

Milltown Environmental Commission Meeting
Minutes of January 24, 2024

1. Public Meetings Act Statement Acknowledgement of ancestral territory upon which Milltown lies were read.
2. Attendees – Michael Shakarjian, Barbara Wright, Kate Scotto, Saly Sharp, Frank Manco Dawn Milburn, Danielle Maiorana, Mary Ellen Schwendeman, Felipe Zambrana, Doriann Kerber (Arrived at 9:15)
3. Reorganization: Councilman Zambrana
 - Nomination of M. Shakarjian for Chair - Yes
 - Nomination of B. Wright for Vice-Chair -Yes
 - Nomination of Secretary- FZ to serve as temp secretary – Yes (responsibilities will be shared with Chair).
4. Planning/Zoning Board – Michael
 - a. Next meeting: there may not be a meeting on Feb 7.
 - b. Neil Marotta stepped down as Milltown Boro Planning Board Attorney as of 12/31/23
Three other qualified firms were identified:
 - 1 KMC (Michael Collins),
 - 2 Bhavini Shah
 - 3 Lieberman, Blecher, and SinkevichKMC Michael Collins was chosen as Planning Board attorney.
 - c. Christopher St. Application for extension/access from Henry St. Amal Mikhail
 - i. This will be heard February or more likely, March.
 - ii. Points of concern and resources:
 - 1) Steep slopes
 - 2) Infrastructure and town's responsibility
 - 3) Impervious surface/loss of town open space.
 - 4) Relation to Master Plan:
 - 5) Relation to NJ State sustainability goals. – Sally
 - 6) Natural Resources Inventory elements
 - 7) NJ Parcels.com
 - 8) Wildlife habitat loss.
 - 9) Loss of open space behind houses.
 - 10) Loss of trees → erosion. Tree diversity important.
 - 11) Letter to governing body – Delivered and read by Dawn Milburn
 - 12) Previous owner Madell, Lawrence & Dorothy;
 - 13) Potential flyer to neighbors to invite if they have concerns
 - 14) Level of development and impervious surface – want to preserve as much woodland as possible. Wildlife and birds, etc. Water and tree management, endangered animals. Air and water quality.
 - 15) Need to see Environmental Impact Statement when submitted.
 - 16) New letter to be drafted, approved and sent to governing body from Environmental Commission after review of plans highlighting the concerns of the Commission.
 - iii. 259 Washington Ave minor subdivision (Badaway), consolidating lots, put new lot

with construction. For completeness – incomplete as of now.

5. Earth Day 2024 10 AM to 3 PM
 - a. Planning - try to work with Rec Dept and DPW
 - b. Schools just achieved Sustainable Jersey Bronze level. Have them participate
 - c. Recycling: Batteries and corks
 - d. April 20 – Saturday (is also National Record Day)
 - e. Antiidling info or contest!
 - f. Committee to ask Governing Body for DPW and or Recreation Dept assistance for Earth Day.
 - g. Councilman Councilman Zambrana to reach out to Finance Committee for the details that they need to consider a budget ask to help out with Earth Day
 - h. Letter to save the date –
 - i. Frank Manco – will ask Kelly of Rec Dept. New Jersey Paddlers, Nature Walk.
 - j. Outdoor games by rec dept.
 - k. Watershed ambassador – enviroscape or other exhibit/activity
 - l. Preregistration for kayaks and clean-up – post on ENV webpage
 - a. Possible bird bath or bird feeder – lego feeders?
 - b. Clean-up registration early or in advance.
 - c. See if Herve might want to help.
 - d. Businesses?: Rescued by Lacy, Revilla grooves & gear, Antique store...
6. Idling issue – Current ordinances? Michael. Need to do more.
 - a. Sign at the Open Space is partially covered by vegetation – Fix.
 - b. Need another sign at Open Space. ?? Millpond Park as well.
 - c. Engage police as well. Report to Council via Phil.
 - d. Checking with Ralph for additional signs. I think they're free from the DEP.
 - e. Idling of white work trucks behind Wells Fargo and Drug Store - maybe a good place for a sign.
 - f. Try KMM again?
7. Milltown Environmental Commission Webpage
 - a. Consider adding more content – Pictures.
 - b. Some content was shared during the meeting.
 - c. Need to update our goals – talk about them next month.
 - d. Mary Ellen – a little report on progress on the log cabin rehab.
8. Stormwater Management Ordinance (Green Infrastructure): Michael: Still behind on this...
9. South Brook Drive issues regarding Bog Brook. – Dawn. Nothing new discussed
10. Schwendeman Property Update: Mary Ellen
 - a. Security camera? Should be in budget for 2024. Councilman Zambrana to confirm.
 - b. Councilman Zambrana to ask BA/CFO for update on what is left of grant money and report back to commission.
 - c. Councilman Zambrana to communicate to BA/CFO and council about movement of artifacts from Schwendeman shop to cabin in the summer.
11. Pollinator Garden – New updates?
 - a. New grant application to ANJEC for 2024 by Sally, need a new angle – late Feb early March. Due in May? Tracy's aunt has a good garden – will consult.
 - b. Sally, Tracy, Danielle, and Barbara and doing some plans.
 - c. Revival of rain garden at Parkview –
 - d. Joyce Kilmer rain garden – was mowed down. May need to revive if allowed. Parsley

