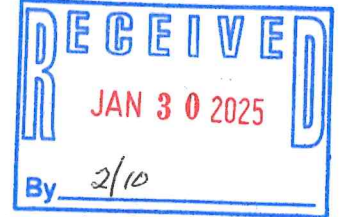


CLERK

OPRA

From: Food & Water Watch <opra+request-71395-d814e750@requests.opramachine.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 11:50 AM
To: OPRA
Subject: OPRA request - 2024 Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes

Dear Scotch Plains Township,



Please accept this electronic request for public records made under OPRA and the common law right of access. I am not required to fill out an official form or use a particular software platform to submit my request per NJSA 47:1A-5(f), which states that an email from a requestor including all of the information required on the adopted form shall suffice in place of a completed form as a valid government record request.

I HAVE NOT been convicted of any indictable offense under the laws of New Jersey, any other state, or the United States.

I WILL NOT use the requested government records for a commercial purpose.

I AM NOT seeking records in connection with a legal proceeding.

Records requested:

Please provide copies of the meeting minutes/notes for all 2024 meetings of your municipal Environmental Commission/Committee, if one exists, and your "Green Team," if one exists.

My preferred delivery method for response(s) to this request is by E-mail as attachments. Please confirm you have received this request. If you are not the custodian of records, please forward my request to that person and provide their email address to me for future reference.

Thank you very much for your assistance with this request.

Yours faithfully,

Food & Water Watch

Please deliver records electronically via email to the below UNIQUE address for all replies to this request:

opra+request-71395-d814e750@requests.opramachine.com

Is opra@scotchplainsnj.com the wrong address for OPRA requests to Scotch Plains Township? If so, please contact us using this form:

https://opramachine.com/change_request/new?body=scotch_plains_township

Disclaimer: This message and any reply that you make will be published on the internet. Our privacy and copyright policies:

<https://opramachine.com/help/officers>

View this OPRA request & responses online:

https://opramachine.com/request/2024_environmental_commission_me_40

Please note that in some cases publication of requests and responses will be delayed.

If you find this service useful as an OPRA custodian, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's website.

"OPRAmachine's mission is to give people easy and affordable access to New Jersey public records.

For more information, contact us at: (732) 707-1628 or PO Box 3180, New Brunswick, NJ 08903."

January Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2024

Notetaker: Alex Loop

(action items for team are bolded)

-Gas-powered blower ban: Alex will touch base with Christopher Hurtz of the Fanwood GT. Will continue to edit the letter to town council and look to NJ State Bill NJS4273 for ideas/counterarguments. Maplewood, West Orange have successfully passed similar restrictions/bans.

-February zoom meeting will have PSE&G speaker Brian C. Kirk to take questions about clean energy careers, initiatives, Clean Energy Jobs Program, and Electric Vehicles. **Please write your questions for him here:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FDjYS3X5Xqw39irKZAOUTiGprgUYCcKeWAJvXMBa4YU/edit?usp=sharing>

-Composting updates tabled for now

-Updates on Electric Vehicles - new developments in Scotch Plains must have spots for chargers. The town and county are aware that there needs to be more EV chargers, and are looking into it. Unfortunately Parker Gardens and Bowcraft apartments will not have charger spots, but future developments will.

-We can send out a Green/sustainable tip every week in the emessenger! **Please send your tips to me (alexvloop@gmail.com) and I will send them to Margaret to be published in the weekly emessenger.** You can sign up for the Scotch Plains Messenger by putting your email here: <https://www.scotchplainsnj.gov/index.php/departments/282-public-property-messenger>

-Regarding doggie waste bags - Vivian and Elizabeth will ask the clerk's office to send out the ordinance regarding dog waste with yearly dog licenses.

-NJ Bottle Bill - I forwarded to the team, **you can sign your name individually and put the Scotch Plains Green Team as the organization!**

-Christine raised the issue of pollution in waterways. If you notice any strong smells (sewer, manure, etc) you can call the DPW and follow up with the manager at the SP municipal building.

February Meeting Minutes

February 29, 2024

Notetaker: Alex Loop

Thank you so much to everyone for your insightful questions for Brian, our fabulous guest speaker from PSE&G! Big thanks to Alice for connecting us, and for Brian for your informative presentation and for answering so many of our questions!

