

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2016 AT 7:30 P.M.

**MINUTES OF THE RP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 25, 2016**

Chairman Jim Ruff called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m., it having been duly noted that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of which was sent to The Record and the Newark Star Ledger on the 31st day of December, 2015. Members present were: Jim Ruff, Kevin Avery, Peter Garvey and Harry Menta. Commissioner John Anlian was also present as well as William Gerken and Mark Olson.

The minutes of the October 22, 2015, and January 28, 2016, meetings were approved. There was no meeting in November or December.

Correspondence received: copy of Challenger Road Defendants' Answer to Complaint for Declaratory Judgment

Old Business:

Interpretive Signs – Signs are in and should be installed in the spring. Steve Quinn said he could be available when the signs are installed. He will contact Fossil to see if there are any height requirements for installation.

Bird Count - Next bird count will be held in the spring.

New Business:

William Gerken and Mark Olson were invited to attend the meeting to see if they were interested in joining. Jim Ruff explained that the only thing the EC is required to do is to have an Environmental Resources Inventory. The EC gave a brief description of activities it is involved in throughout the year. Some examples were the annual Earth Day Celebration, bird counts, tree walks, Skymark project and protection of the eagles' nest. There used to be a series of grants from the DEP the EC was involved in when they were available. The EC has sponsored contests in the schools. The EC has made two interpretive panels to be installed at McGowan Park and plans on adding more signs. The EC also has to apply for certification with the Sustainable Jersey program.

Both Bill and Mark said they would be interested in joining the EC.

Earth Day 2016 – Jim Ruff checked the tides. There were three possible dates selected that the tide would be favorable to have the boat rides. **1)** May 7 **2)** May 21 and **3)** June 11. John Anlian will check with Hugh Corolla about the availability of the boat. Letters will go out to invite people to participate. This year Rutgers Cooperative Extension will be asked if they would like to display any tables at the celebration. They have displayed gardening and 4H tables at other environmental events in the area. Mad Science will also be contacted to see what they could add to the day. The EC will try to change up a few things to make the day a little different.

Nature Preserve - Commissioner Anlian said the Nature Preserve needs a good cleaning. It is too big a job for the EC members to handle. There are difficulties due to the heavy presence of poison ivy to allow the scouts to handle this cleaning as well. John Anlian spoke to someone that brings in goats. It would be a two-year project to eradicate the weeds. John Anlian needs to send some picture of the area to get a quote as to the cost of this process. It is estimated it would cost \$7,000 - \$10,000 each year. He will send the pictures to get a price.

The goats would be brought into the area from May – October. A fence would be installed to keep them in the area. The only thing that needs to be done would be to provide a container of water daily. They

will eat all the weeds in the area they are fenced in. There would be 2 – 4 goats depending on the size of the area. By the second year, the roots are exhausted and then the EC must plant what it wants to grow there.

Right now there is an ordinance against hoofed animals that perhaps might need to be changed to allow the goats in the nature preserve. Would there be a problem with any of the neighbors from any potential noise? These things must also be considered before any decision is made. John Anlian will meet with some members of the EC on Sunday to measure the area and take pictures so a quote can be given for the goats.

Sustainable Jersey program - The link for the program is www.sustainablejersey.com.

In order to participate, RP must, by resolution, appoint a Green Team. All members of the EC should be on the Green Team. John Anlian explained that it is basically a program to encourage municipalities to take action that is good for conservation and the environment. Ridgefield Park already has a lot of the things they require. They just need to be documented for certification.

The Village needs to do a resolution and appoint members of the Green Team. It will then be easier to divide up the necessary requirements so that RP can get credit for many of the activities that it already does. There are projects such as the eradication of the knotweed, the nature preserve, eagle protection, public education, Earth Day, school projects, animal shows, having an EC, having a Shade Tree Commission, recycling, promote electric vehicles, etc., that just need to be documented so that proper credit can be given to RP so it earns the necessary 150 points. The goal is to be able to submit the application for 2016. The deadline is the middle of June.

A copy of the 2015 Sustainable Jersey Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet was given to the members and Commissioner Anlian to familiarize themselves with possible submissions. Deadline is June 2016. Commissioner Anlian and the members reviewed a list of projects that could possibly be submitted by the EC for certification. He will go through the projects in more detail and determine what projects can be submitted by RP. After a quick look through possible submissions, the EC came up with 185 points if all were accepted. John Anlian will organize the list a bit better. He will ask the DPW to take charge of the activities it provides that meets the requirements. He will check with the STC on the activities conducted by its organization that can be submitted. The EC will send a follow-up letter after John Anlian has the opportunity to speak to them.

Some things might require an ordinance change. The Police Dept. will need to certify activities done under their guidance. There appears to be about 18 items that RP can qualify for.

Peter Garvey will try to get in touch with someone from Bogota who submitted the documentation for Bogota to see if she can provide a copy of what a completed application should look like. This meeting was also Peter's last meeting as he is moving in March.

The meeting ended at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara DeLuca