- for swallowtail butterflies.
- e. How can we bridge communication between us and schools, us and Ford Ave, us and other groups? Put on next month's agenda.
12. Littering from businesses. – Reminder, if you clean up, send Ralph a report as it is applicable to the Borough's Clean Communities funds.
- a. Ice cream depot's attentiveness. This has gotten better
13. Energy Infrastructure and state and federal support; community solar?
- a. The BPU has announced another round of [Community Energy Plan Grants \(CEPG\)](#) and Milltown Boro is eligible to apply for a \$10K grant funding to create a Community Energy Plan.
 - i. If interested, we can meet with a consultant at Sustainable Jersey Michael to reach out to set up a meeting.
Application Deadline Extended to: Friday, May 24, 2024
14. LBWP Activities, report – Activities:
- a. Roger Dreyling spoke on Dec 19.
 - b. New Brunswick is creating a Lawrence Brook Watershed Management Plan
15. ANJEC activities:
- a. Jan 30: Environmental Commission Roundtable: Setting & Achieving Goals Event
Recordings: <https://anjec.org/past-training-resources/>
 - b. Talk about ANJEC and Master Plan
16. Kate would like to go to the recycling center and checked with Ralph. Not clear whether tours are being offered at this time.
17. Next EC Meeting (Feb 28). There was interest expressed in returning to in-person.
18. Adjourned at 9:34pm.

1. Public Meetings Act Statement/ Acknowledgement of ancestral territory upon which Milltown lies were read.

2. Attendees – Michael Shakarjian, Barbara Wright, Sally Sharp, Alan Godber, Dawn Milburn, Doriann Kerber, Mary Ellen Schwendeman, Felipe Zambrana (Council EC liaison), Frank Manco (Council Green Team liaison)

3. Approval of Draft Agenda/

Approval of January Minutes- motion (Dawn); seconded (Sally)

Reorganization- Dawn M. appointed to secretary

4. Planning/Zoning-Michael S:

a. Next meeting April 3

b. Christopher St.

i. First heard in Dec, since then changes to PB & Z members and new attorney (Mike Collins)- will start testimony of applic. over again, Larry Sachs (applicant's attorney) will renotece property owners within 200 ft;

ii. new house plans should be included; Environmental Impact Statement-contact clerk week before for EIP

iii. EC letter went out to Mayor/Council. Peter Vignuolo looking into old tax records/maps- legalities of paper streets; can borough retire street; do they need to purchase property, etc.

c. Badaway application-Washington Ave.- incomplete, (3rd time coming before board?); applicant does not have attorney- may be holding up process

5. Albert Avenue Park Plans- Dawn M.

a. Alan G, Matt M. and Dawn M. reviewed engineering plans and visited site where bike paths, crosswalks and park improvements are planned.

b. EC recommending retaining three of pitch pines borough plans to remove

i. pitch pines (pinus rigida) have extensive root systems; suitable for rocky, sandy, acidic soils/wetlands-aids in water absorption and soil erosion, habitat for certain birds including pine warbler

ii. appears there is enough room to put 8 ft. path without need to remove trees

iii. important to maintain the original natural environment of park which consists primarily of pines

c. EC would like to take another trip to look at 2 trees slotted for removal along Hill St. - an oak and a maple.

d. also noted- an unusual amount of park benches to be installed along Hill St. side of bike path- 7 benches, while only 2 benches planned for longest run of path bordering woods along back of park.

e. Phil Z. gave some background of park grant- DOT awarded \$250,000 initially and county awarded an additional \$500,000; Doriann mentioned there should be opportunities for additional grants from transportation.

f. Phil Z. will contact Ralph J., Director Public Works to request that EC members have a chance to meet with him and/or engineers to study the plans, discuss tree removals, bench placements, etc.

6. Earth Day- Kate S.

a. Sat., April 20 from 10-3; raindate Sun., April 21, 11-3; Mill Pond Park

b. Schools declined; Barb W. suggested approaching teachers' union well in advance so they are able to plan Earth Day as one of their school volunteer outreaches; Kate S. will ask if Middlesex Stem/ Academy High School has any high schoolers who can volunteer

c. Friends of Library unable to attend, but reps from Library staff will be able to come

d. Waiting to hear from Parks and Recreation Dept. -ways in which they would like to participate

e. working on waivers for activities- trying to do waivers online, family waivers, etc

f. Councilman Manco volunteering to lead free kayak tours on Mill Pond- will have waivers for liability and for picture taking. Frank M. suggested two ideas-Native American display/presentation and building a bat box(es) with help of seniors, scouts, etc- possibly presentation for ED; mark each bat box made with the year, continue adding them year after year

g. Barb W.- Anna will lead another children's nature activity; Spook Handy (folk musician) interested in performing at 11:30- usually receives \$500

- a performance but will work within budget; Barb will contact county organization to see if there is a traveling Native American exhibit
- h. Battery Recycling program started by a young student from Edison(?) years ago; battery drop off for program at library; investigate how to highlight this battery recycling project at MED
 - i. Michael S. will contact Herve regarding nature walk/nature program for MED
 - j. Doriann said she will set up a table with posters highlighting information about watershed, pollinators, rain gardens and other green team/sustainability topics; may throw in a game/activity for kids- make sure we include Green Team with Earth Day planning to be eligible for SJ points
 - k. Kate S.- contacting Monica/borough to get professional banner and/or table display cloths with Milltown EC

7. Idling-Michael and Doriann inquiring about more signage- from borough

8. Web page for EC- Councilman Phil Z. noticed we needed to include goals accomplished in '23 and goals for '24; he told us to copy him on whatever we send to borough- Gabriella is no longer webmaster

9. Schwendeman Property

- a. Good amount of cleanup of brush and bamboo on property- joint effort, public works dept., scouts, volunteers.
- b. MaryEllen noted much work was done- suggested that the bamboo will need to be dug out deeper to the rhizome
- c. Phil Z. mentioned to borough about need of storage space for certain taxidermied specimens Mary Ellen would like to donate for cabin- no response yet; gave update on borough offices- no CFO, part time BA (Fred Carr) and 2 finance officers leaving this week.
- d. Dawn M. asked for update/info. about architect hired by borough- Phil Z. will get name of architect; they hired the lowest bidder; not supposed to exceed \$7500 for now; Dawn asked Phil if he could find out what current Council/borough administrators will allow pertaining to volunteers doing work inside cabin

- e. Still no surveillance cameras at cabin- Phil Z. said cameras were budgeted for Boro Park this year; maybe they can be budgeted for Albert and cabin in future

10. Stormwater-Water Resources-

Doriann mentioned WRA (Water Resources ?) meeting is March 8th; new stormwater plans must be completed by July 16; Michael said Matt M. will be attending as a LBWP rep

11. Energy/Infrastructure-

- a. Michael cited 2009 article attached to agenda referring to other local municipalities' (So. River included) plans for energy- he will reach out to Sue Garretson.
- b. Sustainable Jersey- Doriann is attending their Summit on May 3; she suggested consulting with SJ for energy plans: Doriann said Milltown and So. River are the least solar-friendly towns in our county
- c. Phil Z. explained we purchase electric for approx. 8c a kilowatt and charge residents 12c a kilowatt- he said we need to come up with creative ideas on how to support solar within our energy plan; Doriann reminded us that solar panels are only used by a proportion of residents- there will always be people utilizing borough electric; Dawn suggested maybe our borough could at least pilot a certain number of homes for solar panels and increase number of each year- she suggested that the borough should be setting an example for residents- borough buildings should introduce solar panels to some of their own buildings first; not right that individual residents have to do it alone, jumping through hoops to get the borough's support for going solar

12. Pollinator Gardens-Sally S./Barb W

- a. Plans are underway for Tracy's aunt to lead a workshop for residents at library on plants for pollinator gardens.
- b. Benches were donated by Randy R. and Tracy- placed by butterfly garden at Mill Pond Park
- c. Volunteers will be needed soon to weed and beautify the display gardens

- d. new ANJEC grants due in May. Dawn offered to help with grant writing- asked if building bat boxes could maybe be supported with grants

13. LBWP (Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership) will have presentation tables at Milltown Earth Day and Rutgers Day (April 27)

14. ANJEC

- a. Jan.30 Roundtable- Sally S. attended; shared some of her notes- someone from Somerville EC shared ways they were able to get support of their community and support from corporations- EC created a slide show as an annual report for borough highlighting their year's work/accomplishments; they also partnered with Met Life and other local corporations/businesses
- b. Doriann mentioned importance of EC and Green Team working together. Some boroughs have apps residents can access that have short daily/weekly tips for sustainable practices.

16. Next meeting "in-person" on March 27 in Conference Room C at Municipal Bldg. We will meet at 6:30 to get a jump start on Earth Day planning. We will attempt to run this as a hybrid meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:23.

Milltown Environmental Commission
Minutes

Date: March 27, 2024

Location: In- person/hybrid

Members Present: Michael Shakarjian, Barbara Wright, MaryEllen Schwendeman, Councilman Zambrana, Kate Scotto, Dawn Milburn, Alan Godber, Doriann Kerber, Sally Sharp (zoom)

Administrative Business:

Meeting convened at: 7:30 PM

Land Acknowledgement read by M. Shakarjian

Approval of April 26 and September 27 minutes- approved unanimously

Borough Council Liaison: Councilman Zambrana answered questions about our current borough administrative offices personnel. Fred Carr is still currently our acting BA; a part-time Financial Officer has just been hired-Joe Maimone (full-time CFO for No.Brunswick township). A security camera had been budgeted for Schwendeman's cabin- should see it installed this year. Mary Ellen S. asked Councilman Zambrana if we could see the report from the architect/inspector (?) who had been hired to inspect/write a report. He will get it to us.

Old Business/Agenda:

Earth Day Planning- members of EC and Councilman Zambrana met prior to regular EC meeting as an Earth Day Planning Committee at 6:30.

