

Keyport Environmental Commission Minutes for April 25th, 2022 – Conducted in Keyport’s Borough Hall

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 8:04pm by **Chairperson Ken DeGroat**.

Sunshine Law was Read

Salute to the Flag

Roll Call

	NAME	STATUS	TERM EXPIRES	PRESENT	ABSENT
1	KEN DEGROAT (KD)	COMMISSIONER, CHAIRPERSON	12/31/2024	X	
2	MIKE PALMISANO (MP)	COMMISSIONER, VICE CHAIRPERSON	12/31/2024	X	
3	JOE SHERIDAN (JS)	COMMISSIONER, SECRETARY	12/31/2023	X	
4	DON PACHECO (DP)	COMMISSIONER	12/31/2022	X	
5	ROY JIMINEZ (RJ)	COMMISSIONER	12/31/2022		X
6	MATT TEVIS (MT)	COMMISSIONER	12/31/2022	X	
7	JIM AUMACK (JA)	COMMISSIONER	12/31/2023	X	
8	HEATHER BRADY-MILLER (HBM)	COMMISSIONER, 2 YEAR ALTERNATE	12/31/2022		X
9	DOUG WEIDER (DW)	COMMISSIONER, 2 YEAR ALTERNATE	12/31/2022	X	
10	DELIA SOSA MCDERMOTT (DSM)	KEYPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL LIAISON	12/31/2022	X	
11	MIKE LANE (ML)	PUBLIC	-	X	
12	DENNIS FOTOPOULOS (DF)	PUBLIC	-	X	

Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes:

There was no Quorum at the meeting on March 28, 2022. Minutes of the February 28, 2022 meeting; Motion to Accept by Matt Tevis (MT); Mike Palmisano (MP) 2nd; No comments/edits/revisions; Jim Aumack Abstained-All Others Approved.

Keyport Unified Planning Board (KUPB) Updates:

(MP):

- Asked about the status of the Letter.

(DP):

- Yes, the KUPD knows about the Letter-action to be taken at the next scheduled KUPB meeting.

(DSM):

- Agreed the Letter is next to be heard at the KUPD, then possibly the DEP if deemed appropriate by the KUPB.

(MP):

- Asked if the KEC should talk to the KBC about the Letter.

(DSM):

- Stated the KEC can talk to the KBC during Open Session, or during her Reports by Committee agenda time.

(MP):

- Said that yes, we are the KEC, but we are also concerned Keyport Citizens that want this issue addressed now and not later.

Ken DeGroat (KD) offered the following ten (10) KUPB items for KEC discussion:

1. Brown's Point Marina (Mariner's Village)

(DP):

- KUPB project is in progress.

2. Mystic at Keyport (44 Beers St)

(DP):

- KUPB project is in progress.

3. 25 E. Front Street (5 Story Apt. Bldg – 54 Units)

(DP):

- KUPB Tabled Discussion on Project until May.

4. 31 W. Front St (restaurant and 9 residential units)

(DP):

- KUPB project is in progress.

5. 333 1st Street

(DP):

- No new update.

6. Hudson Pointe (Henry Hudson Trail drainage ditches)

(DP):

- KUPB project is in progress.

(DSM):

- The County is aware of the issues.

7. Port 149 Bulkhead Damage

(DP):

- KUPB project is in progress.

(DSM):

- \$450k has been approved and allotted to Keyport towards the work on the bulkhead – KBC is looking for more monies as \$1.6 million is the estimated cost to fix the bulkhead.

8. Aeromarine/Landfill Bayfront Erosion Issues:

(DP):

- No new update.

9. 317 Beers St (wetland infringement issue):

(DP):

- No new update.

