

20220707 - Green Ridgewood Meeting Minutes

Green Ridgewood Meeting Minutes 20220707 – approved

Held at The Stable

Attendance:

Green Ridgewood: Bob Upton, Yvone Nava, David Refkin, Caitlin O’Leary, Jill Fasano (Village Staff Rep), Pam Perron (Village Council Liaison), Tessa Florida (Student Liaison).

Green Team: Ellie Gruber, Mike Faherty, Daniel Rozentsvayg, Derek White, Sofia Morino (Student Liaison). Guests: Miles Luo, Carolyn Jacoby, Nurhan Ezik, Virginia Daut.

1. Welcome/Introductions/Apologies

As always for this Green Ridgewood meeting Green Team members are encouraged to attend and the public is invited. We were pleased to welcome newly appointed member, Caitlin O’Leary, who introduced herself as resident in Ridgewood for about a year and working for the EPA in New York.

Apologies had been received from Christine Amundsen, Beth Creller and Frank Mortimer. Adam Peterseil and Justin Jonsson also sent regrets.

2. Approve June Meeting Minutes

Approval of the June draft minutes as distributed by e-mail June 9th was proposed by Pam, seconded by David and carried unanimously.

3. Membership & Election of Officers

a) Members and guests were reminded that, with Bob’s imminent departure, a vacancy will be created on the Committee. Pam will determine what process the Village will follow to appoint a replacement. Also the Chair/leadership of the Committee remains unresolved.

b) Following the creation last month of the two co-secretary positions, Bob suggested that the responsibilities for those positions should be clarified. In addition to writing the minutes Yvone agreed to maintain a record of attendance and apologies for absence to aid in complying with the Village’s attendance policy reported in June’s minutes. They will also ensure that a venue is reserved for each meeting.

4. Communications

Bob noted that, while we held joint meetings of Green Ridgewood and Green Team Committees, topics and projects have not been identified as falling under the purview of either one. Now that the two are currently meeting separately it may be appropriate to do so. For example, to address Leaf Blowers/Noise Reduction a recommendation to the Council will be needed making it a Green Ridgewood responsibility (even though it may result in gaining SJ points). While this project and Project 1,000 Acres are being led by Green Team members we appreciate them attending Green Ridgewood meetings to provide progress updates.

5. Project 1,000 Acres

Mike reported that sign-ups to the Project continue, now totaling 177 acres (37 residences and 20 parks and municipal locations).

Some trees planted in the native garden at the Ridgewood Water HQ were the wrong ones and will be replaced.

6. Leaf Blowers/Gas Powered Lawn Equipment / Noise Pollution

Ellie had distributed information and copies of ordinances adopted by Maplewood, South Orange, Princeton and Montclair. After discussion, there was a general consensus favoring the option of restricting hours and months for gas powered leaf blower use and not trying to include mowers and weed whackers at this time. The alternative of approaching the issue with noise limits was felt to be too difficult to enforce.

Pam offered to review the different ordinances and perhaps suggest to the Committee a draft for Ridgewood.

Ellie has already represented the LWV in advancing this issue and we should try to gain support from more groups.

Members were referred to an article on this topic in ANJEC's Summer 2022 Report which includes many useful references and resources.

We were reminded that the use of leaf blowers is harmful to insects that are necessary for pollination.

7. Schools

1. RHS Chempost Project – Miles reported that this project has been closed out.
2. Miles advised that the RHS Green Club is embarking on an effort to improve the percentage of recycled waste at the school above the current 3% level.
3. Climate Change Impact on Human Health – The students who contacted us about their project did not respond to our invitation to address us.
4. Carolyn reported that some concerns had arisen at RHS due to potentially dangerous tree limbs and STC is consulting with Bob Bielaszewski, Facilities Manager, to identify suggested remedial actions. Some students had created a tree inventory. Inspection of trees at Orchard, Ridge & Somerville schools are planned.

8. By-Laws

This topic was deferred to a future meeting.

9. Finances

Nancy Bigos obtained statements for the account in which the Village maintains Green Ridgewood's funds and reviewed them with Pam, George & Bob. After paying out monies owed to the Conservancy for Ridgewood Public Lands pertaining to Earth Day our balance will be about \$12,100. Recent efforts to award grants for sustainable activities were unsuccessful, perhaps hindered by Covid, but the funds are available for suitable causes.

10. Ridgewood Daffodil Festival & Earth Day Fair April 23, 2023 – Referring to the discussion at the June meeting concerning a theme for next year's event it was noted that we should distinguish between the theme for the whole event (e.g. resiliency in the Village) and the theme for our own exhibit focusing on our own actions and priorities.

11. Recycling Issues

1. On June 22nd Sean Hamlin, Recycling Supervisor, graciously took time to meet with Pam, David and Bob (other subcommittee members were unavailable). David reviewed the proposal he had outlined at our June meeting for a pilot to boost cardboard recycling using increased collection frequency with an automated (EV) truck. He offered to present a financial case for the proposal for which Sean will provide some base financial data.
2. Sean responded to the question as to why Ridgewood does not have recycling collection in public spaces saying that it was tried and people used all trash receptacles alike.
3. On July 6th Sean conducted a demonstration of the Recycling Department's EPS densifier attended by Bob, David, Pam and Miles, and representatives from ECs/GTs from Allendale, Fair Lawn, Glen Rock, Hillsdale, Oradell, Upper Saddle River and Wyckoff. Several towns are interested in bringing their EPS to Ridgewood for recycling, for a fee of course.

12. Grants

Pam noted that some grants are being offered through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

13. Planning Board

The June 7th, 21st and July 5th meetings were cancelled. Members are encouraged to attend the July 19th meeting which is expected to include a review of the Master Plan draft. Pam has had the opportunity to review the draft Open Space Plan and commented favorably. It now goes to the Planning Board to be incorporated into the MP.

14. EAGER (Encouraging Alternative Green Energy for Ridgewood)

Pam reported that 3 bids have been received from consultants which will be reviewed by Beth, George, Christine and herself.

15. Green Team/Sustainable Jersey

1. Silver Recertification – no change: submission completed, awaiting feedback.
2. Sustainable Jersey Summit – to our knowledge no one from Ridgewood attended.

16. SJ Bergen Hub

1. Neither the Hub Committee nor sub-committees have met.
2. The visitors to the EPS densifier demonstration were invited through the Hub.
3. Creative Bergen Arts Amble – Pam reported that events at the Unitarian Society as part of this county-wide event were very successful.
4. Bob has been the principal participant from Ridgewood in Hub activities. Participation in the Hub is probably more appropriately a Green Team responsibility but a volunteer or volunteers from either Green Team or Green Ridgewood to assume that role would be helpful. Contact Bob for more info.

17. Flooding/Stormwater

1. As noted at the last meeting two groups are working on aspects of this topic. It is suggested they coordinate their efforts if appropriate and update the committee at the September meeting. David noted that the Village is trying to take advantage of a \$200,000 grant to conduct desilting/de-snagging of the Saddle and Ho-Ho-Kus Brooks.
2. Flood Acquisition Plan – Pam reported that the June 20th trip to Hoffman Grove, Wayne was very informative.

18. New/Other Business

Jill reported that Ridgewood Water received a PSE&G grant.

19. Next Meeting will be Thursday September 8th 2022* at 7:00 pm at The Stable.

*Sometimes in past years the committee has not met in August. Pam has kindly invited us to her house on August 4th for a party in lieu of an August meeting. Details to follow.

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

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