Some big takeaways:

- PSE&G is working to develop infrastructure and incentives to help usher in EVs. The company does not actually profit from high electricity use - instead money is made from investing in infrastructure. One of their goals is to actually reduce energy consumption.
- PSE&G is a great resource and can work with towns, developers, and home owners to incentivize the installation of EV chargers and infrastructure. This is something we should talk about next meeting.
- Switch to more energy-efficient products to reduce your household's energy consumption. There are apps and smart devices that can help with this! PSE&G offers resources and products to ensure that your appliances are energy efficient, and they can also do energy checkups. You can also learn more about vampire loads - things that take power and are plugged in even when not in use - here: <https://homeenergy.pseg.com/>
- You can see the breakdown of energy sources in our area by visiting pjm.com, which provides electricity for NJ and it's neighboring states. Most comes from gas and nuclear, but you can also see how much of our energy comes from wind, solar, hydro, and coal. <https://www.pjm.com/>
- PSE&G's Clean Energy Jobs program is a great resource if you are looking to get a job in the clean energy sector. They provide training and other resources (Brian mentioned child care and transportation!)

Below is the link for the recording of the meeting.

https://montclair.zoom.us/rec/share/Enb9F-NrDER7hN0qJZDE7zy2Tgt7Ds39l1_7gdXLxQ94iCI-nEOW8LqEtIpMEpSk.B7XSP5sHKhhhrunB
Passcode: 1a!22cW+

March Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2025

Notetaker: Alex Loop

Westfield cell phone tower: at the Westfield Conservation Center. Town cannot fight, but supports SP residents. tapinto article here: <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/scotch-plains-slash-fanwood/sections/government/articles/scotch-plains-residents-outraged-by-location-of-cell-tower-in-westfield-near-town-border-ask-township-officials-for-help> Carl will keep us posted if there is a grassroots group that forms that we can support.

Gas Powered Blowers: Will take lots of groundwork-start with educating residents of harms of gas powered blowers for residents and landscapers (emissions, noise pollution, air pollution) before we can push for an ordinance. Fanwood GT has already presented to their council regarding this issue, Alex will reach out to other sources to see if we can get more info presented to the GT regarding this issue. Attached is a pdf that the Fanwood GT presented to their town council.

Composting: Judy will have update at next meeting

Weekly e-messenger tips: Alex will compile 4 to send to town every month. This month: leaves in road, plug recycle coach, clean birdfeeders and birdbaths for spring, advertise ways to safely dispose of household items (freemarket, county website for dropoffs, etc)

Wild Earth Fest: Sunday, April 28 11-5. The theme is waste reduction. The GT will have a table at this event, manned by our youth committee! Come by and say hi! see more here: <https://ucnj.org/trailside-nature-and-science-center/events/>

Earth Day: Saturday April 20. Cleanup is 8-10a, seedling giveaway 9-11a. Freecycle is 10:30-12:30. Both of these events are at Jerseyland Park this year. The town needs more site captains for the Earth Day cleanups - please register on Community Pass! You can also volunteer for the Freemarket, unloading and sorting items, setting up tables, from 8-10:30. Earth Day cleanup link here: <https://scotchplainsnj.gov/index.php/news/11-township-news/30-events/1250-earth-day-celebration> and freemarket link here: <https://www.scotchplainsnj.gov/index.php/news/11-township-news/30-events/1251-freecycle-market>

Tree Ordinance: The Scotch Plains Environmental Commission is on it, ensuring that native trees are planted after other trees are removed. Thanks Bill!

April Meeting Minutes

April 25, 2024

Notetaker: Alex Loop

Old Business:

SP Earth Day Activities-

- Clean Ups - Went well. For the future, could use disposable gloves and thicker trash bags.
- FreeCycle - Not as many "donations" as last year. But good attendance and not too many items were left over at the end of the event. Recreation might decide to hold the event only 1x a year

Ongoing Business:

Wild Earth Fest - 4/28, 11-5pm - Watchung Reservation - Trailside Nature and Science Center

- Green Team Youth Committee will be manning a table. Been asked by organizers to focus on Waste Reduction. Alex will be working with them beforehand on the materials they will be sharing and what they will be discussing. Will be conducting some soft recruiting for the team . Alex will attend part of the time.

Composting -

- Judy identified that composting is great but the issue/problem is **food waste** and that should be one of the Team's initiative/focus
 - Some environmental facts: <https://www.epa.gov/land-research/farm-kitchen-environmental-impacts-us-food-waste>
 - 31 to 40% of the U.S. post-harvest food supply goes to waste.