10. Beach Park Outfall Pipe:

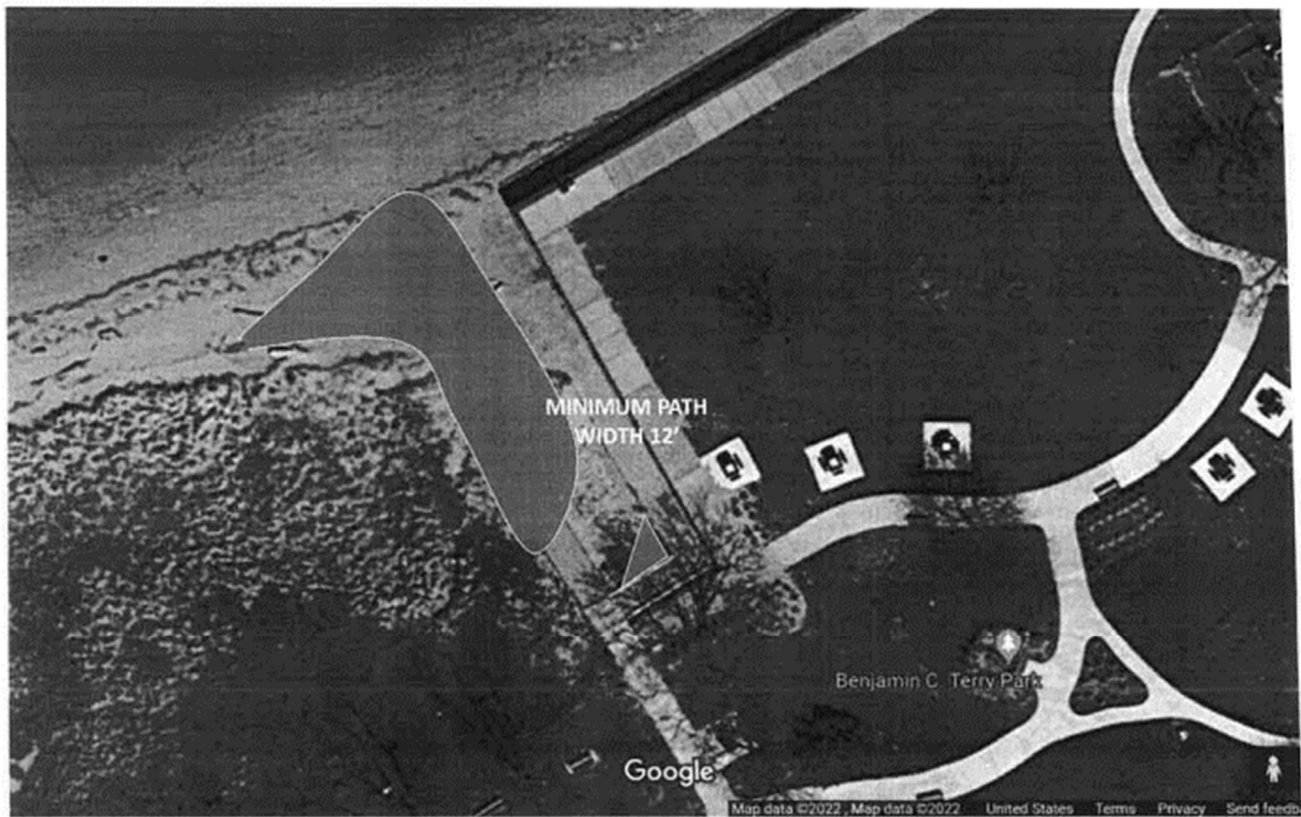
(DP):

- No new update.

New Business:

(DSM):

- The Borough of Keyport is asking the KEC to assist in improving beach stabilization by adding beach grass per the following proposed plan. The KBC will provide snow fencing and signage as necessary.



BOROUGH OF KEYPORT – Benjamin Terry / Veterans Park

Proposed Dune Realignment (March 2022) to provide access for equipment to maintain walkways and improved beach stabilization.

Plan of Keyport Benjamin Terry/Veterans Park Proposed Dune Realignment courtesy of D.S. McDermott, 4/25/2022.

(MT):

- November is the month to plant beach grass, and there is a drainage pipe issue that currently directs the water right through the proposed site.

(MP):

- The KBC can direct the fence to be installed, and fabric within the fence to keep the sand from departing.

(KD):

- The KBC directs the fencing to be installed and adjusts the drainage to run straight down to the beach from Benjamin Terry Park, and the KEC will plant this November. The request by DSM is reasonable.

