



The Borough of Highland Park

Sustainable Highland Park

County of *Middlesex, New Jersey*

P.O. Box 1330

HIGHLAND PARK, NEW JERSEY

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Subject: Sustainable Highland Park Meeting Minutes, September 22, 2021 via Zoom

Attending Members:

Tina Weishaus-Chair, Allan Williams-Vice Chair, Irene Chan Marx, Paul Sauers, Irene Riegner

Council Liaison: Phil George

Guests: Mark Lesko, Jack, Burr, Arielle Cohen (Rutgers student)

1) A guest at last month's meeting, requested SHP meetings be recorded to be viewed by those who cannot attend the meeting. There were no objections, but due to technical issues, this meeting was not recorded.

2) High school environmental club-liaison to SHP needed.

Action: Irene M will inquire with the HS environmental club advisor.

3) Budget-Allan reported SHP has \$885 to spend for 2021. Some ideas include buying reusable bags (nylon, cotton, net), supplies for cleanups, reusable straws and environmental movies. Further discussions and decisions to be made at November meeting.

Action: Mark will research environmental impacts on different types of bag production.

4) Following up on film suggestions. Soliciting ideas. Kiss the Ground is one suggestion. Mark directed us to YouTube. We could spend some of the \$885 on renting films for showing.

5) Everyone's Farm (EF) - Wendy is unable to attend SHP meetings due to her teaching schedule. She intends to return to meetings next semester.

EF will partner with the Community Center to involve seniors in planting a garden next spring.

No new information regarding a grant opportunity for a garden at Zone 6 teen center. **Action:** Tina to contact Ashton Burrell to inquire about the grant.

Wendy intends to identify and contact gardeners to ask if they would give tours of their gardens.

- 6) Plastic bag ban-Tina reported Highland Park reinstated the ban on plastic bags on August 1, 2021. The State will institute a ban on plastic and paper bags in May 4, 2022.

Action: Tina and Irene R. will work with the borough on educating the public on the state bag ban.

- 7) Energy Aggregation program-Tina reported next month, a decision will be made on whether the borough will join Edison's program. If not, the borough will renew their contract with Gabel Associates and begin another round of bidding.

- 8) Raised beds at the HP Environmental Education Center-due to soil contamination at the site, SHP will not pursue this initiative.

- 9) Resolutions' update: Both the Keasbey power plant in Woodbridge Township and the Divestment resolutions will be introduced at the council work session October 5 and then will be up for vote at the council meeting. October 19. There is an amendment in the divestment resolution which now includes an increase in green energy investment suggested by the Environment Committee. The Board of Health will take up the 2 resolutions at their October meeting.

- 10) Electric Vehicle proposed ordinance-class 2 and 3 chargers are proposed although apartments cannot have it at this point. Ideas to increase accessibility to EVs in apartment buildings are being considered by the Borough, especially as it moves forward on the redevelopment plan.

- 11) Cleanups- Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership partners with the borough for a HP river floodplain cleanup on September 26, 2021. Mark has been very involved with the clean-up and a liaison between SHP and LRWP.

- 12) LRWP will also host a workshop on stormwater and flooding. Date to be announced.

- 13) Sustainable Jersey grant opportunities:

Stormwater management-impervious to pervious surfaces using for example rain gardens and bioswales.

Energy and electrification (excluding EV charging stations)-seeking ideas for grant application. There will be a SJ workshop on Oct. 3, 2021. SHP members and other were encouraged to attend SJ webinar for ideas.

14) Meeting guest, Jack, brought up how living sustainably by growing vegetables, raising chickens and installing solar panels, resulted in violating zoning ordinances.

Action: Paul will look into general background on growing food in HP and speak to Teri Jover, borough administrator.