- losses at the consumer level averaged \$371 per capita, or 9.2% of average food spending
- Explore creating a "Reduce Food Waste" initiative that involves the SP community
 - Schools - how can they reduce food waste? Does curriculum cover this topic?
 - Restaurants - What do they do with their waste? Do they follow the law Do they donate food they can't use?
 - Library - Can new programs be created on the topic or do videos from prior speakers still exist?
 - School/Community Groups - How can they help reduce food waste? Education?
 - Green Team - Education at community events
- Explore utilizing existing resources/ideas to use in our community:
 - <https://dep.nj.gov/sustainability/outreach-and-education/food-waste-toolkit/>
 - <https://ivaluefood.com/>
- Use tips from I Value Food website in SP E-messenger
- Possible separate meeting(s) just on this topic is needed to come up with an action plan

E-Messenger Tips

- Alex has sent Green Team Tips. Been published for the last 4 weeks.
- Alex will see if Margaret Heisey could include those tips in the Green Team Instagram feed as well

New Business:

Green Team Meeting Day Change - Will Return to Last Tuesday of the month 6:30pm. Next meeting Tuesday, May 28.

Brightwood Park Day - Saturday, May 4. 8-mid afternoon. Check out the events sponsored and run by the the Friends of Brightwood Park. <https://www.friendsofbrightwood.org/#/>

Master Gardeners' Garden Fair and Plant Sale - Sunday, May 19 12-4. Trailside Nature and Science Center. Check out inexpensive native plants and demonstration gardens. Bring a wagon. <https://mastergardeners-uc.org/events/>

May Meeting Minutes

May 27, 2024

Notetaker: Carol Shichman

Ongoing Business

- Wild Earth Fest went well; despite participation of students more engagement is desired. Discussed more preparation is needed to achieve this. Youth Committee chair will graduate in June; next head is in place.

-Composting update: Follow up meeting in June will focus on this issue, regarding an initiative to reduce food waste on a town-wide basis. Judy Joshua leading this charge.

Related note: the Westfield Conservation Center collects food waste In partnership with Waste Management - to make biofuel. Westfield residency not required. Hours are listed on the website. <https://www.westfieldnj.gov/conservation>.

-More E-messenger tips.

Green Team tips published in the messenger have been well-presented and clear. The group noted the usefulness of using Emessenger and will continue to use that pathway.

New Business

-Recycling in FSPY, JCC and SPF school district.

The head of the Fanwood Green Team (conversation with A Loop) noted no recycling at these locations. Team identified need for further information since this was a general observation, lacking specifics. Action will be taken to contact each of these places to clarify.

Action: Alex Loop to contact FSPY; Carol Shichman to contact JCC; Alex to contact the High School Youth Team wrt SPF school district. Will report back to GT.

-Recycling at Ponderosa Park - See email 6/1/24 from Viv Hsu regarding recycling practices at some Union County Parks. Responsibility was not clear for recycling pick up at Ponderosa (whether Union County or Scotch Plains). Alex to contact township (E Stamler/A Mirabella) to clarify.

-Break for July and/or June? Team decided to meet for June and break for July.

-Union County Invasive Plant Swap 6/6/24-Alex noted the value of participating in that plants are available, without charge, for exchange at this event.

Open Discussion

- Noise caused by leaf blowers, hedge cutter/trimmers is significant. Electric tools much quieter. Group discussed how to make an effective presentation for improving the situation. Discussion will continue.

- S Dazzo seeking a sponsor for her pollinator garden project - will contact Margaret Heisey, Deputy Township Manager, for information.

- **Desirability of adding members to the GT was noted.** To be addressed.

- Recommended read: Eve O. Schaub, "Year of No Garbage "Recycling Lies, Plastic Problems, and One Woman's Trashy Journey to Zero Waste" Skyhorse Publishing, 2023. Available at the SP Library and via Amazon. Many environmental pointers.

June Meeting Minutes

June 25, 2024

Notetaker: Alex Loop

Ongoing Business:

Updates on Recycling in SPFHS, FSPY, and JCC:

Carol reached out to the JCC and learned that recycling was not effectively happening on the member end. The waste removal service may sort it, but JCC was unsure. The JCC may try to bring recycling back, but were pleased to share that they have solar panels on the roof and have reduced power consumption.

Alex reports that FSPY does not have a dumpster for recycling plastics, glass, or aluminum - only a separate dumpster for cardboard and paper recycling. She will find out more from FSPY but assumes a similar situation as the JCC - members do not separate trash from recyclables which results in a contaminated wastestream.