(MP):

- On April 2nd, 40-50 donated Bayberry (*Myrica Pensylvanica*) and Beach Plum (*Prunus Maritima*) bushes, grown by the New Jersey State Forest Nursery, were planted around the Cedar Street Park Dune. Both are indigenous shrubs that thrive in a beach environment and produce root systems that will help fortify the dune, further protecting homeowners from storm surges, and also help bees pollinate. Photographs of the planting are as follows:



Photos of Bayberry and Beach Plum shrub planting courtesy of J. Sheridan, taken on Saturday, 4/02/2022.

(MT):

- Regarding additional plantings the Cedar Street Park Dune, MT said that he is waiting for the check for the PO for the purchase of more mature plants – Keyport needs to issue the check so that the plants can be released.

(DSM):

- Understands the PO needs to be signed.

(KD):

- The gallon-container sized plants should be planted by the next meeting.

(MT):

- The plants need to be planted sooner than the May 23rd meeting.

(KD):

- Recommended Sunday, May 15th, at 10:00am, at the Cedar Street Park Dune.

(MP):

- Requested that a reminder e-mail be sent out to the KEC.

(KD):

- Will send out a reminder e-mail for the May 15th planting.

Clean Ocean Action (COA) Beach Sweep:

(MP):

- The Spring Clean Ocean Action Beach Sweep, performed on Saturday, April 9th, was a success, drawing 44 Volunteers, collecting 320 lbs of refuse. There was less garbage collected due to the recent February 27th Save Coastal Wildlife beach cleanup. Ms. Lisa Wallin and her Keyport High School students provided great assistance. No unusual items found other than a slow-down buoy. The complete statistics of the Beach Cleanup are attached.

(DSM):

- Said that Keyport High School is willing to assist with plantings in November and should be considered a good source for Volunteers.

(MT):

- Stated they could definitely use the help with Asiatic Sedge removal!

Street Sweepings:

(JS):

- Having seen the Keyport Streetsweeper recently in action, asked the question about how the street sweepings are being disposed of.

(DSM):

- Will ask about the Keyport streetsweeper sweepings disposal process and report back at the next KEC meeting.

Henry Hudson Trail:

(JS):

- Opined that the H.H. Trail can use many more wild flowers planted in order to help the bees with pollination and to add to the viewing pleasure of H.H. Trail users.

(DSM):

- Stated that we can do an outreach.

(MT):

- Perhaps we can pick one spot and just work on it.

(DSM):

- Offered that we can partner with Monmouth County to help with adding flowers and pollinator shrubs.

(MP):

- Said that there was a stretch of the H.H. Trail from Green Grove Avenue to Atlantic Street where some trees are in bad shape and need to be addressed.

- We can also ask Monmouth County if we can adopt sections of the H.H. Trail.

(MT):

- The Department of Environmental Protection is helping bees by disallowing certain pesticides.

(KD):

- Said that more information is needed for our residents to make informed decisions about fertilizer and pesticides.

Speed Limit Signage:

(KD):

- Asked if there is there a signage status?

(DSM):

- In progress – there is a meeting on Wednesday, April 27th, from 5:00pm – 7:00pm, at Keyport Borough Hall Council Chambers, regarding the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Program.

Tree Seedling Giveaway:

(KD):

- Asked if there is there a tree seedling giveaway status?

(MP):

- The Forest Service ended their giveaway by this time of the year. We need to address our desire to participate in the December time of the year for participation in the following year's program.
- The Hazlet Environmental Commission recently gave away up to five (5) plants to their residents.
- Additionally, the sooner an entity makes an order, the better selection of plants are available.

(DSM):

- We should plan to order seedlings this November for inclusion into 2023's program.

Open to the Public

9:03pm: KD opened the meeting to the Public.

Dennis Fotopoulos (DF):

- Offered the Port 149 Bulkhead Project would cost \$1.5 million, and that does not include raising the level of the Fireman's Park parking lot.
- The estimated project cost to fix the bulkhead and raise Fireman's Park parking lot is \$3.5 million.
- There still needs to be more cooperation on the Port 149 Bulkhead Fix Project.
- There is a Streetsweeper working the roads of Keyport.
- The KEC can perform a possible "Demonstration Project" to plant flowers on the H.H. Trail.
- Asked about the format of the TAP Meeting being held on Wednesday, April 27th meeting.

