



## ***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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### **SHP Meeting Minutes**

June 26, 2024

Attendees on Zoom: Mark Lesko (chairing the meeting), Tina Weishaus, Lisa Noss, Matt Hersh, Meli, Irene Chan Marx, Rose DeLorenzo, Claudia Farber, Sheree Neese Todd, Lili Wei

1. Boro update (Matt) - thank you to everyone who went to the redevelopment meeting. It's important for us to meet & gather our feedback about the plans. We can meet with Teri Jover (Boro Admin) if we have any questions.
  - a. We should provide comprehensive feedback this summer. It would be good if we can prepare it in July & discuss at the July SHP meeting
  - b. Matt to draft an agenda & see if Teri can join for a 1 hour zoom in July - Matt to see if there is a Wednesday evening available
  - c. Meli's questions about redevelopment:
    - i. Water management for the increased # of people
    - ii. Energy credits - how much is the new housing going to add to infrastructure overload?
    - iii. What % will be renewable energy sources?
    - iv. Better business (?) contractor?
    - v. LEED certification for contractor?
    - vi. How to resolve urban thermal islands
  - d. Tina - there's already a list of issues we started in Google docs. Everyone should have access. I will work with Irene Riegner to update the document.
2. HP Schools (Rose and Meli)
  - a. Rose & Meli were appointed by the Board of Ed as co-advisors of the environmental club!
  - b. [H.S. environmental club won a grant!](#)
  - c. There are parents who want to get involved & engage with their children. Can be a green team member at their child's school. Need to get the word out. Apply for grants & have students apply for grants. It's great when they take the initiative
  - d. Irene Chan Marx did many years of work with the schools to help make this all happen. In 2016 the schools were first certified. Thank you for all the effort you put into making that happen (Tina)
3. There used to be a half school day at the High School before Covid where they dedicated it to environmental education. This can be done again with leadership and collaboration.

4. Report back from plant giveaways and Meadow Trail tours
  - a. Mark - people seemed to be very happy with the plant giveaway & the 3 tours he gave of the trail
  - b. Meli - multiple people asked if they can donate money to SHP (convo to have at a later date)
  - c. Sheree - people were raving. They shared photos of plants they grew in the past from our giveaway. It was very successful! We met people who are master gardeners & want to give tours of their gardens
  - d. Lili - it was really appreciated and it was great that it was on a weekend
5. Park Partners next 2 phases (Tina)
  - a. 80+ people filled out the form about programming they are interested in: community planting event, garden maintenance, lecture about native plants
  - b. Matt - perhaps we build an extra \$2,000 into our budget for next year for plant giveaways & do something else with the park partners grant. Tina liked this idea very much and will pursue with Matt for upcoming year.
6. Farmers Market report (Rose)
  - a. We only tabled once so far & gave away the remaining plants
  - b. We are welcomed every week
  - c. We need more volunteers! Need a minimum of 4, up to 6 to commit every week**
  - d. Maybe we do once a month & announce the dates in advance
  - e. Mark - need someone to set up & clean up, need 2 people at a time, need to know before Friday if anyone can make it
7. Report back on Clean-Ups, 2- year report and NEED more help (Mark)
  - a. Sunday is the 2-year anniversary of Mark keeping data
  - b. Mark needs a partner for the cleanups**
  - c. Sheree - reach out to people from plant giveaway & say we need help/have more volunteer opportunities. Clean-ups and Farmers Market
    - i. Lisa to write draft of email about volunteer opportunities
8. Report back on Rain Gardens Maintenance Crew set-up (Mark)
  - a. Chris & Mark going to work on the gardens maybe next week if it's not too hot
  - b. In progress & had first meeting & first course of action
9. Announcements - Tina and Claudia /Lisa (Google Meet / S217 / \$2000 grant)
  - a. We won a grant to redo our website
  - b. Tina, Claudia, Lisa to meet & discuss
  - c. Tina - leaf blower legislation is in progress. We might need to meet about it & have a response
10. Borough-wide Tabling Opportunities - Tina
  - a. National Night Out, Thursday, August 15
  - b. Arts in the Park, Sunday, Sept 8
  - c. Garage Sale participation - September 14-15
    - i. Maybe we can have native plant garden tours & include on the map?
    - ii. SHP table with plant-giveaway during yard sale at Farmers Market site
11. New Ideas - Eco home tours? Educational tours? Speakers at meetings?
12. Rethinking and upgrading Adopt-a-Drain program

- a. Mark - we should assess how our drains are doing & which ones really need to be adopted. Collect data
  - b. Tina - HP has 650 drains minus the ones on Raritan & River Road which are covered by county and/or state.. We have about 110 adopted so far. Room for growth especially into neighborhoods in Triangle and upper Woodbridge Ave
  - c. The DPW has been doing more cleanup of drains so they are cleaner
  - d. Tina would like one of the drain volunteers to get more involved & send out the reminders/manage the program. Will put that out on next Adopt Monthly reminder for July.
13. What do we want to accomplish in the rest of 2024?
- a. Create a calendar of what we're already doing?
14. More ideas - open
- a. Chris - programming meetings once a month?