

January 13, 2009 7:30 PM Village Hall *Approved*

Attendees: Larry Aronson, Jotham Baily, Janine Bauer (Chair), Walter Clarke, Peggy Freedson, Sarah Jane Jelin, Howard Levison (Trustee), James McGowan, Michael Miller (Planning Commission Liaison), Tom Riordon, Aretas Rupsys (Kean College Intern), Barry Zack (Web Editor)

Following on our planning meeting, the EC engaged in a discussion and comparison of project ideas for coming year:

Recycling:

Improving recycling should begin with the poor state of the DPW recycling yard; suggestion is made to focus on improvements to it, along with increase in type of recyclables and ease of recycling for residents. [Top](#)
Currently we do not know what type or how much tonnage comes from home pick-up versus DPW yard recycling occurs since it is all commingled at the DWP yard. As DPW knows how many total tons of recyclables are collected, we also need this information. Committee needs to move forward on investigating these issues but recycling may not be a good integrated project to tackle at this time because prices for recyclables have dropped. Currently, there is no guidance for visitors to the DPW yard as to what kinds of paper, plastic etc. can or cannot be recycled (with visible examples of each type of item). We may wish to try to get such a sign posted at yard. Also, next time Gaslight comes out, we should try to get picture descriptions of recyclables. We might also consider an organized effort to get residents to recycle high-grade paper. [Top](#)

Advantages of single stream versus source separated recycling is currently being investigated. This is being reviewed as a joint effort between Maplewood and South Orange by a sub committee of the Shared Services Committee with Howard and Walter representing S.O.

Energy Audit:

Suggestions that we create an information kiosk with flyers and other sources of information available for residents on how to have an energy audit done for their home. [Top](#)

Earth Day/Green Day:

We have many projects we could bring together for a single event on last Sunday in April. Bring together 5 or 6 projects that get community involved and engaged in environmental issues.

Ideas for Seton Hall intern:

Do some research up front on each of the following:

- Campaign to reduce consumption of bottled water. (Put some fountains back in parks.)

- Anti-idling awareness campaign. General public unaware that idling is illegal. There is also a fine (the second ticket is \$1000). Local scout leader put together anti-idling campaign at South Mountain School. This information should be disseminated in the Gaslight.
- Green Day planning

Suggestion later in meeting that the student intern focus from SHU, Tejal K., focus on research, topics suggested were review of environmental ordinances and collection of related information.

Our Kean University intern, Aretas Rupsys reported an appropriate balance now, but soon will need more work.

Discussion of High-versus Low-impact Projects

A focus on reducing use of water bottles (e.g. "Back to the Tap" campaign) could be high-impact, result in community engagement at multiple levels. We want village officials to "walk-the-walk." The anti-idling campaign, for example, involved both the village and the schools so it was high impact. If we were to now give everyone a "heads up," then set out to enforce the anti-idling laws, this could have a real tangible impact. Advantage of running anti-idling campaign just prior to summer, since environmental impact of idling is worse during summer months.

Janine suggests that between now and next meeting, each group promoting a particular project should prepare a short write-up listing the goal and objective for the coming year, materials and resources needed, answer the usual Qs (who, what, where, why, and how), visit with officials and get code/DPW/enforcement/police feedback on the possibility of enforcing the project if enforcement is to be a component of it, such as the anti-idling law.

Since one of our objectives was to have officials showcase green efforts, we should think about projects that involve both schools and community members, and village officials.

In our recommendations, we could present our 3 priority areas and the first tier of projects/recommendations:

- **Anti-idling campaign**
- **Back-to-the tap (no bottles)**
- **DPW Reform**
- **Composting**
- **Ordinances of various stripes** (3 Ordinances: Impervious coverage, composting, and recycling.)
- **Green day/Sustainable South Orange** as an event of itself and a means to promote the above initiatives. Suggested that we target Green Day for May. We'll have enough time to plan.

Note: There are some municipalities that are accepting compost from apartment dwellers.

Currently SO has to revise its recycling laws due to changes in requirements. Our ordinance is out of date.

Green Day:

If intern situation doesn't work out, what's the alternative for moving forward with this event, which will require much quick organization? *(Please fill in here)*

Focus areas & EC Members

(Please fill in missing info here)

DPW: Janine, Jotham (discussed above)

Anti-idling: Walter, Larry

Idling any internal combustion vehicle contributes to poor air quality linked to health and breathing problems. Although idling is illegal in NJ, many drivers are unaware of or unconcerned by its ill effects. The South Orange Environmental Commission should mount a community wide awareness campaign to change that.

Back to the Tap: Sarah, Peggy

Website: Tom & Barry

Agreed that we will each focus our energies on the project/s we are most passionate about. We will all write a page focused on the project of greatest interest, with measures for achieving goals. Report by January 26th. This will give us a concrete idea of what needs to be done.

Website

Barry asks how can we further promote website. It is currently being underutilized, not getting sufficient attention (Less than 1000 hits.) Suggestion that we create an edited section where citizens can post writing on local environmental issues, include photo essays, etc. Citizens can talk about how they are addressing environmental concerns in their own lives.

Reports

- **Project Porchlight:** Walter

27 SO citizens participated, distributed 605:
the equivalent of 199.65 tons of CO2 removed
from the air; 34.5 cars removed from the road.

- **Sustainable Jersey Beta Testing of Toolkit**

At kickoff meeting with Doug, 10 people from the Environmental Commission and Energy Policy Committee participated. Revised list of tools in NJ; reviewed 30 items but note that toolkits are incomplete, e.g. missing point value for certain actions.

- **Website:** Barry

We need a baseline of number of people that visit in a month. Go to site map from home page. There are 7-8 items that say "future". These are areas where we would potentially like to have information.

As our projects proceed, we need to be reporting them on our website. Anyone interested in any particular topic, feel free to take on writing. Tom suggests that people be encouraged to write articles for the website on the env't, and also submit photos, and that that will attract more contributors, readers and visitors. He asks for endorsement; Larry asks what the process is for determining how to advance this, or other, projects.

Do we have the resources to advance more than one project, and a Green Day, likely in the fall? Janine suggests asking the Board of Trustee for input to our project choice since lack of interest on their part may guide our choice; Howard suggests that we should be making the recommendation to the Board.

Discussion of merging EC with Energy Policy committee, as per Doug Newman's recommendation at our December meeting .

There are currently 7 Active members on EPC (which is a committee. EC is a commission, established by ordinance and enabled by state statute. 1 member overlaps - Walter, although Barry and Howard Levison attend both meetings.)

Consensus: We would be happy to accept EPC as a subcommittee of EC, or have it remain separate. Gaining EPC as a subcommittee is not a problem under the membership limits of the statute since we can involve as many "volunteers" as we want.

-Janine states need to "groom" a replacement for her as EC chair. She has been at this a long time and would prefer that someone else continue as chair beyond 2009 calendar year.