

NEXT MEETING: GREEN TEAM MEETING: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2016 AT 7:00 P.M.

**MINUTES OF THE GREEN TEAM
NOVEMBER 17, 2016**

Chairman Mark Olson called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 Star Ledger on September 28, 2016, and was on the municipal bulletin board. Members present were: Peggy Conversano, Joe D'Angeli, James Donohue, Leslie Olson, Mark Olson, Linda Quinn, Joe Rella and Gloria Rivera. Steve Quinn and Janet Malool were also present for the meeting.

The minutes of the October 27, 2016, meeting were approved by a motion made by James Donohue and seconded by Joe Rella. All were in favor of this motion.

Approval of bills: There are no bills to be paid this month. Mark Olson distributed a proposed budget that he reviewed quickly with the members. He explained that he used suggestions he read on the Sustainable Jersey website. A quick overview of the budget included the following: Green Fair \$5,200.00; Demonstration how porous concrete works - \$200; (Mark is going to build this with his neighbor, Gerard Garofalow); Community Garden – Soil Test, Nutrient \$200.00, Soil Test, Contaminates \$500.00, Tilling/prep \$500.00, Hoes/Tools – give away \$500 for a total of \$1,700.00; Conferences - \$1,000.00; Storm Water abatement grant \$10,000.00 (give to a civic group/non-profit in village that does something significant to reduce storm water runoff); Materials reuse program (education & signs) \$500 (Take what Sonny is doing and make it known. Create a re-use area/sign); Speakers \$1,000.00; Give aways & awards \$1,000.00; Educational/flyers \$1,500.00. Total proposed budget: \$21,900.00.

Hearing of Citizens: None present.

Steve Quinn said he was assigned the Environmental Commission for the Sustainable Jersey actions. One requirement was he needed to get an electronic copy of the ordinance when the EC came into being. He also has to provide the annual report done by the EC. He was informed that EC has never done an annual report. John Anlian said that is something the EC should be providing to the Board of Commissioners. The EC needs to provide an annual report of roughly 300 words for this requirement.

Correspondence: email from DPW about the recycling containers on the Main Street that the GT wanted to install. The DPW is going to take the existing containers and purchase a different lid for them. One side will be for recycling and the other side will be for trash. This is a great solution as it does not involve another container needing installation.

Sustainable Jersey: Mark took a list that was previously started and put a name on them and then sorted them in alphabetical order. He will do this every meeting and then go over each action at every meeting. This way people can ask for help when needed. This will also help decide if a task has too much work involved to be worthwhile to do. There are so many actions that the GT will not be able to do it. Mark said if something new comes up on Sustainable Jersey, he will look into it and distribute it to the appropriate person. Tonight he asked everyone to take a quick look and make sure the task is assigned to the correct person. He added a few tasks to the top. There are also a few tasks that may not fit into any particular criteria but the GT could make a good case for it under innovative committee program.

There is a task on rain gardens that looked interesting. Mark distributed some info on a rain garden for the members to review. This probably would fall under an educational program. If the GT got someone to do this, the GT would get points for this. Mark said he accidentally has a rain garden from blueberries in his garden because they were planted in a large hole filled with sand and peat moss which absorbs a great deal of water.

Joe Rella said they had the DEA Take Back Day. They got about 40-50 pounds, which is a little light this year. They do this twice a year. He gave Leslie some info on this. Leslie said what they also need is some type of education for the public on proper disposal. This is one of the requirements. They may need to look at publishing something in the newsletter. Later the GT can discuss work on website. The second round of collection will need some literature published as well and show intent and that the GT has an education campaign as well. That should fulfill the requirements. This is also part of the public campaign.

The bicycle/pedestrian portion did not really apply to what the police do. It is more for different type of area than Ridgefield Park.

Mark inquired if the Planning Board making Skymark putting in some type of bicycle path might qualify for something. Joe Rella said he would look again. He had the traffic officer look at this since it is more his area of expertise.

