



**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION
&
GREEN TEAM**

DATE/TIME: July 21, 2026 @ 7:30pm

	Present	Absent
ENVIRONMENTAL MEMBERS:		
Patty Almberg	X	
David Kraft	X	
Brian Mitchell	X	
Mary Daly		X
Gary Barth		X
Pam Gould		X
Chris Caslin	X	
Laura Hoogstrate, Alt.	X	
Aditi Puri, Alt.		X
Councilwoman Klodiana Malellari	X	

GREEN TEAM MEMBERS:

Marie Papaleo	X	
Laura Hoogstrate, Env. Rep.	X	
Mary Ann Komar, Rec. Rep.		X
Elizabeth Brown, School Bd. Rep.		X

Ally Matthews	<u>X</u>
Michael Lam	<u>X</u>
Shu Lam	<u>X</u>
Linda Mei	<u>X</u>
Karen Glass	<u>X</u>
Karen Clemments	<u>X</u>
Isabella Gilmour	<u>X</u>
Joanne Aran	<u>X</u>
Joengwon Kim	<u>X</u>
Noah Cole, Student Liaison	<u>X</u>
Gemma Staines	<u>X</u>

PATTY ALMBERG: Advised on May 28th David and herself presented the annual reports to the Mayor & Council and it went well and June 11th was the High School Prom. Stated she worked with Gemma on the Prom Box Collection at the River Dell High School. There were about 30 boxes returned.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Questioned if they could go to the florists and ask them if they can look into more sustainable boxes for the flowers.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated she could check with both florists and ask them if they had ever checked into other options.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated since they are doing Skip the Stuff, they could ask the florists if they would be willing to ask if the customers want a box.

PATTY ALMBERG: Advised upcoming events are on July 27 there will be Skip the Stuff event at the library that Pam as put together. She also stated she will be going to local restaurants on Saturday, July 25 to give out the letter regarding Skip the Stuff. She asked if anyone was available to help and Laura stated that she can help on Saturday. She also advised that the next Bergen Hub meeting

is on July 27 in Saddle Brook and September 12th is the Hackensack River Sweep.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated she does not have details regarding the time, however it will begin in Oradell and the boats will go south on the river and come out at the River Edge boat ramp.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated they want to coordinate a Sports Equipment and Halloween Costume swap in early October and will reach out to Joe Ricca from Rec. Dept.

MARIE PAPALEO: Stated they need to encourage people to come and take sports equipment, as most people drop off equipment, which she will post on Facebook and Instagram.

PATTY ALMBERG: Questioned Linda how the flower and vegetable garden contest is going.

LINDA MEI: Stated she received a complaint from one person about the deer coming into her yard and eating her garden and suggested having someone come and give a talk at the library regarding deer resistant plants.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated Pam sent some information regarding Skip the Stuff. Pam ordered the tents, which they will give to the businesses, along with the letter which was also mailed to them. Pam posted the Skip the Stuff poster on their Facebook page and This is River Edge Facebook page. Lissette helped to post it on the Borough webpage and it will go out on Nixel this week. Advised the EPS/Styrofoam Shared Service agreement was signed by the River Edge Mayor & Council and was sent to Ridgewood. Stated they would have to wait until Ridgewood accepts the agreement before they can do a collection.

DAVID KRAFT: Advised he put together a template to be filled in regarding everything they do for recycling and once it is complete they can post it on Facebook and their website.

LINDA MEI: Questioned about pickleball and tennis ball recycling.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated she reached out to recreation and they had a conversation about that.

LINDA MEI: Stated she believed there was a question as to who was going to take care of it.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated there is an individual who goes to the river clean-ups who collects old tennis balls that come off the river to recycle.

LINDA MEI: Stated she believes there was a cost to recycling them.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated the people who use pickleballs should maybe pay for the box, as it would not be a lot of money collectively, but it is a lot of money for the Commission to take out of their budget.

PATTY ALMBERG: Suggested when they register to use the Court there could be an increase of \$5.00 which would go towards the cost of recycling the pickleballs. Stated Pam was working on the resiliency Grant and she was trying to coordinate between the towns and Lissette. They needed 3 bordering towns to apply and Pam was working with NNJ Community Foundation and New Milford, Hackensack, Oradell and River Edge. She worked with Lissette, to see whether this would work but ultimately the group was not ready and Pam and Lissette questioned the direction and the focus NNJ Community Foundation were heading in, as it was meant to be about mitigating flooding but NNJ Community were looking to do more art projects to get out awareness. Stated Pam was very good with communicating with all the parties involved and advised them River Edge will not participate if this is the direction the grant is going.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated Gemma came before the Council to talk about Community Gardens and she was shut down. Stated she does not understand why the space that was purchased with Green Acre money is not being looked at for a potential Community Garden.

KLODIANA: Suggested Patty reach out to Jason or Lissette as there are some issues with that piece of land.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Stated she did ask at a meeting months ago if they could come back with some information as that is public information.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated she has asked and the answer she received was they cannot use it because it is Open Space but Open Space is meant for Community Gardens.

LAURA HOOGSTRATE: Questioned if they have given up regarding composting.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated they have not.

DAVID KRAFT: Suggested they go before the Mayor and Council to get on the agenda to pitch their idea of composting and have a plan.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated she tried to get on the Agenda to do a presentation regarding composting and she was told to reach out to Jason and the Health Department, which she did, but has not heard anything back. Stated she will have to call them. Suggested they go before the Mayor and Council and each person can give a 3 minute speech about the same subject.

DAVID KRAFT: Suggested doing the same thing regarding the Community Garden.

LINDA MEI: Suggested reaching out to the churches or the middle school to see if they would donate a portion of their property to put the composting bin, this way you don't have to get Jason involved.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated this is something the Borough should start thinking about as 2035 is not far and that is the deadline of decreasing trash by 50%.

LINDA MEI: Questioned if she should make a flyer to put out to the residents to see if anyone would be interested in paying a monthly fee for community composting.

PATTY ALMBERG: Stated yes she should do that so they can see how many people are interested and to put in on This is River Edge page.

MEETING ADJOURNED

NEXT MEETING: September 15, 2026