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Written on 18 November 2022.

# 20221006 - Green Ridgewood Meeting Minutes

## Minutes of GREEN RIDGEWOOD MEETING

Oct.6, 2022, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Village Hall, Senior Lounge, 1st floor

Green Ridgewood attendees: Christine Amundsen, Beth Gould Creller, Caitlin O’Leary, Pam Perron (Village Council Liaison), David Refkin, Yvone Nava, Jill Fasano, Nurhan Ezik, VH

Green Team attendees: Justin Manger, Adam Peterseil, Daniel Rozentsvayg

Guests: George Wolfson, Sophia Florida (Student Liaison), Miles Luo, Bob Upton, Justin Jonsson, Sonia Berman (RHS Sophomore) & her dad, Kimberly Madrigal, Nancy Koontz, 2 or 3 Parents of Somerville School students

1. Pam introduced herself and welcomed new members, Adam Peterseil and Nurhan Ezik, and guests.
2. Minutes from the Sept. 8 meeting were approved, pending an answer to

Bob’s question about the \$ amount for the screens.

3. Pam explained that we do not have chairpersons for Green Ridgewood and the Green Team and if there is anyone who has the time to devote to this task, reach out to Pam Perron. Pam Perron took over as Village Council liaison to the Green Team now that Michael Sedon is no longer on the Council.

4. Communications: Website/Social media – no new updates.

5. Project 1,000 Acres update: 50 properties registered totaling 177 acres; 31 of the 50 are families, the rest is a mix of parks (registered with Nancy B.), schools, churches. All registrants have received certificates and follow up emails/letters/circular.

Website and registration map remains functional (thanks to RW Water department).

Summer social media (June/July) seemed to work, leading to ~8 added signups... thanks to Yvonne for enabling. (Note: attending the Ridge School event in June with Beth was also helpful).

Last month and a half, no additional social media or signups. Interest expressed by both the Wyckoff and Glen Rock green teams/commissions in creating their own version... have met with Wyckoff, and scheduling Glen Rock.

Going forward actions:

Website resources need updating as some links have expired.

Opportunity to work through elementary and middle schools (HSAs) to get both the schools and the parents involved and registered.

Opportunity for P.R./social media as we head towards new season. This plan needs to be developed. (note: it feels like a "P1000A 2.0" launch should happen in Jan/Feb as folks are preparing for the spring/garden season...with repeat of Earth Day push).

Key issue is workload and focus ongoing. Summer intern was helpful.

6. School projects – Miles Luo reported that the RHS Green club has seen a recent increase in membership.

7. EAGER: Council passed ordinance; we got 3 bids back; Council interviewed all three bidding companies. However, current energy market is too high; we have been advised to wait until Spring before going out for electric supply bids.

8. Green Team/Sustainable Jersey: Justin Manger explained that the Village has been silver certified for the past 5 or 6 years but current status is now bronze level. 180 points have been approved; we need 170 more points and one more priority level action for silver status. Nov. 20 is the deadline for additional submissions for points this year. Pam asked Justin to schedule a meeting of the Green Team so that this information can be reviewed with them. No need to gain Green Ridgewood approval on whatever next steps are decided. (There were only 2 Green Team members at the current meeting.)

9. Earth Day and Daffodil Festival: Dir. Of Public Works and Dir. of Parks and Rec are meeting tomorrow to discuss plans. George Wolfson explained the two functions: steering committee and participant piece. Bob Upton advised that he is willing to work on this for the coming year; we are seeking a Green Ridgewood member to also volunteer this year to learn for future years. George indicated that he is retiring from this activity but is still willing to work in an advisory capacity. Village Steering Committee has to develop theme for the event. Green Ridgewood will have its own theme, consistent with the whole plan. The date is April 23 from 11am – 2 pm.

10. Bergen Hub – Bob Upton explained the various projects on which the hub has worked, notably styrofoam collection. Next meeting: Oct 24th in Wyckoff library. Bob encouraged active Green Team members to attend. If someone else can come, Bob will attend to make introductions.

Basecamp (Bergen Hub's social media site) - group is upset that county has been indiscriminately taking trees down. David Refkin commented that many trees have been taken down on Saddle River Bike Path.

