

## Madison Environmental Commission Meeting

Minutes for November 18, 2021

Attendees: Claire Whitcomb, Joan Maccari, Brian Monahan, Meridit Jones, Lisa Jordan, Ellen Kranefuss, Kirsten Wallenstein, John Hoover as Borough Liaison

Guests: Jim Burnet, Bridget Kerry, Abbey Poore, Isabelle Lutz

- Jim Burnet Jim reported that the town council will be introducing a rate increase for the town water company. The rate increase will be approximately 20%. During the ensuing discussion, it was suggested that the town look into implementing a water restriction for lawn watering during the hottest months. John Hoover said that the idea should be coupled with the rate increase and considered as soon as possible.
- The proposed basketball and pickle ball court plans were cancelled. The council determined that there are far more urgent matters that must be considered first. One of the problems with the courts project was finding an acceptable space. This project may come back for consideration at a later date.
- Three Drew University students reported on their academic independent projects. Bridget Kerry gave a brief description of her project concerning endangered species in or near Madison. Examples were the brown bat and various bird species. Abbey Poore and Isabelle Lutz explained that they are looking at asthma rates and possible causes from environmental factors and food quality. The council expressed an interest in hearing the results of both projects.
- John Hoover mentioned that Sustainable N.J. recognized Kathy Caccavelli for her tremendous work and efforts for Sustainable Madison.
- Meredith Jones asked if the site plans for the 66-64 Park Ave project include removing 116 trees. Further discussion indicated that there doesn't seem to be much interest from the developers as to environmental concerns. Perhaps there needs to be a discussion with the developers.
- Joan mentioned that there will be a Pollinator W11/22/21orking Group plant sale with the Great Swamp Watershed Association. Should be in April. Shade Tree is looking into perhaps providing saplings with each purchase of a pollinator plant.
- Kirsten reported that Green Vision Forum will focus on natural resources i.e. water and soil and that the MEC newsletter will focus on how to be more sustainably responsible during the coming holidays.
- Ellen talked about the continuing efforts to reduce the harmful effects of current lawn maintenance practises. Perhaps the effort to ban gas leaf blowers as Summit has, should be stepped up.

*MEC Minutes continued*

- Tom Salaki will be entering a tree float in the Madison Thanksgiving parade. It should give greater awareness to all green committees in Madison.
- Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.