1. We will hire Spook Handy for folk music entertainment for \$200- if county grant cannot be used to pay him, members of EC have offered to make personal donations to pay him.

2. Barbara has secured Douglas Aumack, Resource Interpretive Specialist of E. Jersey Olde Town/Arts Institute of Middlesex Co., to share his Leni-Lenape presentation. He will set up an exhibit for duration of day.

3. Councilman Frank Manco will get back to us about whether or not Home Depot can donate bat boxes. Dawn will follow-up with Anchor Exterminating about wildlife education about bats. Councilman Manco is set with free kayak tours beginning at 11:30 on Milltown Earth Day. He will have waivers to sign (approved by Peter Vignuolo, borough attorney).

4. Dorian will contact student, Sri Nihal Tammana, with non-profit program that places battery recycling boxes in libraries/schools, to invite him to attend/set up display at Milltown Earth Day. (as of meeting, Nihal has already committed to attending)

5. Kate Scotto shared that Middlesex Co. Solid Waste Management and Environmental Health will both have tables at Earth Day Fair, as well as our DPW, who will provide gloves, grabbers and trash bags for Cleanup. She is still working on getting Beekeeper and Mosquito Commission. Spotswood High Community Service Club will be sending student volunteers to assist at Earth Day. (Advisor- Gabriella Heredia). Carol from County Solid Waste M. offering part of NJ Clean Communities grant to fund programs for Earth Day, including "Grand Falooms" program with traveling performers- on stilts, etc., providing environmental education. Kate will ask if grant funds can be used for Spook Handy entertainment. Russ Einbinder is generously volunteering his time and talents as DJ for the day.

EC will invite Mayor Murray and Council to attend Earth Day and open ceremonies of the day.

6. Library will have a table with a kids' activity, they are generously offering to loan long tables-7 in all. Friends of the Library will do a book giveaway;

7. Dawn will bring 5 tents. She has secured 50 free food coupons each from Maria's, Francesco's, and Four Boys for Earth Day volunteers. She will ask Bagel Express and Dunkin' donuts if they would like to provide breakfast again for volunteers. Rescued by Lacy, Dee's Florist and Anchor Exterminating will be setting up table/tent at Earth Day and will offer demonstration, education, and/or free raffle/kids activity. Revilla Grooves and Gear will have their annual Record Day event and we will help promote one another's events.

8. Doriann Kerber has offered to assist EC in setting up an info. table about pollinators, rain gardens, etc., and make seed bombs with children.

9. LBWP will set up a table at Earth Day.

10. MaryEllen and Linda Schwendeman will organize tours at the Schwendeman Taxidermy/Nature Center throughout the day.

Events/Field Trips: Kate S. reported that it is difficult to plan trips to county recycling facilities at this time, but a field trip to water treatment facility is a possibility-will report at later date.

Planning/Zoning Board- M. Shakarjian-

1. April 3 is next meeting when new attorney will be introduced; no application or new business;
2. May meeting- Christopher St. application/Amal Mikhail for extension/access from Henry St. will be heard; PB should take a look at site prior to; EIS-ask Monica 1 week by April 3
3. 259 Washington Ave/ Badaway minor subdivision application- incomplete, no attorney

Idling Issue:

1. Doriann checking with Christopher Gonda/Ralph J. about anti-idling signs

2. sign at Open Space overgrown with vegetation-EC members will take care of that.

Milltown Environmental Commission Web Page- presently Monica/clerk is handling web page

1. We need to meet as a committee to update completed 2023 goals and post 2024 proposed goals; include photographs of accomplished goals; include invasive plants list
2. Discussed how we should report to Mayor/Council once a year with presentation of our accomplished goals, proposed goals, and to suggest a budget. November may be a good month to consider.

Albert Ave. Park Bike Route Plan:

1. Herve B. suggested a Pineland type garden plan at Albert Ave. Park/Schwendeman property; also mentioned there are paper bees that we should observe and seek to protect.
2. Alan, Dawn and Matt had visited the park a few times with plans to understand where the bike trail was to be placed and locate trees slated for removal- there are a few healthy pines slated for removal they believe could be saved without interfering with bike path- Councilman Zambrana said the grant application is on hold so it may be premature to talk to Ralph J./borough with our suggestions.
3. Michael S. asked if we as an EC should meet together formally to study plans and make suggestions to the borough for bike path and other plans for park that are part of grant project- we all agreed that we should study plans and give formal input.

Schwendeman Property- Mary Ellen

1. Cameras- see Borough liaison report (above)
2. MaryEllen S. encouraged members to stop by cabin and see the chinking work/ restoration work started and the clearing of brush and bamboo around property by DPW. Soon volunteers can resume work on log work-remove old caulking, apply linseed oil, etc.
3. MaryEllen discussed phragmite removal- EC members cited Rutgers Landscape Architecture dept. as a good source for learning how to remove it. Barbara W. said Tracy Youngster may also have info./ experience in phragmite removal.
4. Herve-see above suggestion for pineland garden/paper bees issues for Albert Ave/Schwendeman Property

Pollinator Garden:

1. Barbara W., Danielle M. and Sally S. have a new grant application project to beautify the existing Open Space Pollinator Garden that was initially installed by Will Bradford a few years ago, as his Eagle project- they hope to add new plants; cleanup existing garden, etc; Will Bradford has been contacted about the grant project at Open Space and has offered to assist.
2. Tracy Youngster, who is involved in the train station project, has ideas about how to incorporate gardening with the new station location. Her aunt, a gardener from Caldwell,

will be leading a workshop at the Library about pollinator gardens for municipalities and residences on May 6 at 6:30 pm..