(DSM):

- Unsure of the format.

Mike Lane (ML):

- Spoke of the Pump Out Boat.

(KD):

- Asked M. Lane to send him an e-mail regarding the pump-out boat stats and request for monies.

(MP):

- Queried what department of the County covers the Pump Out Boat?

(ML):

- Answered Susan Keiley, County Commissioner

(DSM):

- At the last KBC meeting, a unified letter by resolution regarding the Pump Out Boat was performed.

(ML):

- Provided the following e-mail regarding the Pump Out Boat:
- *Regarding the Pump Out Boat: Attached are some pictures of the pump-out boat, which is located at the marina across from Raritan Cove, formerly Pedersen's Marina. This boat has a clean painted bottom and appears ready for launching. Funding is needed to pay winter storage and spring prep costs, and for summer operating expenses.*
- *Wade gave me input on its previous operation. He indicated that the boat serviced the vessels in the Keyport Harbor mooring field as well as those tied up in the five marinas along Matawan Creek (Wagner's, Keyport Marine Basin, Browns Point Marina, Blue Rock, and Petersens). Patrons needed to call a request a pump out. It was not necessary for the vessel owner to be on the vessel during the pump out process. The pump-out boat also served vessels in the area of Perth Amboy. The operators of the pump-out boat were flexible in terms of hours and days. I was told the operators of the pump-out boat were paid \$20/hour. Boat owners were not charged for the service.*



Photos of pump out boat courtesy of M. Lane, provided on 4/26/2022.

(ML):

- M. Lane was kind enough to provide the following summaries of his concerns:

Inputs for KEC Mtg. 4/25/22

Pump Out Boat

- Ready for launch with clean and painted bottom
- Held by marina pending payment for storage and prep
- KYC providing mooring
- Funding needed from County
- South end of Raritan Bay contains 2 Yacht Clubs, 5 marinas and over 400 vessels needing this service

PSIP Public Meeting Wed 4/27/22 from 5 to 7 PM

- Need traffic calming with 25 MPH signage and 4-way stops at 1st and Atlantic and at 1st and Broad.
- Well delineated crosswalks needed on First, on Broad, on W Front, and on Broadway.
- County will implement “no passing” the entire length of First St.

Mystic at Keyport On KUPB agenda for this Thursday.

Revised drawings delineate 8 ft. garage floor elevation and ground elevation increase of a foot.

- New survey still fails to identify site as in a Coastal A Zone
- No revised architectural drawings meeting VE Zone criteria for building on piles with breakaway walls, etc. and certified by a qualified architect.
- Requirement that deeds advise buyers of flood risk and approved by KUPB attorney not in file
- Monmouth County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Item 24-12 aligns with Borough Strategic Recovery Planning Report recommendation to acquire this flood prone site for Open Space.

Mariner’s Village, Browns Point Marina – On KUPB agenda for this Thursday. Roger Miller’s status report identifies the dirt pile at end of Washington St as ‘historic fill’ to be used on the apartment lot by EOY.

- Contaminated fill at the north end of Washington Street still needs to be addressed. Fences are required to keep humans out of contaminated areas. No delineation of fence location, height and type have been provided.
- Proposing valet parking using driveway area to provide 44 additional parking spaces. No restricted access to valet parking area, early arrivals can be blocked in by valet parked cars. Unidentified is surge duration wait time resulting from a weather event, shelter, number of cars to be moved to clear exit path, and liability issues with unrestricted parking area. Obvious alternatives for impatient drivers are neighborhood parking.

KUPB Hearings

25 E Front – Revised pump station plan pushes water through a 10-inch forced main to Broad Street stormwater pipe. Questions on Broad St stormwater infrastructure capacity and abandonment of First St pump station and its stormwater pipe. Issue with expanded bldg. foundation disturbing ancient brick channel in the recorded easement for Division St stormwater pipe. Will construction on piles be required in this former marsh area. Application will continue in May.

