

## RAMSEY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

### MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING –MARCH 8, 2022

Until further notice, the Environmental Commission meetings will be held via Zoom. The March meeting of the Ramsey Environmental Commission was called to order by Chairman Nerney at 7:20 p.m. Also present were Ms. Benfanti, Ms. Boone, Ms. Danz, Ms. Hudon, Mr. Kehoe, Ms. Kymer, Mr. Morris, Mr. Ramiza, Mr. Walsh, Council Liaison Weber, and Mrs. Dey, Administrative Assistant. Mr. Carey, Ms. Kundriat, and Mr. Parker were absent. Mr. Melso from the Shade Tree Commission was also in attendance.

In accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey, public notice of the meeting was published in *The Record* on Thursday, December 23, 2021 and *The Ridgewood News* on Friday, December 24, 2021 and posted in the Municipal Building.

Mr. Walsh was sworn in at the conclusion of the meeting.

Mr. Melso, chairman of the Shade Tree Commission, was present to discuss how the two Commissions might work together. A while ago, he had contacted the Environmental Commission about trees being removed in the wetlands. Mr. Ramiza visited the site and wrote a letter, a portion of which covered proposed tree removal of approximately one dozen trees that were dead, dying, or diseased, as determined by an arborist from SavATree. Since the trees were in a presumed/potential freshwater wetlands area, their removal might not be allowed under NJDEP regulations. Following that interaction, there was a suggestion that both Commissions meet to discuss ways to educate the residents about such things as the rules for tree removal. Ms. Benfanti asked about the punishment for removing more than six trees since she is aware of people who certainly have removed more than six. Often neighbors must inform the Shade Tree Commission that too many trees have been removed from a property but by then the damage has been done. Paramus has the strictest ordinance on the books and there are also state guidelines. Mr. Melso noted that sometimes it is the tree cutters who are not knowledgeable about or who do not care about the regulations. In other municipalities, such as Saddle River, those tree cutters are required to put their tree care operator state license number on their trucks. Unlicensed tree cutters are not allowed to work in Saddle River. The Shade Tree Commission is looking into a means to have “more teeth” with a stronger ordinance that enables the Commission to go after the tree cutters who ignore the borough ordinance. Ms. Benfanti suggested that rather than allowing six trees per year to be taken down, that number should be reduced to four. She will look into the original ordinance and do some research about ordinances in other municipalities. Mr. Melso also noted that the Shade Tree Commission encourages planting of replacement trees to replace those which are taken down. The governing body would need to change the ordinance, working together with Jared Geist, attorney for Shade Tree, and Bruce Whitaker, attorney for the Planning Board. It was agreed that the two Commissions, Environmental and Shade Tree, should meet at least one per year.

**MINUTES**

On motion by Ms. Boone, seconded by Ms. Benfanti, the minutes of the February 8, 2022 meeting were accepted as received.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

All minutes will now be found online. Hard copies will not be distributed.

**OLD BUSINESS/COMMISSIONER/GREEN TEAM MEMBER REPORTS**

Ms. Benfanti is completing the Audubon grant. She had checked with the borough, and someone must be licensed to use Roundup. Bob Buono, who has left the borough, was licensed. It is not known if there is anyone employed by the borough who is licensed.

Ms. Boone has added the plastic toy collection on Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, to the Farmers' Market schedule.

Ms. Boone provided an update regarding the Green Business Recognition Program. The window clings have been created and purchased. There are three businesses which have already qualified for the recognition. She and Mrs. Dey are finalizing the application and the certificate.

Ms. Hudon will be using the case at borough hall for the Environmental display. She shared the items which she will put into the display case. The plan is to tie in the exhibits with Earth Day, the annual borough clean-up, the third collection for Second Chance Toys as well as the Adopt-a-Drain program, the bikepath, and the plastic bag ban. She will be putting a QR code linking to the Environmental Commission's website on the outside of the display case.

Ms. Kymer noted that there will be some upcoming Styrofoam collections in other municipalities. She would like to schedule one for Ramsey. Perhaps the pool parking lot could be used after the pool closes for the 2022 season. She also asked who is responsible for informing the residents about the plastic bag ban which begins on Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. She will design a flyer which can be displayed at clean-up day along with a Shade Tree flyer. Mr. Ramiza had forwarded an excellent piece with pertinent information about the ban. Ms. Kymer also shared that Minetti Dennis will be sponsoring an old paint and shred day on Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, at the pool parking lot.

Mr. Morris reviewed what is needed for the annual clean-up day on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, with a raindate of Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Dey is handling the publicity and has sent out the first of several e-mail blasts about both clean-up day and the plastic toy collection. There will be no tools available this year, only gloves and bags which Ms.

Danz will pick up from the county. Ms. Kymer is handling the annual grant. Mr. Nerney will take pictures of the event and will pick up the coffee from Starbucks. Water will be requested from Shop-Rite. The realtors will be contacted. The Junior Woman's Club will provide refreshments as they always do. Anything left at the end of the event will be given to Ramsey Rescue.

Mr. Ramiza reminded everyone to send him information which should be put on the Environmental Commission's Facebook page.

Mr. Weber provided the timeline for approval of the borough's 2022 budget. He also shared information about the mandatory lead line replacement which needs to be completed within ten years.

Mr. Morris asked about the wrapping of the utility poles by the DPW. Mr. Kehoe suggested that they were injecting the poles with a preservative which had been done in his neighborhood.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Environmental Commission, Ms. Boone moved that the meeting be adjourned at 8:34 p.m., seconded by Ms. Kymer, and passed.

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom**