Environmental Commission

October 9, 2025 7:30pm – at Boro Hall and via Zoom

Minutes

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance Mr. Yarin called the meeting to order at 7:32 with the Open Public Meetings announcement.

Everyone was reminded to identify themselves for the ease of minute-taking.

2. Attendance

Paul Yarin-present
Krishna Rege-present
Shelagh McCaffrey-present at 7:35
Council Liaison Cho-present
Conway Wong-present

3. Approval of Minutes (~~September 11, 2025~~) postponed

4. Open Meeting to Public Comments Representatives of the Northern Valley Demarest Environmental Club visited the meeting and spoke about their mission to get people involved. They asked the Commission to provide them with community service hours and spoke about the possibility of a cleanup. They mentioned that the garden at the school has been leveled to make room for a playground but that no construction has been done. They asked the Closter EC to come to the school to talk and stated that they would be happy to work over the summer as well. Mr. Wong asked whether this group has reached out to other ECs. They have not yet, but they know that the Closter EC is very involved. Discussion of what is involved for community service and possible projects, such as the pollinator garden. Ms. McCaffrey suggested starting a food compost project in the schools. Discussion. The club and the commission will stay in touch, and the club can figure out what is best for them to do. Mr. Yarin asked that the high school cleanup group could be incorporated into the club. Sam Layvand and Paul Kim gave their names, as they are Closter residents.

5. Executive & Treasurer's Report

a. Budget update no major changes

b. Upcoming events: ANJEC Congress (to be attended by Mr. Yarin and Ms. Rege; the garden project is part of a silent auction), Bergen County Sustainability Hub. Members are encouraged to attend conferences and meetings. The upcoming Sustainability Hub meeting is in Wyckoff.

6. Unfinished Business

a. NYC Climate Week recap Mr. Yarin shared information about some of the events he attended, including visiting a cargo sailboat that sails from France to New Jersey to learn about carbon-free cargo transport, an event about the importance of climate change, and a talk about investing in solar energy.

b. Buzzoni Pollinator Garden updates Mr. Yarin spoke about signage at Buzzoni that can change as the garden changes. He passed around cards containing QR codes that could be posted on a bulletin board.

c. ERI updates The funding has been approves, and discussions are underway about the contract and timeline. A steering committee will be created. Key stakeholders will be interviewed. Members were asked to volunteer if they want to be on the committee. Councilman Cho expressed interest if it does not conflict with other meetings. Ms. Rege asked who created the previous ERI. Hakim Associates created the previous one, and Mr. Yarin interviewed Mr. Hakim. Discussion.

d. Community Energy Planning Grant updates Mr. Yarin has spoken to PSE&G and Orange and Rockland. A meeting with Sustainable Jersey and Rockland Electric is planned. EC members are welcome to participate if they wish. Discussion about the possibility of convincing a landscaper to switch to electric. Committees will be created to explore and choose projects for the energy management plan.

e. Website/social media updates Work is underway; a report next meeting is possible.

7. New Business

a. NVD HS Environmental Club

8. Plan Review and Comment

a. 751 Closter Dock Road is a large property. The owner is trying to subdivide it. There is some sort of a road on the property; it may technically be a driveway. There is a house on the property.

b. 162 Closter Dock Road is a commercial building that appears to want to expand the building and parking. The building has apartments as well. There is a small planting plan.

Mr. Yarin is trying to attend Planning Board meetings; Mr. Wong will as well.

9. Liaison Reports

a. Governing Body (C. Cho) There is an open house at the Fire Department this Sunday 11:00-3:00. The bee ordinance is on the agenda for the upcoming Board of Health meeting on November 20. They would like the Environmental Commission to attend and discuss. Mr. Wong will attend the meeting. Ms. McCaffrey will send him a letter.

b. ~~Shade Tree Commission~~ (postponed pending new appointment)

c. ~~Planning Board~~ (postponed pending new appointment)

10. Adjournment Mr. Wong moved to adjourn, second Ms. McCaffrey. Meeting adjourned at 8”28 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha Francis
Recording Secretary