Is it important for these places to recycle? Should we be putting more energy in educating residents and reducing waste at the source? (ie a bottle bill, encouraging greener practices - reusable water bottles, etc)

Alex is still looking for e-messenger tips - tips/articles relevant to plastic reduction would be especially welcome as Beyond Plastics is doing a Plastic Free July that we can challenge residents to partake in.

Alex will email Mirabella regarding waste disposal in Ponderosa Park.

New Business

Senate Bill 217 which bans the sale and use of gas powered leaf blowers passed the Environmental and Energy Committee, and has been referred to the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. We will stay tuned for additional action to take to support this bill.

Vivian, Carol, and Alex will meet to discuss ways to engage with the Scotch Plains Library to educate residents on the plastic crisis.

Scotch Plains Day: late September-early October, considering offering raffle prizes (gift card to Sustainable Haus, Stanley cup?) to engage with residents. Vivian will talk with McIntyre's of Westfield to see about having someone promote battery powered lawn equipment at SP Day. Vivian also spotted a commercial landscaper using electric lawn equipment in Westfield - whoohoo! (Scape-Abilities)

August Meeting Minutes

Notetaker: Alex Loop

August 27, 2024

Bill S217 gas powered blower ban - no update, bill has been referred to Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee 6/20/24

Alex is still collecting e-messenger tips! Please continue to send any articles, ideas, suggestions for tips her way! Elizabeth has contacted Margaret - 7000 residents receive the e-messenger every week! Scroll to the bottom of this page and sign up for it [here](#).

Scotch Plains Day 2024 has been confirmed for Sunday October 6. The SP GT will have a table! A signup sheet for manning it will go out with the meeting links in September. We decided on prizes for our table (Stanley Cup, swedish dishcloths, mesh produce bags) Alex has contacted Margaret regarding prizes as well as gift cards to the Farmers Market at Elizabeth's suggestion. Vivian has collected brochures and business cards from MacIntyre about electric lawn equipment. Alex will reach out to Fran to see if she still has a prize wheel, and will also reach out to Sustainable Haus to see if they would like to donate gift cards for the table. Our goal for the table is to educate residents on sustainable initiatives they can undertake at home: reducing waste, planting natives, using electric lawn equipment, and shopping locally. We will display emessenger tips, prizes, and native plants at the table. If anyone is willing and owns one, we could also display an electric leaf blower/mower for residents to appreciate the difference in sound.

Good news regarding the Clark Reservoir Plans - the county has listened to residents' concerns regarding the proposed carousel, ice rink, and train, and have removed them from the plan, with a focus on environmental restoration and maintaining a green space!

We discussed a Skip the Stuff ordinance, (requiring customers to opt in for plastic cutlery, sauce packets, etc.) but most local restaurants already eschew handing out these things with takeout. Only chains such as McDonalds in Scotch Plains continue to give out these items. We tabled the issue for now, but Alex made a e-messenger tip about it.

Please comment on the NPS page about the Athletic Complex in Thomas A Edison Park in Middlesex County. The county is looking to install 14 artificial turf fields!!! Carol sent out some talking points from Beyond Plastics including links to the page and info regarding the dangers of synthetic turf.

We discussed an alternate platform for virtual meetings, and will stick with Google Meets for now.

We also discussed another plant-based potluck in lieu of our October meeting! We will finalize the date and time in a google sheet closer to our September meeting.

That's all for now! I hope everyone has a lovely Labor Day weekend and enjoys summer's end!

September Meeting Minutes

September 28, 2024

Notetaker: Judy Joshua

Freecycle Market - Went well. Better attendance than prior Freecycle. Though lots of adult books were left over. Rec might be a little more selective on what books they will allow in Spring. Better promotion is still necessary. People didn't learn about the event until the day of.

Youth Committee - met and determined games (recycle sorting) and signage for Scotch Plains Day on 10/1. Will meet Saturday, 9/30 with Alex to create games and trivia questions. Mary Ann from Fanwood Green Team to try to meet youth committee

Scotch Plains Day 10/1/23

- Suggestion to see if there is anything to giveaway at the table from either SP or Union County. Maybe a candy giveaway. Plus, sharing info/QR code on recycling coach app.
- Alex to send google form invite to see if any other GT members are interested in manning the table with the youth committee. **done**

Online Outreach/Postables - will discuss at next meeting with Youth committee

Plant-Based Potluck - Thursday, October 26.

