

## Montclair Environmental Commission MINUTES – Feb 3, 2021

### Zoom Meeting information:

Topic: Montclair Environmental Commission Monthly

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84270255919?pwd=V0UvL1ZFekZnU3NSS2RPQjBaVnczdz09>

Meeting ID: 842 7025 5919

Passcode: MEC\_2020

**Type of Meeting:** Monthly

**Facilitator:** Suzanne Aptman

**Note Taker:** Nicol Sobczyk

**Voting Commissioners:** Ben Rich  
(Co-Chair), Suzanne Aptman  
(Co-Chair), Nicol Sobczyk  
(Secretary), Lyle Landon, Imke  
Oster, Janine Salvador  
(Webmaster), Keith Brodock  
(Planning Liaison)

**Alternates:** Mac Carbonell, Bill  
Martens (proposed)

**Associates:** Bill Martens

**Montclair Liaison -** Gray Russell,  
Montclair Sustainability Officer

**Township Council Liaison:** Sean  
Spiller, Mayor (Excused)

Guests: Peter Holm, Benjamin  
Bright

**Call the meeting to order: Time** 7:33pm

This meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

**7:30 - Welcome & Introductions** Suzanne

**7:35 - Approval** January 2021 Minutes Nicol; approved.

**7:40 - Reports/Updates**

1. Mission, Goals, Budgets (Suzanne, Ben)
  - a. Review Mission statement draft:
    - i. Mission: "Guide Montclair Township to reduce carbon emissions, build climate resilience, embrace environmental justice, and protect our living environment by advising, advocating, developing policy and educating."
      1. No vote. Co-chairs to revisit based on proposed alternatives.
      2. PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES:
        - a. Guide Montclair Township to reduce carbon emissions, build climate resilience, embrace environmental justice,

and protect our living environment by advising, advocating, **and developing initiatives, policy, and education.**

- b. "Guide Montclair Township to reduce carbon emissions, build climate resilience, **[advance / promote]** environmental justice, and protect our living environment by advising, advocating, developing policy and educating."

ii. Goals:

1. Exceed Paris Agreement/Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and New Jersey emission reduction goals\* (asterisk leads to explanation of energy committee understanding baseline)
  - a. IPCC goal = to reduce emissions by 45% by 2030, against 2010 baseline. ([link source](#))
  - b. Note: last [emissions report for Montclair completed in 2011.](#)
  - c. **PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES:**
    - i. **Mitigate** climate impacts by exceeding Paris Agreement/Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and New Jersey emission reduction goals\*
    - ii. Exceed Paris Agreement/Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and New Jersey emission reduction goals\* **to mitigate the impacts of climate change.**
  - d. Committees supporting: Energy, Development, Recycling/Waste, Trees & Natural Resources
2. Identify and support initiatives to prepare the Township for climate change impacts
  - a. **PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE:** Identify and support initiatives to **mitigate &** prepare the Township for climate change impacts
  - b. Committees supporting: Energy, Development
3. Incorporate an environmental justice lens into our work
  - a. Committees supporting: Development, Trees & Natural Resources

4. Protect our immediate environment from pollution and misuse of natural resources
  - a. Committees supporting: Development, Recycling/Waste, Trees & Natural Resources
  - b. Committee Goals completed
  - c. MEC Budget & Township Budget; final input
    - i. Suzanne and Ben o coordinate letter for \$1,104.00 MEC budget request:
      1. \$450 annual ANJEC membership (\$375 for 7 members; \$75 for 2 Alternates plus Gray)
      2. \$200 pilot Styrofoam program
      3. \$200 flyer design, signage for events
      4. \$100 Watchung garden plants
      5. \$50 Arbor day materials
      6. \$104 website (\$25 annual domain fee; \$79 reimbursement to Janine for 3 yrs advance pymt)
    - ii. Any dollars needed that cannot be covered by the MEC budget could be requested from township budget, grants.
      1. Trees: 1:1 street/park/public space tree removal/native tree replacement plus compensation for less trees planted in 2020 due to COVID. Continue pruning program. Any necessary investment in disease prevention - such a spotted lanternfly.
      2. Recycling brochure (see actions under recycling committee for brochure next steps)
      3. Drinking water quality: Continue to invest in building Township well carbon filtration systems (to eliminate PFAS and other pollutants)
      4. Humane Geese deterrence: Same investment level as 2020: Geese Chasers hired for winter prevention; spring - fall maintenance.
2. This month's Committee updates - important developments, input/support needed or action requested (decisions, vote):
  - a. Communication: website
    - i. Site in testing now, through Wednesday February 10.
    - ii. Janine to coordinate any further needed tests with committee members (link testing, navigation by phone and on desktop, etc).
  - b. Recycling/Waste: plastic bags & grocery stores; [Cartridge Toner Recycling](#)