Mark discussed the points. If the GT did all the tasks originally selected, it would have 350 points. Obviously, the GT will not be able to do all these projects but he feels the GT must overshoot the goal of 150 points to make up for any tasks not selected to receive points from Sustainable Jersey. They do turn down a lot of projects so the GT must be sure to have more than the minimum submitted.

Joe Rella said he is sure that there are a bunch of companies that already have charging stations. He is still looking into this. 105 Challenger Road has two stanchions already. He is trying to get info on the Cranford Project, which is buying available for a charging station. Joe said there are already two charging stations in town and he believes the goal was to have three charging stations in order to comply with the task. The cost of a charging station is anywhere from \$2,000 - \$5,000. The GT is almost there for this task.

Linda Quinn reported on behalf of the Shade Tree Commission. First project was the forestry project, Linda sent the annual community forestry report from last year to Leslie already. This task is worth 20 points. The STC already has 10 points completed. The other 10 points they have to estimate the tree cover of RP accurately and then make a declaration of how they want to increase the tree cover of RP. Linda is the new STC Secretary. She is reviewing software and as soon as they get it sorted out they can set a goal for improving it. It will definitely be done by the spring so that will be 20 points. They are also working on the tree protection ordinance, which is separate from the ordinance that set up the STC. Commissioner Anlian is working with the Chairperson Flo Muller. They are working to get that done.

The other things, tree hazard maintenance and tree planting program, the tree forestry project is mandatory first. Once the STC gets approval on the forestry project, they can move ahead to the next project because those are good for longer times. It seems you have to do the community forestry project every year probably because there is a lot to do with it. They have completed it every year for the past 15 years so it should not be a problem to get those points.

Jim Donohue said he could probably tie the community garden info into community education. Janet Malool did a nice presentation for the community garden plan she and James Donohue put together. They plan on getting it started tomorrow with the presentation at the school. Jim Donohue said he has spoken to two teachers at the school and they are ready to get the approval to proceed. They might be able to incorporate this with the rain garden as well. They both could be located at the same time. Jim asked how do they get the approval to use the area for the garden. Commissioner MacNeill is the person in charge of parks.

Mark said he spoke to Commissioner MacNeill about several things, not the community garden in particular. Commissioner MacNeill said he gets many requests for people interested in starting a community garden. Mark is not sure that he may have thought of this site for a garden. Mark said one concern is that it used to be the old high school. There could be a soil issue.

Janet said that in one of the articles that she read they said if there was a soil issue, you could have raised bed and have a barrier for the new soil added. You would need to dig a certain amount down and then put a barrier and add new soil. Mark's opinion is that no matter where the garden is there should be soil testing for contaminants and nutrients. This way if anyone brings up any issues, the DPW would have all the paperwork on the soil. Janet is wondering if the DPW might have dirt from another area of the town. Mark said usually that is not good soil anyway. It is subsoil with zero nutrient matter. Janet was just trying to reuse anything the GT might have. Two suggestions were St. Francis and the old high school. Janet said one of the sites said that 20' x 30' area would be sufficient. One of the concerns was to start it small to see how it takes off. That is why they selected this area. There is room for growth if it works. Mark said one of his concerns is they seem to focus the community garden in a central plot rather than focusing on backyards. Janet said it depends on the communities. Not all towns have acres available to use for a community garden.

Janet said they looked at the area online but today she went to the site to actually see it. She is pretty excited about doing it there. She looked to see where trees were. There is actually a water fountain as well so they might be able to tap water there as well. A lot of the sections are triangular, which could add interest as well and it is very visible. People are playing tennis in the park, bringing their children to the park to play. There are apartments nearby and that might get people interested in gardening but with no place to do it. Janet's goal is to try to get people that aren't necessarily involved in things in town. See if you can draw them out a little bit. The community is changing. One of the things she is finding is that the people that have been here for years are still here. The 25 – 35 years old are moving out because they can't afford the houses. They are moving to other areas where they can afford a house. People moving in aren't aware of the good things in the town's past because they didn't grow up here. She would like to draw some of the kids in from the high school to help out. Maybe this would draw the parents in as well. Mark told Janet to speak to Commissioner Anlian about the garden.