- Alex to reach out to Elizabeth to see if a room in town hall is available.
- Alex to send sign up sheet to determine the best time to start and who is bringing what.

Future Green Team Meetings - Request from youth committee - Special Guests in Sustainable Careers. Maybe a panel of guests. Alex to reach out to UC to ask for another presentation. Maybe December

FSPY Fall Harvest - Saturday, October 28

Alex to see if SP Green Team could have a table. Suggestion to promote something to tie into Fall Harvest theme - the value of fallen leaves, composting, recycling pumpkins, etc.?

Brookside ArtificialTurf & other Improvements \$3.8 million Bond Ordinance on Nov 7 Ballot

- Learn More - <https://friendsofbrooksideparksp.org/>
- Get out the Vote - remind your friends and family. Promote.
- Vote - in person or Vote by Mail https://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-by-mail.shtml?WT.mc_id=Campaign_ConstantContact_VotebyMail-Email
 - Must hand in application to for Mail In ballot by 7 days prior to election or apply in person at County Clerk office by 3pm the day before election

Exploring - Composting in Scotch Plains - Judy

- How to conduct a Pilot program using a couple of sites in town for drop off of food waste to be turned into compost. Must have a plan beyond Pilot
- Research Westfield's program allowing residents to drop off food waste at Westfield Conservation Center which is collected 1x a week and turned into BioFuel to power Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority
- Research how local towns use Green Bucket Compost to pick up food waste. Individual homes or different locations throughout town?

- See if able to get grants to run/subsidize a program. Maybe through Sustainable NJ or Union County?
- Speak with Elizabeth about ways to move forward.

Check out webinars and events at **NPSNJ** - The Native Plant Society of New Jersey
<https://npsnj.org/>

Check out **ANJEC** - Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions -
<https://anjec.org/>

October Meeting Minutes

Overview

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1. Call to Order

On Monday, Oct. 28, 2024, members of the Scotch Plains Green Team got together for their second annual plant-based potluck dinner and meeting, at the historic Shady Rest Country Club, on Jerusalem Road. The meeting was called to order at 6:45 PM by Alex Loop.

2. Attendees

In attendance were:

Alex Loop Vivian Hsu (note taker) Carol Shichman

Alice Condren Judy Joshua Carl Spring
Susan Dazzo Al Muller Elizabeth Stamler
Fran Wagner

3. Ongoing Business

3.1 Scotch Plains Messenger

Weekly tips on becoming more environmentally friendly have been appearing in the Scotch Plains electronic newsletter, the Messenger. Please send any tips to Alex so she can turn them into punchy messages.

3.2 Scotch Plains Day

The annual Scotch Plains Day fair, held this year on October 6th provided good exposure for the Green Team, whose kiosk featured a hand-crafted wheel of fortune (courtesy Alex). Passersby could spin the wheel and if they correctly answered environment-related questions were entered into a raffle to win ecologically-friendly giveaways (which included a coveted Stanley water bottle). There were over 40 entries.

4. New Business

4.1 NJ Senate Bill S217 Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers

In the NJ Senate, a bill was introduced by Senator Bob Smith in January. It would prohibit the sale and use of certain gas-powered leaf blowers, in view of the chemical and noise pollution they produce and the health and environmental damage they cause.

Link https://pub.njleg.gov/Bills/2024/S0500/217_R1.HTM

Al Muller is interested in working on advancing this legislation. The Fanwood Green Team is also interested in furthering this legislation and Alex will put Al Christopher in touch with Al so they can share information. Al Christopher's email is herzwords@gmail.com

Scotch Plains Green Team Meeting Minutes -- Oct. 28, 2024

4.2 Webinar on Climate Proofing Your Yard

NPSNJ (Native Plant Society of New Jersey), Union chapter is offering a webinar on October 30th 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM. on Climate Proofing your Yard with Hazel England.

5. Open Discussion

5.1 Sustainable Jersey

There was a discussion about the Green Team's possibly working on Sustainable Jersey certification as a goal for 2025.

Sustainable Jersey is a 501(c)(3) non-profit which provides support for municipalities in their efforts to reduce waste, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and improve environmental equity. NJ municipalities can progress through levels of certification: various sectors of the community, such as local officials, non-profit groups, business community members get involved to implement specific sustainable actions that earn points to qualify for bronze or silver certification. Sustainable Jersey also provides grants to local governments for sustainability projects.