3. Ralph J. will have DPW workers remove overgrowth/vines at pollinator garden at Mill Pond Park most likely next week.

Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership- will be in attendance at Milltown Earth Day and Rutgers Day (April 27)- they will announce future activities at these events; there are plans for a cleanup that will be announced soon

East Brunswick Environmental Commission project- plastic reduction project regarding plastic utensil waste in businesses- Dawn will look into this project so our commission can consider a similar plastic reduction effort in our town

ANJEC-

1. Michael S. suggested that Fred Carr has likely paid our ANJEC dues; Michael had previously forwarded the info. to Fred; we will verify dues are paid.
2. Recordings from ANJEC: <http://anjec.org/past-training-resources/>

Next Meeting: April 24 via ZOOM

Adjournment: 9:00 PM

New Business:

Meeting Closed

Milltown Environmental Commission Minutes

Date: April 24, 2024

Location: Zoom

Members Present: Kate Scotto, Danielle Maiorana, Michael Shakarjian, Sally Sharp

Guests in attendance: Councilman Frank Manco

Administrative Business:

Meeting convened at:7:30
Land Acknowledgement read by Michael Shakarjian
Approved Draft Agenda
Approval of April and May 2023 Minutes

Borough Council Liaison: Phil Zambrana

Old Business:/Agenda

Planning/Zoning Board:

Next meeting: May 1 covering:
Christopher St. Application for extension/access from Henry St. (Amal Mikhail)
Question about EIS waiver
Steepness of slopes – street may make them more steep.
259 Washington Ave minor subdivision (Badaway), consolidating lots, put new lot with construction.
For completeness – incomplete as of now.
Doesn't have a lawyer – currently

Earth Day Redux

Turnout was good, esp for the cleanup - 31 volunteers.
Kayaking went well. About 80 people.
Darren Murray helpful;
Mary Ellen had decent turnout and good attendees. 25 people.
Jimmy gym teacher in Edison – like how we cleaned up the brush. Some towns over manicure. Have to check with New Brunswick Water Utility.
For next year:
April 19, 2025. Give letter to council now. Ask for a little bit of money.
Spook Handy – will county cover?

Idling issue – Current ordinances? Michael/Doriann. Need to do more.

Sign at the Open Space on Washington Ave was partially covered by vegetation. Has it been cleaned?. Other locations for signs?

Milltown Environmental Commission Webpage

Update accomplishments and goals 2023 should be done, need to have 2024
May need to have a workshop on goals; in person or ZOOM
Post about updating Kiosk info.
Eventually NRI?
Supply updates to Monica

Presentation to borough – Request for November 12 (ask Monica)

Request Line item for Env Comm
Table Cloth for Env Comm – may want to request sooner.
Banners - Mary Ellen – paint on the blank side.

Schwendeman Property Update:

Try to get a grant re what to do with taxidermied animals? Mary Ellen spoke with Doriann about an opportunity; can also check with Tracy Youngster and Matt Milburn
Architect's report – Phil will provide
Plan for removal of phragmites; Landscape architecture? See what Tracy knows
Things should start moving better once the CFO is appointed (Apr 29?)

Pollinator Garden – New updates?

Met with Ralph: DPW took out wild grape vines and put in wood chips.

Bridging communication: between us and schools, us and Ford Ave, us and other groups

Go more often to the other meetings.

Try to engage with the school early for their potential participation for Earth Day.

Energy Infrastructure and state and federal support

The BPU has announced another round of [Community Energy Plan Grants \(CEPG\)](#) and Milltown Boro is eligible to apply for a \$10K grant funding to create a Community Energy Plan.

Met with consultant (Poornima)

Ask her about how laborious this is. Is there a lot of paperwork involved? Are there specific requirements? Send info to Monica via assistant clerk: Mary: mguinee@milltownboro.com

LBWP Activities, report – Activities:

Will be at Rutgers Day

Maybe a clean-up

ANJEC Activities

Meetings on effective environmental posters; tackling litter

Next EC Meeting (May 22) via ZOOM.

Adjournment.

Milltown Environmental Commission Minutes

Date: May 22, 2024

Location: Zoom

Members Present: Michael Shakarjian, Barbara Wright, Sally Sharp, Kate Scotto

Administrative Business:

Meeting convened at: 7:30

Land Acknowledgement read by: Michael Shakarjian

Approved draft agenda

September '23 minutes approved.

Borough Council Liaison: Phil Zambrana

Old Business/Agenda:

Planning and Zoning Board- Michael Shakarjian – Next Meeting: July 10-
Christopher St. Application for extension/access from Henry St. Amal Mikhail
EIS was not received in latest packet; steep slopes are a major issue.

