

**Highland Park Environmental Commission**  
Meeting of January 7, 2026  
Minutes

Present: Michael Rosenberg, Jonathan Abrahams, Laurel Kornfeld, Mark Lesko, Mel Pihura Shiu, Allan Williams, Council liaison Matt Hersh

Guest: Craige Ambroch

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:03 PM.
2. The minutes of the December 3, 2025 meeting were approved with minor corrections.
3. Site Plans: None
4. Correspondence: None
5. Old Business
  - a) Meadows Update. A few trees came down in storms. A trustee of ANJEC asked the EC to participate in a silent auction with a tour of the Meadows, which ANJEC organized as a fundraiser. Heather Fenyk (Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership-LRWP), bought the rights to a tour the Meadows for \$80, which will be held on March 29 from 1-3 PM. At the tour, the LWRP members and trail volunteers will highlight improvements done on the trail and show participants the riparian buffer. Three days before the tour, on March 26, Rutgers lecturer David Smith will do a Zoom presentation to discuss habitat creation within the Meadows. Allan and Craige will meet with organizers of the Rutgers oral history of the Meadows project, which was approved by the mayor. Mel raised the issue of interviewing former borough residents about the Meadows and will look into obtaining historical photos of the site.
  - b) Greenway. Nothing new.
  - c) Website. The minutes are up to date. In February, Allan will decide what he wants to improve on the site.
  - d) Leaf Blower Ordinance. Matt presented various ordinance options to the Council at a meeting on the subject in Borough Hall, which several task force members attended. Follow up is needed to determine the next steps. The Council is largely on board but need to decide on issues of code enforcement, such as whether it will be phased in, whether to establish a registry, and how the ordinance will be enforced. A suggestion was made to do a landscaping survey. The Borough Attorney will attend the next task force meeting to begin drafting an ordinance. Craige noted that under its clean energy program, New Jersey offers funding, including potential grants and rebates, for the purchase of electric equipment by both residents and businesses. We could ask DPW to apply for a grant through this program to purchase some tools.
  - e) Community Solar. Community Solar is building out solar farms in the state. The program operates through PSE&G. Matt will find out if the borough has received any feedback from residents in response to the letter sent out about this program.
  - f) Cleanups. A cleanup of the municipal parking lot by the Reformed Church was held on December 6. The cleanups scheduled for December 21 and January 3 were canceled. The next one will be on January 18.

- g) Rain Gardens. At the recent meeting about the proposed South 3<sup>rd</sup> plaza, people were told there will be rain gardens at the site, but these were not shown on the illustrations, which are very preliminary. Because the current rain gardens there may be moved or redone, volunteers will not do plantings there in the spring. Plantings will be done in other rain gardens around town.
  - h) Invasive Species Act. Nothing new.
  - i) Mulch Volcanoes. Nothing new. Volunteers will rake them out by hand. There is still an issue of landscapers putting mulch volcanoes on street trees.
6. New Business
- a) Plastic Recycling. Matt reported the borough is reassessing its recycling program, adding he is trying to get lidded totes for recycling. Mike suggested doing another visit to the recycling center this year. Mel asked whether we could have someone who works at the facility do a public presentation at the library to explain how recycling is done. Mark noted that Sustainable Highland Park (SHP) was sent a message asking about recycling of non-traditional items, which they will discuss at their next meeting. It would be good to find places that do non-traditional recycling so we can put the information on various websites. Jon noted people need to know how to get rid of hazardous waste, such as paint cans, car batteries, and tires. Mel reported she has observed contractors dumping industrial grade waste into high school dumpsters. Matt reported that Princeton has compost drop off locations and that they contract with a compost facility in Trenton. Middlesex County has a publication about recycling called "Reuse It." We could put information from this publication on the borough website.
7. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM. The next meeting of the Environmental Commission will take place on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 8 PM on Google Meets.