

WWT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

June 12, 2025

The June 2025 meeting of the WWT Environmental Commission was held on Thursday, June 12, 2025 via Zoom with Ephraim Buhks calling the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, place and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board, and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Members: E. Buhks; E. Gordon; L. Katz; M. Tomar; D. Bhide
Liaison: F. Guzik Advisor: D. Parris; P. Gupta Council Liaison: A. Mandel
Guests: C. Symington, Sustainable Jersey D. Dobromilsky, WWT Consultant
A. Stanislaw, WWT Landscape Architect

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: August and September 2024 E. Gordon motioned; L. Katz seconded;
Minutes were approved as presented.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Gas Leaf Blowers – Christine Symington, Executive Director of Sustainable Princeton a nonprofit that works exclusively within the municipality of Princeton, has a fee service agreement with the municipality and raises funds and applies for grants to do activities above and beyond the agreement. The agency brought together elected officials, landscape company owners and crews, and environmental justice advocates for the reduction of gas-powered landscaping equipment. They applied for and received a grant from the Urban Sustainability Directors' Network that was looking for local governments and partner nonprofits to work together towards an environmental sustainability and equity issue. In collaboration with the municipality, the Environmental Commission, other nonprofits, including Unidad Latina, which is a workers' rights organization, they applied for and received \$50,000 to initiate a process by which the town and all the stakeholders could come together and discuss potential solutions. They were required to utilize the knowledge and assistance of an equity consultant to guide us through the process. They had a group of university students do a cost analysis of what it would take a landscaping company, from very small to medium, to transition all of their equipment from gas-powered to battery-powered, so we can have a sense of what is the cost involved. One suggestion was to have co-responsibility between the homeowners hiring the companies and the landscape companies if they were found to be in violation. Another suggestion was to implement an incentive program where companies could provide accurate proof of purchase of an electronic or battery-powered piece of lawn equipment, the town would reimburse them a specific sum of money.

Solar - Community Update – L. Katz stated he had recently seen an article which stated other areas across the country are struggling with installations and hookups to the grid, similar to the issues being faced in New Jersey. He reported that members of the Parking Authority were able to do a walkthrough of the Avalon Bay development near the transit village. They were surprised to learn that every apartment had an on-demand water heater installed, which is more energy-efficient.

Community Park Rain and Pollinator Garden – F. Guzik provided an update from S. Parratt on the Rain and Pollinator gardens. He was able to conduct some routine maintenance over the past month. P. Green is working with the Girl Scout, Agriya to plan and install her meditation garden.

Landscape and Fire Prevention – I. Singh was unable to attend the meeting this month and will provide an update when available.

Sustainable Jersey Recertification 2025 – D. Dobromilsky provided an update on the current status of the application. The application was submitted for the preliminary review by Sustainable Jersey on May 16th with a potential 390 points included. The third submission date is July 31st and the final submission will be due after that. The feedback will be received by mid-June and the application can be edited to incorporate the recommendations or additional information requested.

Township Council Update – A. Mandel invited all EC members to attend the Community Picnic being held as a Diversity Day event by the Recreation Department and the Human Relations Council. It is the first-ever Community Picnic and will be held at Community Park on Saturday June 14, 2025 from 12 to 4pm. There will be various food trucks and games. The Mayor will be giving his State of the Township address at the June 16, 2025 Township Council Meeting. If anyone is unable to attend it will also be available online. The Green and Complete Streets resolution was passed at the May 19th meeting. She attended an Assunpink Working Group meeting at the Watershed on May 21st where Princeton Hydro gave a presentation on a regional MS4 plan.

Planning Board – A. Baig was unable to attend the meeting. F. Guzik reported that the Planning Board recently updated the Site Plan and Subdivision checklist requirements to reduce the number of waivers that applicants can request.

E. Buhks welcomed Dnyanada Bhide to the Environmental Commission. D. Bhide provided a brief background of her experience and stated she was looking forward to serving on the commission.

There being no further business, L. Katz motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by E. Gordon.

Respectfully submitted,
Samantha Tomaro, Administrative Secretary
WWT Environmental Commission