Earth Day Redux – Kate Scotto

Thank you notes going out this week. Kate will Ask Frank about Home Depot donation -

Idling issue – Michael/Doriann.

Vegetation near sign at open space has been cleared; another sign should be added

Need one for Mill Pond Park

Doriann – checking for stickers, flyers,

Milltown Environmental Commission Webpage- Michael/Dawn

Updated accomplishments and goals posted after meeting was held to discuss.

Be good to have an update with pictures of Schwendeman progress – Mary Ellen

More concise description of our role.

Presentation to borough – November: Kate

Request sent to Monica for November 12.

Request Line item for Env Comm

Request Table Cloth for Env Comm (may want to request sooner).

Albert Ave Park –

Plan to add improvements, incl. bike path. See whether work is going on and status with trees.

Schwendeman Property- no report.

Pollinator Garden/Rain Gardens/Community Gardens: Sally/Barbara

Tracy Youngster's aunt provided a presentation at library.

Volunteers needed at this time

Plans for tree plantings, consider buying a cistern.

Stormwater Ordinance (Green Infrastructure): no report, but new required state revision has been passed as an ordinance.

Energy Infrastructure Michael

The BPU has announced another round of [Community Energy Plan Grants \(CEPG\)](#) and Milltown Boro is eligible to apply for a \$10K grant funding to create a Community Energy Plan. Application is ready to submit.

New State OPRA rules passed by both NJ houses and on Governor's desk. More restricted.

Resolution passed by Council that was supported by League of Municipalities.

Opposed by ACLU and others.

Not yet signed into law. On Murphy's desk Recommend to oppose by writing

Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership:

Had a booth at Rutgers Day

Planning a clean-up at Farrington Lake June 1

East Brunswick Environmental Commission:

Businesses providing plastic utensils only when requested.

Had a meeting on "Food Choices for a Small Planet."

ANJEC: Michael S.-

Opposition to NJ Turnpike Expansion: Resolution' public comment period ends July 11.

Working with NJDEP on NJPACT REAL to protect wetlands.

Events/Field Trips: None

New Business: None

Next Meeting: June 26 (ZOOM)

Meeting Adjourned: 9:15 PM

Milltown Environmental Commission Minutes

Date: July 24, 2024

Location: Zoom

Members Present: Michael Shakarjian, Barbara Wright, Dawn Milburn, Doriann Kerber

Council Members in attendance: Felipe Zambrana, Frank Manco

Administrative Business:

Meeting convened at: 7:30

Land Acknowledgement read by: Michael Shakarjian

Approved draft agenda

May '24 minutes approved.

Old Business/Agenda:

Planning and Zoning Board- Michael Shakarjian – in attendance at P&Z meeting were Barb Weight and Kate Scotto

- a. Christopher St.- Larry Sachs, applicant and engineer in attendance- testified of site plans; very little given about actual house plans; Mr. Sachs did not request a vote tonight- will return with plans- footprint of house construction?; during public comment section, residents spoke their concerns even though their comments could not be legally recorded- estimated close to 50 residents showed up; Mr. Sachs admitted application would not meet steep slope standards and did not expect to address application until after September
- b. Centre St. application? A previous approval with restrictions because of slopes. A neighbor came to raise concern about it and flooding.

Tree Ordinance: Chapter 19 superceded by 19.4 new ordinance- every property has to follow new ordinance which supports new stormwater ordinance- discussion about value of combining the old ordinance with the new

Stormwater Ordinance: updated the latest storm ordinance; Approved by WRA but 4 votes in opposition because Env Comm was not consulted.

Anti-Idling: Doriann Kerber- Keep America Moving- \$14.50 for 10 anti-idling signs

Milltown Environmental Commission Webpage- Monica, our clerk, will assist us in submitting our information to the borough web page; we need to collect photographs of our EC work, field trips, Earth Day, pollinator garden, etc. for website

Presentation to Borough Council- Our Environmental Commission will give a formal presentation of our commission's work in 2024 and goals for 2025- November 12, 2024 Council Meeting

Albert Avenue Park: discussion of particular trees slated for removal for bike path plan; EC members wish to modify plan, Councilman Zambrana will facilitate setting up meeting with borough/engineer to discuss and supply latest mark-up for tree removal. Concern is the pitch pines.

Schwendeman Property- couple of cracks in logs need to be chinked; linseed oil application last step after log repair; borough not taking bids at this time (inspection? repairs?), as there is a delay in passing budget- no BA/CFO; budget hopefully approved by July 31

Pollinator Garden/Rain Gardens/Community Gardens: Barbara Wright

- a. Donated bench moved.
- b. DPW installed a pipe to channel water
- c. Getting bat houses put up. Ralph is finding time in his schedule. Dawn may get in touch with him.
- d. Randy Ruth built a wall with donated stone.
- e. Rain washed away mulch- suggestion of placing logs to protect mulch.
- f. Councilman Manco volunteering 4x4 and 6x4 wood
- g. Some plants being eaten by deer, etc.

Energy Infrastructure- Michael Shakarjian- \$10,000 CEPG grant applied for – hear by end of July?

Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership: Earth Arts Festival at Earth Center/ Davidson's Mill Pond Park- August 24, 2024

Milltown Day- September 28, 2024- EC will plan displays/activities for our tent and will sign up for volunteer times.

East Brunswick Environmental Commission:

- a. Dawn is inquiring about the plasticware initiative
- b. National Moth Day – Saturday night 8 pm – next to Crystal Springs

ANJEC- July 29- Zoom event- Citizen Science; Sept. 10- Zoom event-Adopt a Drain

Next Meeting: August 28 (via ZOOM)

Meeting Adjourned: 9:40 PM

Milltown Environmental Commission Minutes

Date: October 30, 2024

Location: Zoom

Members Present: Michael Shakarjian, Sally Sharp, Kate Scotto, Dawn Milburn

Council Members in attendance: Felipe Zambrana

Administrative Business:

Meeting convened at: 7:43 PM

Land Acknowledgement read by: Michael Shakarjian

Approved draft agenda

Old Business/Agenda:

Planning and Zoning Board- Michael Shakarjian –

- a. memorialization of decision made last month- 25 Albert Ave./pool installation- exceeding maximum covers of impervious surface- approved
- b. 259 Washington Ave., applicant-Badaway; minor subdivision; no updates

New Tree Ordinance/Stormwater Ordinance- EC needs to work on these; meet separately to address these

Anti-Idling:

- a. Suggesting 2 by Four Boys; can signs be placed in Milltown Pharmacy/bank lot-Dawn will contact Ralph J./Public Works
- b. Suggestion to walk around the town to see where to put signs; bring up to Chief Johnson.

Upcoming Presentation to Borough Council for Nov. 11:

Environmental Commission members meeting this Sunday, Nov. 3, to prepare presentation- Sally Sharp, Kate Scotto, Barbara Wright

Environmental Commission General Discussion:

- a. Kate Scotto asked if EC can obtain an email address; Felipe Z. will inquire; cost?
- b. EC discussed if we should consider a non-voting, unofficial EC member from high school(s)
- c. Kate S. is attempting to recruit a new member for EC; Danielle M. needs to resign from EC- thank you, Danielle, for your service to our EC!

Albert Avenue Park: Dawn Milburn

gave report about meeting with borough engineer, Ralph and Alan Godber at Albert Ave. Park; reviewed plans and walked perimeter of proposed bike path; concluded that the few trees (3?) marked for removal were necessary for removal due to regulations regarding footage/clearance allowances for path; borough engineer gave word that township will provide list of replacement trees proposed to EC for review/comments/suggestions; members discussed importance of preserving pine trees, in particular; Herve Barrier should be included in future

discussions regarding new plantings- he has a vision/plan for native plants at Albert Ave. Park/ Schwendeman property.

Schwendeman Property: Michael S. questioned what was happening with proposed security cameras that were part of the Borough's '23 budget- did it fall out of budget? Felipe cited time line issues due to personnel vacancies in administrative offices

Energy Grant-

- a. Felipe (Phil) reported borough got official document announcing that we received the grant; no QPA (Qualified Purchasing Agent) at this time
- b. Sally has been in contact with Energy and Env policy planners – Gabel in Highland Park and would like to have an initial meeting. Meeting would include Phil, Fred, and Env Comm members.:
- c. Phil will write email and include Sally S., Kate S., BA, John Eckert (Electric Dept.), and Michael S.

Energy Infrastructure-

- a. Electrical prices are going up. Battery storage? Solar panels over parking lots?
- b. Suggestion to have someone give a talk about solar energy

Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership- Michael S.- plans for upcoming presentation by Holly Nelson of Rutgers University Landscape

ANJEC- Michael S. reported on webinar by Jeffrey Lamborn of Somerville- topics included: how to give presentations, importance of recruitment for commissions, mission statements, developing partnerships

Next Meeting: December 4 (via ZOOM)

Meeting Adjourned: 9:35 PM

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Milltown Environmental Commission Minutes

Date: September 25, 2024

Location: Zoom

Members Present: Michael Shakarjian, Barbara Wright, Sally Sharp, Kate Scotto, Mary Ellen Schwendeman

Council Liaison: Felipe Zambrana (not in attendance)

Administrative Business:

Meeting convened at: 7:30 PM

Land Acknowledgement read by: Michael Shakarjian

Approved draft agenda

Old Business/Agenda:

Planning and Zoning Board- Michael Shakarjian –

Next meeting: October 3

25 Albert Ave (Block 106.02, Lot 16): Variances to install pool with insufficient setback and exceeding maximum impervious coverage.

New Tree Ordinance/Stormwater Ordinance- EC needs to work on these; meet separately to address these

Anti-Idling: There was no action on this item

Milltown Environmental Commission Webpage: No new actions

Upcoming Presentation to Borough Council for Nov. 11:

- a. Request Line item for Env Comm
- b. Table Cloth for Env Comm – may want to request sooner. – Kate
Milltown Env & Borough seal for table cloth – Kate (\$385 available)
- c. Banners - Mary Ellen – could paint on the blank side of lawn sign.
- d. Discuss Energy grant, Christopher St, Steep slopes, Schwendeman, Earth Day, Antidling signs, pictures
- e. Need a committee – Kate and Dawn, Sally and Barbara, too. Mary Ellen – studio pictures

Milltown Day: Sept 28!

