

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, March 16, 2026 – 7:45 p.m.

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81589301741?pwd=CsVTb3I3bASOzSNngOwZyBeyN0DsgF.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(P), Randall Preston(P), Lisa Skoglund(P), Antonio Vozzolo(P), Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Joseph Puglisi(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(A)

Approval of Minutes – February 23, 2026 -- A motion to approve was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by R. Preston.

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

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

Communication/Correspondence:

- A local landscaping business generously offered to donate t-shirts for Montvale Clean-Up Day. We sincerely appreciate the offer; however, to remain consistent with our policy of not promoting individual businesses, we are unable to accept the offer. We welcome and encourage all local residents and businesses to participate in the event on Saturday, April 25th.
- Eagle Scout Plaques
 - Plaques have been made acknowledging completion of Eagle Scout projects for Hridank Shukla and Kiera Luff. The EC thanks them both for their hard work for our community.
- Memorial Sloan Kettering Community Health Needs Assessment
 - Was received and forwarded to commission members.
- Bergen County Clean Community Mini Grant
 - We once again received the \$300.00 grant for our participation in being a clean municipality and keeping our waterways clean and maintained.

New Business:

- Review of Planning Board Submissions
 - UB Chestnut LLC Soil Movement plans - Trader's Joe's location
 - Preliminary and final approval granted at the previous planning board meeting on 3/3/2026.
 - Revised Dunkin Donuts Submission

- Sidewalks were modified and impervious surface areas were modified to support the new sidewalk layout.
- J. Puglisi recommends the EC members make recommendations as per pages C10 and C11 of the submission referencing shrubs and trees.
- R. Hanrahan requests the EC members to review, make recommendations and forward to E. Riccardi.
- R. Hanrahan will ask the borough if the landscape architect is still collaborating with the planning board.
- 86 Akers Avenue – New House Construction
 - The plans show removal of a shed and installation of a patio.
 - The EC requested a map/survey that is marked showing where trees will be removed and replaced as per Montvale ordinance requirements.
 - The quantity of trees being removed is currently indicated but the location of the trees is not shown or what they will be replaced with.
 - A hand marked survey/map is an acceptable submission so residents are not subject any unusual or additional costly expense.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini) – No news to report.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan) – No news to report.
 - The trail has been getting good use by residents.
 - R. Hanrahan did make a request to the New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife bureau requesting that they stock the pond with more bass.
 - R. Hanrahan was informed that if we have currently have bass and sunnies it is unlikely that they will put in additional minnows.
 - We have not had any dead fish or any toxic algae bloom last year.
 - R. Hanrahan spoke to R. Campanelli and requested that the inlet be cleaned more often.
- Montvale Clean Up Day 2026 – April 25th.
 - R. Hanrahan contacted Bergen County for donations of pick up sticks, shirts, gloves and bags.
 - The event start at 9:00 a.m. and R. Hanrahan requests EC members to come at 8:30 to set up.
 - The DPW helps by delivering traffic cones, tables, and disposal of the collected trash.
 - A. Vozzolo suggests we distribute a flyer for tic bite prevention.
 - E. Riccardi will prepare copies of hold harmless, maps, and volunteer hours form for the event.
 - We will order the same trees for this year. 50 redwoods and 50 pines.
 - L. Baldanza asks if we can we send volunteers to the ELC trail to remove brush clippings and moss from the boards.
- Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo)
 - A. Vozzolo sent an email to the EC that laid out the regulations.
 - Included a file that shared a link to towns that have current bike path plans.
 - R. Hanrahan asked how we could best navigate bike paths on county roads. Can we create a municipal ordinance that directs future construction projects to reserve space for the bike plan?
 - A. Vozzolo replies that it is possible as long we comply with NJDOT rules. There are signage issues, regulations on types of storm grates as well as crossing regulations
 - L. Baldanza suggests we check with the county engineer and planning board.
 - R. Hanrahan suggests we start with Montvale's engineer and ask for recommendations to start planning now for a future bike path.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - The community garden subcommittee had a great meeting with 7 people at the first meeting.
 - Thank you Mairead, Lisa S. and Randy P. for your participation on the subcommittee.

- The D'Agastino family (the new tenants on the DiPiero property) will support the community garden effort and potentially run a water line to our location.
- We will likely have funding for a pavilion.
- Our goal for this year is to get 40 raised beds in place by the end of June.
- Scout leaders will provide some support. We hope to get some work in now as the weather warms.
- R.Preston has been helping assessing the land and setting up rough plans.
- Repair of Environmental Learning Center, trail discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Michelle Zink-Jojic/Lou Baldanza)
 - Thank you to L. Baldanza for cutting down the branch across the trail.
 - We contacted the DPW to remove the remaining debris which was taken care of promptly.
 - R. Hanrahan will send an email to J. Voytus requesting two trash cans for the trail area.
- Update on the Interconnect Trail between the ELC and Wegmans
 - R. Preston asked Wolfgang if the EC could borrow his rock mover. It's a hand truck made for moving 200-300 pound boulders. He agreed to loan it to us when we need it.
- Tree City Application
 - We updated the proclamation and we are approved for another year as a tree city.

Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche (Absent)

Planning Board Report – Joe Puglisi

- Chairman DePinto and J. Puglisi were delighted that we have improved communication between the Planning Board and the EC.
- Viola does not want a public trial on the Summit Avenue property. R. Hanrahan suggests asking them to subdivide the property and deed a portion to Montvale for use as a trail.

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

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, April 20, 2026