- i. NJ law indicates that municipalities must send some of the tonnage report (~\$40k in 2017) and Clean Communities – anti-litter grant (\$68k) to reusable bags in 2021/2022. Goal: to provide residents with reusable bags, replace plastic bags.
  - 1. To be determined: how the bags would be distributed. Pick up at town hall not an option; currently closed. Maybe share with small businesses to distribute.
  - 2. Action:
    - a. Lyle and Suzanne to advise in letter re: budget to the commission.
- ii. Resource guide for plastic advisory to come from the state.
  - 1. Suggestion to initiate a local resource guide pre-state level involvement.
  - 2. E.g. where should businesses go to replace plastic containers?
  - 3. Challenge: until ban is effective in 2022, possibility that businesses will buy non-compliant materials at discount, for use through ban.
  - 4. Action:
    - a. Nicol to search for expert resource guidance...Montclair BID involvement?
- iii. Plastic Bag & Cartridge Toner program
  - 1. Fort Lee launched a pilot program for cartridge collection.
  - 2. Cartridge Evolution collection program
  - 3. MEC voted OK'd to pursue, with collection sites to be confirmed.
  - 4. Action:
    - a. Lyle to make recommendation.
- iv. Styrofoam – Bergen county + Glenridge has started programs that are free to the public.
  - 1. Action:
    - a. Lyle to research options: drop off, collection, and processing.
- v. Recycling guide / brochure:
  - 1. Actions:
    - a. Nicol to coordinate revised brochure with Township communications director; to get estimate for printing, stuffing, mailing.

- b. Gray to send former version of the brochure to Suzanne/Ben; to attach in budget proposal letter to Township.
- vi. Composting – Gray, Ben Bright, Nicol, and LeeAnn to continue work through Feb researching viable short-term options for Montclair.
  - 1. Actions:
    - a. Nicol to contact NJ Composting Council (contacted Ben Rich). May be a great resource to work with for township composting: <https://njcomposting.com/>
- vii. Water Refill Station update:
  - 1. Schools installed ELKAY machines.
  - 2. Actions:
    - a. Janine to continue conversation with Upstream Solutions.
    - b. Suzanne to share contact info for team doing work within Parks & Rec for park installation.
- 3. Town Council update: Leaf blower ordinance (Bill)
  - a. Peter Holm: Township Council passed the 1st reading of the ordinance restricting the use of gas leaf blowers. In two weeks, 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the ordinance will be up for a vote. The ordinance was last updated in 1994.
  - b. Changes in ordinance updates:
    - 1. Gas leaf blowers would be limited to 4 months.
    - 2. Start after 9AM on weekdays and after 10AM on Saturdays
    - 3. Requirement for companies to provide eye/ear protection for workers.
    - 4. Setting minimum fine of \$400 for violations (today, verbal warning, if any).
- 4. Planning Board (Keith)
  - a. Started application for parking deck on Orange Rd.
- 5. Sustainability Office (Gray) - [recycling plant](#) fire update
  - a. [Montclair's materials recovery facility burnt down](#). Served 40 municipalities. Township manager in contact with MRF, who will aim not to go out of business, looking into leasing a temporary location. Likely root cause: [lithium ion battery](#) recycled in a greeting card.
- 6. Gray retiring from position in 2021.
  - a. Key priorities in 2021, that have been communicated to the Township.
  - b. Commission can advocate for fit replacement. Township position critical to city's success in sustainability.

## **Calendar**

**Feb 11-13** Northeast Earth Coalition Event

**February and March:** ANJEC Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions Training- free for members. Email [info@anjec.org](mailto:info@anjec.org) to register:

1. Environmental Commission Powers & Responsibilities: Sat. Feb. 27, 9:30am; Tues. Mar. 2, 7pm
2. Creating/Updating a Municipal ERI/NRI: Sat. Mar. 6th at 9:30am and Tues. Mar. 9th at 7pm
3. Land Use Planning: The Municipal Master Plan, Municipal Ordinances and more: Sat. Mar. 13th at 9:30am and Tues. Mar. 16th at 7pm
4. Site Plan Review: Sat. Mar. 20th at 9:30am and Tues. Mar. 23rd at 7pm

**Adjournment** [9:13 pm](#)

**Next Meeting:** [March 3, 2021](#)

**Note Taker** [Nicol Sobczyk](#)