Nuisance Flooding

Division and East Front Basin Flooding – The Beach Park Outfall Pipe problem with the significantly restricted outfall pipe capacity continues. At the 4/17 KBC meeting, Boro Admin reported there are no plans to deal with this design deficiency in 2022, and it is not a 2022 budget item.

Third St Flooding – Drainage-ditch/floodway along HHT between Atlantic and Manchester flows to the pipe under the HHT just east of Manchester Street. The HHT floodway is not maintained between this pipe under the HHT and Fulton Street. Hudson Pointe is now approved to discharge their stormwater into the area of this pipe under the HHT which will further intensify the flooding issue.

Water and Air Pollution

AeroMarine Landfill – No update on efforts to end the pollution of the Keyport Harbor due to toxins leaking from the landfill site at Aeromarine.

Erosion Clogging Waterways

Aeromarine Site – No update on efforts to eliminate the continuing erosion that is silting in the adjacent bay and creek. It is also exposing landfill trash.

Port 149 Bulkhead – No update on plans to fix the collapsing bulkhead. A 7/31/21 Notice to the Boro Clerk, KEC and KUPB of an application for Coastal General Permit #10 Permit-by Certification was received by the Boro Clerk. This permit is only applicable for a bulkhead UPLAND OF THE MHWL. Detailed bulkhead plans covering a “return” along the Borough Lot 22 property line is needed. A return is required from the east end of their bulkhead to a point along W Front Street. The Port 149 bulkhead application raises the issue of where the park property line is located. Property tax refund needs resolution.

Approved Projects

333 First Street – Framing is complete on some of the units.

Raritan Cove –Retaining wall installed along abutting property line to the west. Piles being installed.

31 West Front St – Application for mixed-use for 2 restaurant levels and 9 residential units approved by KUPB. Condition of approval was delineation of flood zone boundaries (VE, LIMWA, and AE) in this SFHA. Need a report from a certified Flood Plain Manager. CAFA permit is required.

317 Beers - continuing wetland infringement in violation of 8/25/2005 NJDEP FILL Permit. Not an enforcement action by the Borough.

(DF):

- Provided the following clarification e-mail on 4/26/2022:
Ken et al –

After last night's meeting I reached out to the Administrator to clarify the capital plan for Fireman's Park bulkhead and parking lot because the budget was a bit confusing. He confirmed that he had the same info as I did and that cost included the WHOLE bulkhead, hence the reduced estimate.

The total capital cost for the bulkhead improvements is estimated at \$1.085m (2022 minus the Federal Grant of \$480k) and the parking lot is estimated at \$720k for a total of \$1.805m.

The administration intends to coordinate with the owners of Port 149 vis-à-vis the timeline for the construction. The earmark from Frank Pallone's efforts lands at \$480k and goes a long way to help with the cost for sure.

*Hope my math is right LOL!!
Dennis*

Public Portion - Closed 9:55pm

(JS):

- Posted that Osprey Nests were erected on April 9th (Cliffwood Beach-within sight of Fireman's Park) and April 16th (Union Beach), by Save Coastal Wildlife.

Meeting Adjourned 9:56pm: Motion to Adjourn by J. Sheridan; M. Tevis 2nd;
Unanimous Approval.

Next meeting will be on **Monday, May 23rd, 2022, at 8:00pm, at Keyport Borough Hall Council Chamber.**

Minutes submitted by Joe Sheridan.



BEACH SWEEPS

MASTER

K

Please complete both sides

Thank you for participating in Clean Ocean Action's (COA) Beach Sweeps and completing this data card. **Data collection is the most important task and turns your dedication and volunteerism into a legacy of information we use to reduce litter and marine debris.** The data from this card is collected and analyzed to identify pollution trends in the waters off New Jersey's coast. The final results from Beach Sweep are incorporated into an Annual Report used to educate citizens and lawmakers about nonpoint source pollution. The Fall data is also forwarded to Ocean Conservancy, who maintains an international database for tracking trends of marine debris in world's oceans. For information on how to help raise funds, reduce pollution, and check out COA's Annual Beach Sweep Reports visit www.CleanOceanAction.org.