One condition of county involvement is that it has to be accessible to every town within the county.

Sonia Berman presented her proposal to reduce plastic waste. She is passionate about it. She began working on elimination of plastic utensils when she was a student at GWMS. But then Covid put the brakes on the project.

This year she has been designing coasters explaining the harm of plastic. She proposes to install 3 yellow plastic bins in the GW cafeteria to collect biodegradable utensils. She has contacted companies to get estimates of the cost to have the materials picked up. Interstate Waste Services is one of the companies. Hopefully, the other schools in Ridgewood could eventually come on board. She is requesting ~\$213 from Green Ridgewood to purchase the bins. Proper composting is the goal. Various questions were posed by committee members.

Pam asked if she might have more information to share with the committee next month and she agreed.

Miles advised that RHS is trying to increase their recycling efforts. Sonja will research the biodegradability claims. Seven members raised their hands in support of this project (consensus).

11. Goals – Pam asked each member to pick 5 projects in which they are interested, Chris and Yvone will receive recommendations by Oct. 13th and make note of overlaps.

12. Master Plan- David Refkin commented there are important issues that were left out and should be included. Pam agreed and advised that if we have the interest, we should address it.

Natural Gas Phaseout - Discourage Natural gas usage. We can pose it to the council as a recommendation. It's up to the Green Team to cherry pick which suggestions to turn into possible projects. What are other towns doing?

Oct. 18 is the next Planning Board meeting. Questions can be emailed to Jane Wondergem or 3 or 4 people on the subcommittee. If you want to comment on the record, you have to go to the meeting in person.

Thank you to Caitlin O'Leary who spoke about the Master Plan in front of the Board on behalf of Green Ridgewood; it was received positively.

13. Deer and Geese: Dr. Nurhan Ezik spoke about the problem of the over- population of deer and ticks. They also discovered Covid 19 in deer. NO natural predators (except cars and trucks).

This is the context:

Couple of things can be done: selecting deer averse plants, using chemical repellants (controversial), using physical barriers, herd control. In rural areas they can be hunted. Live capture and relocation can be very expensive. People worry about deer dying from this method. Best way to control deer population is castration, vasectomy done in a clinic; chemical not surgical vasectomy but deer need to be tranquilized. More humane - they can keep their hormones. It's easier to do males as opposed to females. Caitlin O'Leary called NJ Fish & Wildlife. They said sterilization is almost useless in declining the population.

The cost is \$600 - \$1,000 per deer. Hunting was a better idea.

Somerville School district parents in attendance raised concerns about the increase in Lyme disease. Thirty new Lyme disease cases in a three-block area. CDC is not publishing this information. Tick borne disease is hard to identify; it is costly to get the lab tests. Deer migrate throughout our whole town.

Whitney Climg started the ball with identifying the problem. She, her husband and three children have all gotten Lyme disease. Has any community been successful in eradicating the deer? County is responsible. Essex County has a particular park that they shut down twice per year to cull the deer. George Wolfson said it's important to focus on the tick problem. Deer and ticks are two separate issues.

Pam Perron suggested we have a forum. We could ask TYCO to come and talk to us about how to control the deer overpopulation. Perhaps it's a HUB Issue to be addressed. Nurhan Ezik said it would be good to have public input.

County issue – Ramon Hache is in charge of parks. Pam will bring this up to him. Parent comments: It is frightening. No one at Valley Hospital is knowledgeable about tick borne diseases. Recommended reading: Chronic by Stephen Phillips ... epidemic in Ridgewood.

Canadian geese are protected by US Fish & Wildlife; efforts have been unsuccessful in reducing the geese populations. Official dogs are trained to disturb them.

14. Bylaws – We reviewed a few changes being proposed and approved bylaws.

See the attached By-laws. Discussion –

We should have student liaisons for both Green Ridgewood and Green Team. We need to amend the ordinance to state this.

15. Leaf blower ordinance: Not enough time to go over leaf blower ordinance.

Miscellaneous Old Business/New Business:

PFAS multi-district litigation. Large lawsuit - many companies involved. Defendant companies moved for summary judgement but the judge denied their motion. Good for our side.

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