

**Madison Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 25 2021**

1. **Call to order** by Chairperson Claire Whitcomb – Virtual Meeting via Zoom Conferencing.

2. **Announcement of meeting notice**

Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: Read by Claire Whitcomb, Chairperson.

This meeting of the Madison Environmental Commission complies with the Open Public Meetings Act. (P.L. 1975 c. 231) Notice of this meeting was provided to the Madison Eagle, Daily Record, Star Ledger, and to tapintomadison.com. Copies of this notice are posted on the bulletin board at the main entrance of Hartley Dodge Memorial and were made available to the general public.

3. **Present:** Bridget Daley, Joan Maccari, Trina Mallik, Kirsten Wallenstein, Ellen Kranefuss, Claire Whitcomb, John Hoover as BC Liaison
4. **Absent:** Ann Huber, Brian Monaghan, Stephan Stocker
5. **Guests:**, Olivia Kranefuss, Taya Eppers, Andrew Smith, Shea Nelson, Rebecca Bertrand
6. **Events:** All previously scheduled public environmental events sponsored or supported by the MEC have been cancelled and/or postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

7. **Continuing Business:**

Town Wide Yard Sale: Scheduled for April 17th. To date, 33 people have signed up; many more are expected. Registration closes Thursday, April 15th. There is a master sign-up page at the Great Swamp Watershed Association (GSWA). Rebecca will generate a map with participant addresses and list of items.

Green Vision Forum: The event held on March 24th was a great, inspirational success and featured eight schools including St. Elizabeth's University (for the first time) as well as FDU. BOE members attended along with the Mayor. Some actionable topics included recycling bottle caps to benches, native plant cookbook, green roofs, disposal of Covid masks in an environmental way and an eco scavenger hunt. It was suggested that a mentorship project might be developed to help the students connect with guidance for bringing their ideas to fruition.

Climate Action Planning: Two recent meetings were held to help shape the vision and direction for Madison's climate action. Peter Fried shared details on Madison's carbon footprint and Bridget, Kirsten and Claire shared the communications plan incorporating "I am Green Madison". The Madison Chatham contingent (MadChats) of the larger Climate Action Working Group (CAWG), which includes up to 10 towns, met to better define the vision and broad goals. The name Energy Transformation will be used to reflect alignment with state language (energy) and future vision (transformation of community space). Bridget raised the idea that residents need to see concrete goals so they can connect and contribute to making a difference (i.e. number of EVs). The idea was raised from previous meetings to create a thermometer or digital dashboard to show residents climate progress. John Hoover will speak with Ray Codey about Jim Burnett meeting with the MEC, SM and other groups to review plans and constraints for purchasing power now and in the future.

Site Plan Reviews: Proposed changes for Cook Avenue Parking Lot are on display at Borough Hall. There was discussion of the need to have plans sent digitally on a more consistent basis and receive such documents well in advance of impending deadlines so as to have more impactful involvement.

8. New Business:

Open Space: Kirsten reports that a \$1,500 ANJCEC grant application is in the works. Monies could perhaps go to Summer Hill Park – which is in need of upkeep, redesign or both. Rebecca, who is on the Parks Committee, will touch base with Tom Salaki on where/how potential grant monies might be used. Bob Vogel is looking into viability of structural changes at Summer Hill Park. John Hoover indicated that the Parks Master Plan to be shared with Borough Council on April 26th.

Energy Audit: Hartley Dodge was one of 5 municipal buildings to have an energy audit with LGEA, part of the NJ Clean Energy Program. SMAC recieved a large list of actions. Claire will join Peter and Kathi at a follow up meeting.

Rain Gardens: Rebecca attended a presentation by the GSWA and noted that Summit has partnered with Rutgers (who has produced a comprehensive Rain Garden Manual) for residents to sign up for free, 30-minute consultations on rain gardens. Rebecca will inquire as to whether we could do this for Madison. As an aside, it was noted that certain towns that are in watersheds can get rebates for installing rain gardens; Madison is not one of those towns. Bridget suggested that the Madison Public Library might be a site for a rain garden. Joan provided some education on the nuances of determining useful spots for rain gardens. Bridget will contact the library. For rain garden site development, we may be able to make use of the storm water downspout runoff map developed by the MEC summer 2020 intern.

Native Plant Tour: Bridget and Joan are developing a Native Plant Tour – in the same vein as the very successful Eco House Tour - only with gardens. Time frame is sometime in September.

Pollinator Sale: Bridget shared that a number of towns are working with the GSWA to conduct a native plant sale (wholesale prices) on April 1st. Orders will be picked up from the GSWA on May 1st and distributed by respective towns. GSWA is sending out a press release; Bridget will touch base with Michael for local press. Lisa Ellis will be consulted for the best pick-up location in Madison. John Hoover suggested the community arts center. It was noted that May 1st is also May Day in Madison.

Upcoming Events: Some noted were April 15th Master Gardener Pollinator Event; April 22nd, Composter Sale; April 22nd EV Expo; May or June, Meet the Beekeepers and Pollinators of Madison and Pollinator Plant Give-Away; Possible Event: Store Owners of Morristown (0-180) and Summit (Sustainable Haus) possible Zoom presentation of the store concepts, date TBD.

Submitted by Ellen Kranefuss