

Mountain Lakes Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2025

Members Present: Dan Gates, Mimi Kaplan, Jackie Bay, Robert Platt, Cy Korman
BC Liaison: Josh Howley
HS Liasons: Evan Mei, Hania Shafqat

1. February meeting minutes: Approved

2. MLHS Updates – Students took pictures of the current trash and recycling setups. Recycling bins are not color coded or clearly marked. Students will work on short presentation with recommendations to board of ed on how to remediate. Students will also use the presentation to educate colleagues.

Jackie to compile volunteer opportunities for various commissions/clubs in town and provide to student liaisons to distribute throughout the high school.

3. Update: NJ Highlands Council(HC) Compliance

The tentative date for BC discussion is 4/28 Borough Council Meeting. The next step for ML is to pass a conformance ordinance.

Plan Conformance involves the revision of local planning and regulatory documents to integrate the land use provisions and resource management protections of the Highlands Act, so that those documents align with the goals, policies, and objectives of the RMP. Grant funding is available to support this work. The MLEC's request for funding an Interactive ERI was approved (\$3,000) so we have to provide the HC with an outline of what we want included in our ERI.

EC plans to prepare simple talking points for public comment at this meeting. We want to address potential resident concerns regarding impacts to current home ownership, impacts to new development and the benefits of future funding opportunities that conformance with Highlands will provide.

4. ERI Update

Dan spoke with Maryjude who is the highlands liaison regarding what is required to update our ERI. Unfortunately, we cannot simply provide our information to Highlands and have them incorporated into their existing interactive ERI. We need to develop a SOW with a third party consultant who will then incorporate the information from our existing ERI with the Highlands Interactive ERI. Dan has reached out to J. Caldwell Associates to discuss the scope of work. They have experience with this work, and they are very familiar with ML. Dan is waiting to hear back from them. We have \$3,000 allocated from Highlands to pay for this work.

5. Monthly environmental fun fact: Light Pollution:

Dan received feedback from ground on the short E-Blast snippet as well as the flyer that snippet will link to. Mimi to simplify and bulletize the snippet. High School students will beautify the flyer. Hope to push this through the first E-Blast in April.

6. 2025 ML Community Cleanup:

We will be having the Community Cleanup on April 26th, 2025. Dan will generate the new flyer, sign up genius, and distribute the yard signs. Jackie will coordinate with the high school teams. Mimi will ensure

we have the required supplies with DPW. Evan/Hania will distribute the flyer to the high school students.

6. Rain Garden: MLHS students are responsible for the rain garden maintenance this month.

7. Additional business: None

Meeting adjourned @ 8:45pm. Next MLEC meeting is scheduled for 4/15/25 @7:30pm via Zoom.