

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, April 27, 2026 – 7:45 p.m.

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84354613764?pwd=QowaqLbPX6bFBD5yidpzY9IDP0aAb.1>

Open Public Meeting Statement:

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Bergen Record and/or The Ridgewood News, informing the public of the time and place according to the provision of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1976)

Roll Call:

Members: Lou Baldanza(P), Lisa De Pellegrini(P), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(P), Mairead Jensen(A), Randall Preston(P), Lisa Skoglund(P), Antonio Vozzolo(A), Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Joseph Puglisi(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(P)

Approval of Minutes – March 16, 2026 - A motion to approve was made by R. Preston and seconded by L. Baldanza.

Meeting Opened to Public Agenda & Non – Agenda - A motion to open was made by L. Baldanza and seconded by L. Skoglund.

Meeting Closed to Public - A motion to close was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by L. Baldanza.

Communication/Correspondence:

- The Principal of Pascack Hills High School emailed R. Hanrahan to request a garden plot in the community garden for use by the high school students and staff.
 - The EC would like to involve the high school in this shared cooperative initiative.
 - The high school does have an environmental club who may be interested in maintaining a garden.

New Business:

- Review of Planning Board Submissions
 - 14 Clover Court
 - Homeowner is adding a garage on the left side of the property and a deck and a patio in the rear. There is a 2nd story addition as well.
 - Driveways are excluded from the tree ordinance but it is noted that the survey shows a good amount of impervious surface being added to the property.
 - There are no category 1 waterways.
 - No trees listed.
 - There is no environmental impact noted, EC would request a survey with any tree removal when application is submitted
 - Kristin Marie Hair
 - There is no environmental issues to be discussed.
 - Valley Chabad

- Application was submitted to Montvale borough because a fence crosses the property from Woodcliff Lake to Montvale.
- Fence is 6 feet in height and made of decorative aluminum
- No environmental impact noted by EC.
- Wegmans
 - They are moving the wine section from the south side of the building to the north side. There will be some parking reconfiguration and repurpose of the space.
 - No environmental impact is noted.
- Gray Capital
 - They are proposing a wall and screening around a water tank.
 - There is wetland and a 50 foot intermediate grade buffer.
 - The survey shows 10 to 12 feet high green giant arborvitae – 2 rows of screening.
 - EC suggests Leyland varieties, Willow, Birch, Cottonwood and other water loving species of trees to be planted no closer than 10 foot centers.
 - EC will request a follow up landscape proposal.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini)
 - Joe D'Angeli a wildlife animal conservationist who is interested in presenting to the community on bats and their importance. He has presented to Montvale in past years successfully.
 - Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan) – No news to report.
 - Montvale Clean Up Day 2026 (recap)
 - Thank you to the residents and commission members for your participation.
 - Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo) - Absent
 - Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - A big thank you to everyone who has been helping with the garden.
 - All 40 raised beds are in place. Next step is to put cardboard (a natural barrier which will decompose and help to discourage weeds) and woodchips down.
 - Soil has been delivered.
 - Within 2 weeks geotextiles (a permeable, synthetic fabric) will be rolled out on the walking area prior to laying down crushed stone/concrete.
 - We have a fence installation scheduled for the 2nd week of May.
 - Opening day will be scheduled for June.
 - Repair of Environmental Learning Center, trail discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Michelle Zink-Jojic/Lou Baldanza)
 - There have been complaints of tripping on the boards on the trail. There are still more boards in need of repair.
 - L. Baldanza stated that a group of scouts who helped at clean up day wants to do some more work. The ELC trail may be a good option for them.
 - R. Preston suggests we involve the high school students in the repair of trail.
 - R. Preston suggests a date and time to organize the work that does not interfere with school.
 - R. Hanrahan states that new garbage receptacles have been ordered for either side of the trail.
 - Update on the Interconnect Trail between the ELC and Wegmans – No news to report.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche

- Hekemian and Russo presented a proposal for 250 units with 50 being affordable housing as well as an option for a data center, which it's currently been approved and used for. Most units in the proposal are intended to be for sale.

Planning Board Report – Joe Puglisi

- Some use permits were submitted to the planning board.
- J. Puglisi did confirm with planning board secretary that all plans are forwarded to the EC.
- The Dunkin Donuts proposal has not yet been voted on. It is hoped they will provide some updates to the proposal.

Adjournment - A motion to adjourn was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by R. Preston all in favor stating aye.

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, May 18, 2026