Carl Spring was previously involved in Sustainable Jersey and will provide information to Susan Dazzo.

6. Resources

- View NPSNJ webinar recordings at: <https://npsnj.org/native-plants/all-about-natives/webinar-recordings/>
- Track a bill in the NJ Legislature: <https://legiscan.com/>
- Learn more about Sustainable Jersey: <https://www.sustainablejersey.com/>

7. Action Items

7.1 Leaf Blower Bill

Alex will put Al Muller in contact with Christopher? from the Fanwood Green Team regarding the gas-powered leaf blower bill.

7.2 Sustainable Jersey

Carl Spring will pass along information about Sustainable Jersey to Susan Dazzo.

8. Next Meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 26th at 6:30 PM on zoom. A link will be mailed out later.

November Meeting Minutes

Attending: Alex Loop, Susan Dazzo, Vivian Hsu, Al Muller, Bill Picard, Elizabeth Stamler, Andrea Stuart (note taker)

Ongoing Business:

-E-Messenger Tips: Please continue to send to Alex; Holiday and New Year-themed tips welcomed.

-Legislative Action on Gas Powered Leaf Blowers.

Discussed status of State (S217) and Local actions for bans and seasonal restrictions (Maplewood, Montclair, Morristown, Princeton, Glen Ridge, West Orange) and towns considering restrictions (Westfield, Milburn, Madison).

Green Team supported drafting an ordinance for Town Council review/consideration.

Action items:

- (i) Alex to forward samples of existing ordinances and Al Muller agreed to review and draft one appropriate for Scotch Plains.
- (ii) Track progress of S217 and write our representatives in support of bill passage.

Ongoing Discussion:

- (ii) Educate residents on impacts from noise pollution and debris generated by these machines along with the benefits of electric / battery powered options.
- (iii) Determine how enforcement for existing restrictions are structured (who is contacted about violations, which parties provide violation notices / collect fines).

-2025 Initiatives:

-Discussed existing Earth Day and FreeCycle events and interest in continuing with these. Helpful to tie new initiatives to FreeCycle dates. Souls4Souls, crayon and lego recycling were raised as opportunities for discussion at next meeting (related links attached).

Souls4Souls

Fanwood souls4Souls

New Business:

-Artificial turf 12/4 webinar with **Beyond Plastics** available and other December training discussed (link below).

Beyond Plastics training

Carol Shichman reviewed her notes from a recent Beyond Plastics webinar; anyone interested in more detail please reach out to Carol as we were nearing the end of the zoom session.

Sue Dazzo mentioned upcoming 12/4 film screening in Montgomery, NJ on impact of plastics on health:

We're All Plastic People Now

Continue to follow S3398 (Packaging Product Stewardship Act/Bob Smith, sponsor) introduced to NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee.

-Elizabeth Stamler reported on the **Sustainable Jersey** League of Municipalities Conference she attended in November. Certification cycle for Bronze and Silver status for 2025 starts on February 23 and continues through July 31 for late September decisions. A Sustainable Jersey Union County Hub event in January will be held in Berkeley Heights in January and Sue Dazzo was interested in attending.

-Alex Loop shared the links (below) for the NJ Climate Resilience Funding Directory:
Climate Resilience Funding Directory

Tools and Web Apps

December Meeting Minutes

Notetaker: Alex Loop

***We will meet again and have our January meeting on January 28 at 6:30, via Google Meet.

January 2, 2025

Attending: Alex Loop (note taker), Vivian Hsu, Al Muller, Bill Picard, Andrea Stuart, Carol Shichman, Carl Spring

Ongoing Business:

-Sustainable Jersey: We discussed forming a subcommittee to assist Susan Dazzo. Margaret Heisey has the login and can help provide documentation from the town. We should determine if town really wants this certification (or convince them that they do!) and work with partners in rec, etc. Carl Spring and Elizabeth Stamler also sent resources to help. Nearby towns with this certification can also provide guidance.

-Appointing a member for non-profit collections/initiatives: tabled for now.

- Green Team Initiatives: Working toward Sustainable Jersey certification, Reducing Waste, More cleanups, Education via E-messenger Tips.

New Business:

- Home Electrification Event at the Scotch Plains Library Monday Jan, 6 7-8:30pm, in person or via zoom. <https://www.scotlib.org/event/home-electrification/>

There is no Electric Vehicle session at the Library this month - I mixed up the year



-Leaf Blower Ordinance: Al Muller drafted an ordinance tackling gas-powered leafblower usage in town. Please feel free to send feedback specific to the document and page number or to download a copy and edit directly.

