

City of Summit Environmental Commission Minutes, November 21, 2022
(VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE)

Participating: Donna Goggin Patel, Dan Crisafulli, Jeff Hankinson, Lara Mendenhall, Kelly Moughalian, Chris Sprague, Mimi Zukoff

Council Rep: Marjorie Fox

Guests: Fred Blau, Scott Clark-Schoeb, Kathy Head, Sofia Mendenhall

Donna Goggin Patel called the meeting to order at 8:03 PM. The Oct. minutes were approved.

Sustainable Jersey Certification: Donna Goggin Patel

Sustainable Jersey awarded Summit with Silver certification with 620 points (for 50 actions in 15 categories). A huge thank you to the team of people who helped write out the actions and all the various city employees and community volunteers who helped provide needed details. Beth Lovejoy, Donna Goggin Patel, Chris Sprague, Melissa Spurr, and Mimi Zukoff all wrote actions for this cycle.

Earth Day Clean-Up Planning: Kelly Moughalian

Council approved the annual Earth Day Clean-Up for Saturday, April 22, with Sunday, April 23, as the alternate or rain date. Within the first two weeks of December, Kelly will email the save the date to the past participants.

“Tiny Forest” Reforestation: Donna Goggin Patel

A group of Pingry high school students and their teachers assisted at the Tiny Forest on Friday, Oct. 28, with Donna, Kelly Moughalian and Mimi Zukoff supervising. The students and three teachers re-mulched the pathways, swapped out the branches and logs bordering the pathways with larger ones, and added a six-inch strip of cardboard around the outside perimeter of the fence and layered several inches of woodchips on top of it. On Saturday, Oct, 29, Donna, Mimi, Lara Mendenhall, and Chris Sprague supervised community volunteers, including adults, one Lincoln-Hubbard student and several LCJSMS and SHS students. The volunteers weeded, added mulch around all of the plantings (including those done in September) and added cardboard and woodchips along the inside border of the fence. They also covered the thicker grass under one of the large corner trees, laid cardboard and woodchips and sprinkled golden ragwort seed there.

Donna gave tours of the Tiny Forest to Rep. Tom Malinowski on Thursday, Nov. 3, and to Jim Novotny and Alf Newlin from Harding Township Environmental Commission on Friday, Nov.

4. Donna also spoke about the Tiny Forest to the Summit Garden Club on Thursday, Nov. 17 and provided a tour to many of the attendees following the talk. We had 27 volunteers working at the Tiny Forest on Saturday, Nov. 19, with Donna, Mimi, Lara, Chris and Jeff Hankinson helping, along with Marian Glenn. We replanted the sweetgrass and finalized preparations for winter.

Community Energy Plan Grant: Donna Goggin Patel

Donna Goggin Patel, Dan Crisafulli, Aaron Schragger, Jin Blades, Marjorie Fox, and Fred Blau plan to meet about the Community Energy Plan grant for Summit on Dec. 1 from 1-2 pm.

Recycling Advisory Committee: Mimi Zukoff

The food composting pilot program began on June 1 in conjunction with Green Bucket. Any kind of food item, raw or cooked can be composted, including animal products. The collection containers are on the lower level of the Transfer Station, just past the garage. Residents with a Transfer Station permit can bring food waste any time the Transfer Station is open. Here are the amounts of food composted to date: June - 1,327 lbs; July - 3,064 lbs; August - 2,694 lbs; September - 2,165 lbs; October – 1,977.6 lbs.

Shade Tree Advisory Committee: John Kilby

STAC is moving ahead with work on a revised tree ordinance for Summit. The revised tree ordinance will be presented at a Council meeting in the next few months. The revision will provide more options to the City Forester and the Planning and Zoning Boards. There were a number of questions about tree permits and how to tell the City once a resident has replaced a tree that needed to be removed that were forwarded to STAC.

Summit Free Market: Mimi Zukoff

The Free Market held its first weekday event on Oct. 27, and it was well-received and crowded. The following typical Saturday opening in November was also crowded. There will be another weekday opportunity on Thursday, Dec. 1, from 12-2 pm. The Free Market will also be open on its usual second Saturday of the month from 8 am-3 pm in December.

GreenFaith: Mimi Zukoff

The webinar held on Oct. 27 entitled “Why Save the Drew Forest?” was attended by about 30 people. Dr. Sara Webb and Joe Basralian answered questions at the end. You can watch it on the Library’s YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V49HprcHTBY>.

Park Line: Jeff Hankinson

Jeff Hankinson provided updates about the Park Line. The pedestrian bridge went in on Oct. 22. The bridge is not open to use yet based on a few of the engineer's punch list items.

Green Schools: Donna Goggin Patel

The Green Schools parents plan to meet next on Friday, Dec. 2. If you would like to join the green parent group, please contact Donna Goggin Patel at dgp212@gmail.com.

New Business: Everyone

Following up on Fred Blau's questions about energy aggregation from last month's meeting, Donna reached out to nearby towns about their status. Millburn joined the Hunterdon Co-op last year, but the pricing has been unfavorable because of the war in Ukraine. Chatham Township got a resolution approved for the town to participate in an energy auction for public property. Chatham Borough has not progressed on this.

Following up on Jeff Hankinson's questions about Summit's drinking water from last month's meeting, Donna shared information from Aaron Schrager. Summit does not test its drinking water supply. This falls on the water providers to do so and they usually post it online. Here is their 2021 report: [PowerPoint Presentation \(amwater.com\)](#). In terms of forever chemicals (PFAS and PFAOS), there are a pair of bills currently in the NJ Legislature (S3177 and A4758). It appears each version has been referred to the relevant environmental committee in October. Donna will call the sponsoring legislators to learn more about the current status of these.

The Environmental Commission would like to travel to Paterson Falls in the spring for a sightseeing excursion. Jeff spoke about watching the "American River" documentary about the Passaic River and how it spurred his interest in seeing the falls. He recommends the movie.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Goggin Patel.

2022 Meeting Dates. For the present time, these meetings will be held via Zoom. These are typically the 3rd Monday of the month. Any changes to that schedule are noted:

12/19