

**Environmental Commission &
Sustainable Montgomery Subcommittee Minutes
April 16, 2024**

Adequate notice of this meeting has been posted and sent to the officially designated newspapers.

Environmental Commission Attendance:

(X) Mary Reece, Member	(X) Ratna Revankar, Alt. 1
(X) Susann Brown, Member (arrived 7:10)	(X) Jim Bushong, Alt. 2
(X) Frank Derby, Member	() Brian Zinn, Advisor
(X) Michelle Jacob, Member	() Sahana Karthik, YLC
() Greg Kaganowicz, Member	() Maahi Sethi, YLC
(X) Kathy Lynch, Member (left 7:10)	(X) Devra Keenan, TC liaison
(X) Sarah Roberts, Member	

Additional Sustainable Montgomery Subcommittee Advisors

() Thuy Anh Le
(X) Lauren Wasilauski

Guests: John Groeger, Parks & Recreation Director

The meeting was called to order at 6:04PM.

Agenda Items

● Lenape Land Acknowledgement

“We gather today on the land of the Lenni Lenape. As we meet in Montgomery Township, let’s aspire to show appreciation, respect, and concern for all peoples and our environment. We honor the Lenape and other Indigenous caretakers of these lands and waters, the elders who lived here before, the Indigenous today, and the generations to come.”

A Lenape land acknowledgement with a rock and a plaque in front of the Municipal building was discussed. Need to find out the cost of the rock.

- Approval of Minutes – February 6, 2024
 - Motion: Sarah Roberts; Second: Kathy Lynch
 - All in favor: all; Opposed: none
- Approval of Minutes – March 5, 2024
 - Motion: Frank Derby; Second: Sarah Roberts
 - All in favor: all; Opposed: none
- Public Comments: None

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- Proposed lights at Mill Pond soccer fields – John Groeger
A young resident recently attended a Township Committee meeting and proposed adding lights to Mill Pond Park to increase availability for playing time. John Groeger, Parks & Recreation Director, said options at Mill Pond Park and other parks, including Lubas Field, are being evaluated. Mr. Groeger is investigating the cost of lights. Michelle mentioned that lighting will interrupt the patterns of wildlife movement. Sarah asked whether parking lot lighting would also be added. Mr. Groeger responded that would probably be part of the project, if it moves forward. Devra and Frank inquired about use of Board of Education fields.

- Tree Ordinance – draft (*State deadline to adopt: 5/1/2024*)
 - Draft recommended tree list – under review by Shade Tree
 - Tentative schedule (subject to change):
 - March 27: Town Hall meeting
 - April 4: Township Committee introduction
 - April 8: Planning Board hearing
 - April 18: Township Committee public hearing

The ordinance public hearing will be held this Thursday at the Township Committee meeting. To match the state model, the caliper of replacement trees has been revised to 1.5 inches instead of 2 inches. Most 1.5”caliper trees are ornamental. The application fee was reduced from \$150 to \$40 (for 1-4 trees).

○

- Stream Cleanup – April 13 – Mill Pond Park
Mary participated. Maya will be creating a sculpture out of trash.

- Earth Day 2024 – May 5.
Divya Bharadwaj will set up posters. Earth Day will be held between 11am -2 pm at the Municipal Complex. Youth Leadership Council (YLC) members offered to volunteer. Larry will collect plastic pots. Milkweed plants will be distributed, but no saplings this year. There will be a table for freecycling of working electronics.

- 2023 Environmental Awards
The members decided to skip the award program this year.

- Sustainable Jersey
 - February 25: first round submission due
 - 500+ points uploaded
 - 4/4/2024: 1st round reviewer comments received (revisions flagged for 16 items)
 - May 10: second round submission due
 - July 31: third/final submission due

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Lauren gave an update on the comments received on the first-round submission and status of resubmission.

- New Municipal Center – green initiatives
 - Solar: meeting scheduled for this coming Friday with a solar consultant
 - EV charging stations
 - Rain garden – Lauren will check with Daniel Leopold on whether he plans to complete this project for his Eagle project
 - Maintenance of lawn & field areas
 - Detention basins
 - Maintaining existing trees & shrubs; planting new trees: grant kickoff meeting scheduled for 4/24
 - River Friendly certification

- River Friendly
 - April 18 (1PM): High School certification event

- Composting
No update

- Grants
 - 2023 Urban & Community Forestry grant
 - Funding awarded to conduct tree inventory/evaluation (street & park trees)
 - 2022 DEP Stormwater grant
 - Applied to retrofit 2 basins: Catbriar Court & Red Fox Court
 - Selected as grant recipient, awaiting more details from DEP
 - 2024 Sustainable Jersey grant – due 2/9
 - Requested funding for Watershed Inventory Report (part of new MS4 requirements)

- Single Use Paper, Plastic and Polystyrene: proposed new rules: [N.J.A.C. 7:26L](#)
 - EXTENSIONS GRANTED (to May 4, 2025):
 - meat and fish trays for raw or butchered meat, including poultry, or fish that is sold from a refrigerator or similar retail appliance
 - any food product pre-packaged by the manufacturer with a polystyrene foam food service product
 - EXTENSIONS NOT GRANTED (*The Department did not extend these exemptions because there are cost-effective and readily available alternatives.*)
 - disposable, long-handled polystyrene foam soda spoons when required and used for thick drinks

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- portion cups of two ounces or less, if used for hot foods or foods requiring lids
- NEW PROPOSED ADDITIONS:
 - polystyrene foam food service products used for the health or safety of patients and residents used in hospitals, nursing homes, and correctional facilities to the exemption list
- Penalties/enforcement provisions established

- Microhabitat for pollinators – Jim Bushong

Jim continued his research by visiting nurseries. Buttonbush is good for pollinators. They are not deer resistant. The native garden for people should be incentivized instead of making it complicated. Township Committee must be consulted about creating a pilot project on Township property and about the Township publicizing the initiative.

- Site Plan Reviews

None

- Correspondence

- Notice of Treatment Works Approval (TWA) application for Pike Brook Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade & expansion project, dated 3/5/2024
- Sourland Journal, Spring edition

- Old / New Business

- Deer management
 - 2023-2024 season total: 216 (192 antlerless + 24 antlered); 72 donated

Year	Harvest
2014-15	192
2015-16	163
2016-17	164
2017-18	174
2018-19	214
2019-2020	218
2020-2021	286
2021-2022	252
2022-2023	251
2023-2024	216

The Township is applying for a grant from NJDEP to complete a new population density survey, and to offset the cost of butchering donated deer.

- Film series collaboration with Franklin EC

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- “Kiss the Ground”
- “American River” not available until late this year/early 2024
- Host in Montgomery

- Upcoming Events
 - April 12: Arbor Day planting, Orchard Road triangle
 - April 13: Stream Cleanup, Mill Pond Park, 9-11AM
 - April 18: High School River Friendly sign unveiling, 1PM
 - April 27: Arbor Day event, Municipal Complex, 11AM (concurrent with Farmers Market)
 - April 28: Run with Rotary
 - May 4: Spring Fling
 - May 5: Earth Day Fair
 - June 1: Trails Day

Upcoming meetings: May 7, June 4

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50PM.