**MINUTES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SCOTCH
PLAINS NEW JERSEY FOR JANUARY 31, 2024, 8-9pm**

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Environmental Commission of the Township of Scotch Plains has changed the format of their Meetings scheduled for the first meeting of the calendar year 2024 to be held by remote access. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 (the "Open Public Meetings Act") Meeting will be conducted through Zoom. Members of the public who wish to monitor and/or participate in the public meeting may join from a computer or capable device.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Bill Picard, Chair - Present
Dominick Saliola - Present
Carol Pinkus - Present
Carol Shichman - Present
Ryan Teicher - Present
Paul Duvoisin - Present
Jeff Mayerson, Vice Chair - Absent
Councilman Matt Adams, Liaison - Absent

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

None

IV. OLD BUSINESS

None

V. NEW BUSINESS

- Two new members were introduced. This was followed by all around introduction of meeting attendees.
- Decision of Roles: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary. Bill will continue as chair in 2024. Vice-Chairs will be Jeff Mayerson who will onboard Paul Duvoisin for potential chair/vice role in 2025. Secretary will be Carol Shichman with Carol Pinkus to back up.
- Stormwater Ordinance (per R Teicher)
<https://dep.nj.gov/njpdcs-stormwater/municipal-stormwater-regulation-program/example-ordinances/>
Ryan Teicher noted the need for a tree ordinance in Scotch Plains in order to address issues such as clear cutting, storm drainage, air quality. Recommendations need to apply to new construction, additions. Discussion followed. Environmental Commission (EC) makes recommendations to the Planning Board relative to the environment, only. Relevant action would be for EC to draft a proposal, bring to the Planning Board and then to the Town Council to adopt as an ordinance.

Discussion on Tree Ordinance: The need to specify trees which are or are not acceptable for replacement planting was noted. A follow up provided by Paul Duvoisin (email 2/2/24) noted:

- OK to Plant- Red Maple, White Fringetree.
- Do Not Plant - Norway Maple, Callery Pear.
- Team to read through the model ordinance and send comments to Bill and Ryan to collate thoughts and finish draft at the next meeting.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

None

VII. CITIZEN'S UNAGENDIZED STATEMENTS

None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm.

**MINUTES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
SCOTCH PLAINS NEW JERSEY - FEBRUARY 28, 2024.**

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Environmental Commission of the Township of Scotch Plains has changed the format of their Meetings scheduled for the calendar year 2024 to be held by remote access. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 (The "Open Public Meetings Act" Meeting will be conducted through Teams. Members of the public who wish to monitor and/or participate in the public meeting may join from a computer or capable device.)

Public Notice was read aloud.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Bill Picard, Chair - Present
Dominick Saliola - Present
Carol Pinkus - Present
Carol Shichman - Present
Ryan Teicher - Present
Paul Duvoisier – Present
Jeff Mayerson, Vice Chair – Absent
Councilman Matt Adams – Present

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the January meeting were adopted as read.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Tree Ordinance

The team followed up on the need for a tree ordinance as discussed in the January 2024 meeting. Existing Township Ordinance 15 was distributed by Chairman for review purposes. Team member Carol Pinkus noted a DEP proposed rule effective May 1, 2024 regarding adoption of a tree ordinance (primarily concerns municipal properties). SP may be covered by current Township requirements especially if consistent with state requirements.

NJ Shade Tree Federation with the NJ Association of Planning and Zoning Administrators offers three Tree Ordinance Webinars: March 5, March 19, April 9 – Registration open.

Team members were encouraged to attend if possible to determine what the DEP seeks from the NJ State perspective and what might be relevant to a Township tree ordinance. It was suggested that where possible team members should attend first two webinars (before next EC meeting), recap and summarize. Two team members signed up. Information from the first webinar was shared with the team and reported useful for creating a draft ordinance which should apply to all trees within the municipality on both public and private property.

Generally this could help understanding impact of increasing storms; especially to Storm Water Management issues, with possibility that ordinances may address issues such as clear cutting. Capability of Council and DPW to incorporate recommended changes would be a consideration.

Matt Adams, Liaison, stated that SP should require a comprehensive landscape plan that includes tree replacement; planning and zoning committees are relevant resources for developing this requirement.