One of the things to get credit is the Village has to show substantial support for the garden. The GT will probably be ok in proving substantial support. Steve questioned if people have their own plot in the garden. Janet said she was researching that. Some people are assigned a plot. A lot of the communities are "renting" the plot but Janet doesn't think that will work in RP. Her thought is residents say they want to work on a plot together and their payment would be to donate a certain amount to the food pantry in exchange for use of the plot. She said maybe the GT could get a couple of families together to work on a plot. It needs to be more than one person to work on a plot because there isn't a lot of space. If you leave it to one person working on a plot, what happens if they go on vacation or are unable to tend to the plot? Janet thinks it would be better to get pairs of people to work together on the plot. Hopefully, all of the sections will be filled. If it turns out we can only get 10 people and 15 plots are available, maybe it is best to start with only the 10 at this time. There are many things that can be done as the GT gets experience planning a community garden.

Another thing Janet was thinking about was safety. As far as by-laws and rules, she thinks that there should be a rule that at least 2 people should be working at a time. It is a safe town but things could happen. No one should ever be working alone. Jim Donohue said he has seen some great gardens in town, particularly the large one on Main Street; maybe he'll knock on the door to see if he would be interested in assisting. Jim said there are a lot of great ideas and energy. Janet said everything is kind of there already to work on the garden. Even if a parent had school age children, they could work on their section while the children play in the park. It is still light out. If this takes off, the GT could set up a section of garden where the GT could set up an educational section and have kids take care of it. Mark said maybe the GT should think about first-time gardeners and encourage them to work with an experienced gardener. There are so many ways this project could go. Janet said she will talk to John Anlian so they can start as soon as possible.

Janet said the only other question was if they could apply for grants or donations. Mark said he didn't think grants would be a problem. He would have to ask the Commissioner about donations. Mark told Jim to speak to Commissioner Anlian to see about the use of the park. If no one tells him no, Mark told them to proceed.

Steve Quinn said the EC action was turned in. He turned in the annual report and ordinance. Leslie said that is all that is needed at this time.

Mark said there is one task regarding historic preservation element. It may have something to do with the Planning Board. It might be easy points because there already is a Historic Preservation Commission. Mark will look into this one.

New Business: Mark said he (and others who might be interested) wants to talk to the Bogota Green Team about a Green Fair. Maybe it can be done together. There might be other things that could be done together that could get both towns points. There are lots of opportunities to work together to help each other.

What Mark didn't understand before about the Green Fair is that it can be vendors selling things as well as giving out educational materials. He is hoping to draw somebody in like a paving company that could talk about using porous or permeable asphalt. Look it up on the internet. It is amazing what it can do. If people run across vendors that have a green related business, get their information. Leslie said another thing about the Green Fair is that they want you to make it easily accessible to people. They don't want you to make it that people have to drive there. Joe Rella said maybe Brewster Park would be a good location. There is the circular court which lends itself to setting up the vendors. There is an area for the kids to play and a covered area for food. There could be separate events but at two locations and you could advertise both events at the other event. The best dates for tides are May 13th and 27th. High tide on the 13th is 11:55 a.m. and on the 27th it is 11:21 a.m. A date needs to be selected soon if the GT wants to start inviting vendors before they have other commitments. Joe D'Angeli said Earth Day is his busiest time of the year now. People are now booking events on days other than Earth Day.

Two members need to be reappointed, Peggy Conversano and Joe D'Angeli, will be reappointed as regular members with terms set to expire in December 2019.

The Environmental Commission meets on the fourth Thursday of the month, immediately following the meeting of the Green Team. The GT will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 15, in the court room.

Leslie Olson pointed out that in order to get credit for any action it must take place within 18 months of the June submission deadline. Leslie put a call in to get an exact explanation of the deadline.

Website: Leslie said the GT needs to decide what will go up on the website. Leslie said she will put something together and then circulate it for comments as a start. Pave Mandich from the Clerk's Office is in charge of the website.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for December 15, 2016, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara DeLuca