

Madison Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes

October 28, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm. Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act was read by Claire Whitcomb, Chairperson.

Members:

Claire Whitcomb, Joan Maccari, Bridget Daley, Trina Malik, Brian Monaghan, Stephan Stocker, Kirsten Wallenstein. Liaison: John Hoover-Madison Borough Council

Guests:

Kayla DeBevoise, Haydon Holz & Jazmyn Mora

Drew Students, Kayla DeBevoise, Haydon Holz & Jazmyn Mora are updating the Madison Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) The students presented their work so far. The students are collecting data on surface temperatures, extreme weather, humidity and other areas. Haydon Holz is compiling information about threatened and endangered species habitat in Madison. 144 habitat sites represent 20% of Madison land. Endangered species include the Red Shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, Box Turtle and some types of bats. The students will possibly expand the ERI to include flora and fauna as well as invasive species.

There was a discussion about the siting of the basketball and pickle ball courts. There are 4 possible sites. Two are at Memorial Park and two are at MRC. Stephan Stocker assessed the MRC. He presented photos of a recent heavy rain event at the MRC complex. We received 5 inches at the Madison Community Garden. Rain water from the MRC parking lot/embankment was rushing onto the road. A large amount of soil would be required to raise the area high enough to build a basketball court. Another reason to avoid further building at the MRC is the historic pin oaks that are protected by a town grant. The future ADA Trail will likely be impacted by flooding. The group discussed other possible alternatives: Niles, Bayley Ellard, Lucy D.

Two news articles were recently published by MEC Members: Trina Malik wrote an article about why voting is the most important thing we can do for the environment. Ellen Kranfuess wrote a piece on the hazards of leaf blowers and benefits of leaving the leaves.

Regarding leaf pickup, Madison is one of the only towns that still allow residents to put their leaves in the street. Most municipalities put them in bags and we should consider this requirement or some other alternative to avoid hazards of leaf piles on streets.

The recent ANJEC Congress emphasized the importance of stormwater management in New Jersey. Madison needs to address increasing amounts of impervious coverage.

Shade Tree did inventory of Summerhill Park and will be taking down some ash trees.

The Electric Vehicle ordinance is moving along.

The Friends of the Forest Petition has 10,000 signatures. The Borough has hired an appraiser with experience in land conservation.