VI. CITIZEN'S UNAGENDIZED COMMENTS

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm

**MINUTES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
SCOTCH PLAINS NEW JERSEY – MARCH 27, 2024.**

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Environmental Commission of the Township of Scotch Plains has changed the format of their Meetings scheduled for the calendar year 2024 to be held by remote access. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 (The “Open Public Meetings Act” Meeting will be conducted through Teams. Members of the public who wish to monitor and/or participate in the public meeting may join from a computer or capable device.)

Public Notice was read aloud.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Bill Picard, Chair - Present
Dominick Saliola - Absent
Carol Pinkus - Present
Carol Shichman - Present
Ryan Teicher - Present
Paul Duvoisier – Present
Jeff Mayerson, Vice Chair – Absent
Councilman Matt Adams – Present

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the February meeting were adopted as read.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Tree Ordinance

Chairman Picard led the discussion around the tree ordinance. Discussion centered around the two March tree ordinance webinars that members virtually attended. Chairman had reached out to the Union County liaison about timing and extensions for the tree ordinance and was awaiting a response. Several nearby township ordinances were discussed as well as the requirements of the DEP one.

Matt Adams, Liaison, promised to work closely with the township to ensure that the ordinance was reviewed by all departments and the requests of the EC taken into account.

VI. CITIZEN'S UNAGENDIZED COMMENTS

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm

**MINUTES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
SCOTCH PLAINS NEW JERSEY – JUNE 26, 2024.**

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Environmental Commission of the Township of Scotch Plains has changed the format of their Meetings scheduled for the calendar year 2024 to be held by remote access. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 (The “Open Public Meetings Act” Meeting will be conducted through Teams. Members of the public who wish to monitor and/or participate in the public meeting may join from a computer or capable device.)

Public Notice was read aloud.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Bill Picard, Chair - Present
Dominick Saliola - Absent
Carol Pinkus - Absent
Carol Shichman - Present
Ryan Teicher - Absent
Paul Duvoisier – Present
Jeff Mayerson, Vice Chair – Absent
Councilman Matt Adams – Present

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

N/A.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Meeting began at 7:35pm without a quorum. No official actions could be taken.

It was noted that there are no plans to review this month. No requests for new construction on properties have been received.

Brookside Park Pollinator Garden

Walk through was done with Susan Dazzo wrt addition of a pollinator garden at Brookside Park. Needs were identified and are being further assessed.

Haven Park - per Councilman Adams, phase I of the process to improve Haven Park is underway. Primary needs: take out dead trees; provide adequate fencing.

If question about a dead tree near a township street, we can call DPW to check it out.

VI. CITIZEN'S UNAGENDIZED COMMENTS

Ed Minall of Scotch Plains asked about status of the tree ordinance. Ordinance is still with DEP for review. DEP Liaison is Gabrielle Pulcinelli, County Case Manager.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:09pm.

MINUTES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SCOTCH PLAINS NEW JERSEY FOR OCTOBER 30, 2024, 7:30-8:30PM

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Environmental Commission of the Township of Scotch Plains has changed the format of its Meetings scheduled for the calendar year 2024 to be held by remote access. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 (The "Open Public Meetings Act" Meeting will be conducted through Teams. Members of the public who wish to monitor and/or participate in the public meeting may join from a computer or capable device.)

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Bill Picard, Chair - Present
Dominick Saliola - Present
Carol Pinkus - Present
Carol Shichman - Present
Ryan Teicher - Absent
Paul Duvoisin - Present
Jeff Mayerson, Vice Chair - Absent
Councilman Matt Adams, Liaison - Absent

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

None

IV. OLD BUSINESS

None

V. NEW BUSINESS

- Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was said.
- Chairman noted there were no new developments to review at this time.
- Tree ordinance is still being reviewed by the Town Council. The review may be completed in time for the November 2024 meeting. The Environmental Commission members asked to review the final document before vote by Town Council.
- The EC brought up the need to publicize the final Tree Ordinance. Given the varied individuals, businesses, township residents, homeowners, etc who will be impacted by a Tree Ordinance, publicity must be done which will reach the maximum numbers of folk. Further discussion to define and clarify effective publicity is needed.
- Tree issues:
 - LIDL supermarket will replace trees erroneously taken down in LIDL's building efforts.
 - PSE&G will replace the trees taken down when new transmission poles were implanted (eg, along Lamberts Mill Road, Scotch Plains}. A good working relationship between Scotch Plains Township and PSE&G facilitated this action.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

None

VII. CITIZEN'S UNAGENDIZED STATEMENTS

None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.