- a. Energy grant received – create a flyer
- b. Pictures of garden; pictures or presentation of Schwendeman property or taxidermy
- c. Recycled crafts
- d. Dawn – tables and canopy; Mary Ellen, too.
- e. What does the Env Comm do? Flyer.
- f. Mary Ellen will bring a stand with pictures.
- g. Duct tape and rope
- h. Clipboard at Milltown day – ask for opinions.
- i. Volunteer sign-up; advertise for new commission members.

Albert Avenue Park:

Dawn and Alan – at the park in the next few weeks with Ralph and Mike McClellan.

Schwendeman Property Update:

- a. Discussed possibility that DPW could spend a small amount of time to finish up the repair and coating. Ask Ralph at Milltown Day
- b. T-Mobile grants for environmental projects – for nature center. Quarterly deadlines?
- c. Ask Preservation NJ – Randy Ruth? Setting up PNJ meetings in Milltown; Does ANJEC have some resources?
- d. Ask Phil to help with this

Pollinator Garden: – New updates

- a. Had a clean-up day, Ralph brought wood chips, lot of beautiful flowers now. Kiosk redone
- b. Frank volunteering 4x4 and 6x4 wood. Ralph is taking care of this
- c. Benches from Randy and Tracy migrated
- d. Mums in demonstration garden in herb bed.
- e. Plants from master gardeners did well – need to be thinned – bring to Will on Washington Ave. Do some bush hogging up there.

Energy Infrastructure

- a. Electrical prices are going up. Battery storage? Discussed at Council
- b. Solar panels over parking lots?
- c. Randy and Tracy – have solar

CEPG Energy Grant

- d. Energy and Env policy planners – Gabel in Highland Park: Sally
- e. Advertise to get interested people to help with our grants

Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership- Michael S.

- a. Fall Bike Ride: Sunday, Sept 15 - Successful
- b. Meeting Sept 17, Senior Center, Herve Barrier and iNaturalist very good – Hybrid presentation.

ANJEC- Michael S.

- a. Sept 27: Environmental Congress

Next meeting: October 23 (via ZOOM)

Meeting Adjourned

Milltown Environmental Commission Minutes

Date: December 4, 2024

Location: Zoom

Members Present: Kate Scotto, Barbara Wright Michael Shakarjian (arrived after Planning Board Mtg), Sally Sharp, Mary Ellen Schwendeman

Guests in attendance: None

Administrative Business:

Meeting convened at:7:30
Land Acknowledgement read by Barbara Wright
Approved Draft Agenda

Borough Council Liaison: Phil Zambrana (not in attendance)

Old Business:/Agenda

Planning/Zoning Board:

250 Crestwood Drive (Block: 89.02 Lot: 20): Variances Required
Insufficient Side Yard Setback: Required – 7 feet; Proposed – 5.1 feet
But it's a preexisting nonconforming use
The applicant is proposing a 407 square foot single-story addition to the rear of the property that will accommodate a new kitchen and master bedroom.
Approved

Milltown Environmental Commission Webpage

Goals for 2025
Mary Ellen – Still need report on log cabin progress with before and after pictures.
Pictures; updating Kiosk info would be good – with pic. Pictures of flowers.
Update of what we do: using text from our presentation

Schwendeman Property Update: Mary Ellen

T-Mobile grants for environmental projects – for nature center. Quarterly deadlines?
Ask Preservation NJ – Randy Ruth? Setting up PNJ meetings in Milltown; Does ANJEC have some resources?
Input from council rep

Presentation to borough (November 12)

Topics covered: Energy grant, Christopher St, Steep slopes, Schwendeman, Earth Day, Antidddling signs, pictures,
Request for more funding for EC
Request for council to include the EC as a resource for environmental concerns

Improvements at Parks

Green Acres Grants for Wash Ave Open Space and or Michelin Field

Energy

The BPU Community Energy Plan Grants (CEPG).

Meeting with Gabel Associates

Meeting with Sustainable Jersey

Next steps

Energy Infrastructure and state and federal support; community solar?

Take Barbara's advice and watch the council meeting about electricity rates.

Get East Brunswick ordinance on clean energy.

Doriann says that we and South River are the worst of the consortium regarding solar ordinances.

Electrical prices are going up. Battery storage? Solar panels over parking lots?

LBWP Activities, report – Activities:

None right now, but Michael will be inviting Holly Nelson of RU Landscape Architecture to discuss project ideas from students on open parcel in North Brunswick

Idling issue – Current ordinances? Michael/Doriann. Need to do more.

Need another sign there at the Open Space.

Need one for Mill Pond Park

Engage police as well.

Idling of white work trucks behind Wells Fargo and Drug Store - maybe a good place for a sign. –Try

Figure out locations because we have to buy - \$14.50 each. Order from DEP; Make some??

East Brunswick Environmental Commission:

Still need to apply plastic utensil waste reduction effort initiated by them - to Milltown

Next EC Meeting (Reorg Jan 22, 2025) via ZOOM.

Adjournment.