertaking an extensive effort to look at a broad range of potential solutions to reduce/minimize the regular flooding that is impacting our community, especially fields and buildings, and move away from repeated implementation of "short-term fixes" that do not get to the heart of the problem. The group will look at other communities' experiences and investigate other solutions in detail.
- e. Green Team Update – Mike F. See comments about Bronze certification above.
- f. Finance – David/Justin J
Working to set up a meeting to discuss GR finances with Village's CFO

Motion to donate electric leaf blower (from earth day) to the library.
Vote: All in favor

Future Events (5 minutes)

15. Field Trip: Leaf Composting – December 2 @ 9am
16. Other Planned Events – Pam/David
17. Future Meeting Dates – December 7, January 4, February 1, March 7

Minutes submitted by Yvone Nava