Consent: As a participant in the Clean Ocean Action Beach Sweeps, I/we understand that I/we participate at our own risk and that there may be photos and/or video taken that may be used by Clean Ocean Action.

CLEANUP SITE INFORMATION			
CLEAN UP SITE NAME	CITY/MUNICIPALITY	COUNTY	BEACH CAPTAIN NAME
Cedar St. Park	Keyport	Monmouth	MICHAEL PALMISANO
Type of cleanup: ☒ Bay ☐ Shoreline/Beach ☐ Lake, Stream, or River			
DATE OF CLEANUP		NAME OF GROUP/SCHOOL	
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS WORKING ON THIS FORM			
BEACH SWEEP VOLUNTEER INFORMATION Teams of two are encouraged			
VOLUNTEER 1		VOLUNTEER 2	
Name: _____		Name: _____	
Street Address: _____		Street Address: _____	
City, State, Zip: _____		City, State, Zip: _____	
Phone: () _____		Phone: () _____	
Email: _____		Email: _____	
BRAND NAMES Please list the brand names and items		MOST UNUSUAL ITEMS FOUND	
MODULO, ROCK STAR, MILLER LITE, LABATT, GOLD FISH, WENDYS, KITKAT, PRESTONE, MIKE'S, McDONALDS, STARBUCKS, NESQUICK, CORONA, STY VODKA, HEINIKEN, FIREBALL, SCHWEEPS, PEPSI, COKE, LAYS		SEE BC REPORT	
COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS about the cleanup (including entangled animals)			
SEE BC REPORT			

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SWEEP:

- Be careful with sharp objects
- Wear gloves
- Stay off dunes
- Respect wildlife
- Do not lift heavy objects
- Wear sunscreen
- Have fun!

BLACK BAGS ARE FOR GARBAGE

WHITE BAGS ARE FOR RECYCLABLES

Volunteers can reduce the use of plastic bags by bringing their own bucket or reusable bag for trash collection.

Please return this Data Card to a Beach Captain or mail it to:
CLEAN OCEAN ACTION, 49 Avenel Blvd., Long Branch, NJ 07740



732-872-0111
CleanOceanAction.org
info@CleanOceanAction.org
49 Avenel Boulevard
Long Branch, NJ 07740

Clean Ocean Action is a 501(c)(3)
tax exempt nonprofit organization.



#COABeachSweeps

Printed on 100% recycled paper.



Make a tally mark on the line for each item found. Total the tallies in the box provided.
Most commonly found items are highlighted in orange.

Example:

Cups ||||| 23 Tires (piece) |||| (whole) || 7 2

PLASTIC

Bags and Wrappers:

Food, Candy Wrappers/Bags ||||

Store/Shopping Bags 46

Dog Waste Bags 7

Other Bags 17

Bottles:

Beverage/Soda Bottles 115

Other Bottles/Jugs 13

Bottle Caps/Lids 57

Cap Rings 14

Cigarettes 91

Filters 1

Lighters 10

Packaging 48

Cigar Tips 1

E-Cigarette Cartridges/Caps/Pens 3

Fishing:

Bait Bags/Containers 6

Line (tangle) 6 Line (piece) 6

Lures, Floats 2

Nets 1

Food Takeout:

Beverage Cups 2

Forks, Knives, Spoons 7

Food Lids 7

Straws/Stirrers 13

Takeout Containers 7

Health/Hygiene Products:

Cotton Swab Sticks 1

Dental Floss Picks 1

Diapers 4

Disposable Wipes 1

Syringes 6

Tampon Applicators 2

Miscellaneous:

Light Sticks 2 Pens 2

Pieces 96

Ribbon/Tape (no balloon) 6

Rope 1

6-Pack Holders 1

Sheeting 1

Shotgun Shells 1

Strapping Bands 4

Toys 12

Other Plastics (specify) SCREEN COVER, MELTED BLOB, 1DK

FOAM PLASTIC

Building/Dock Material 4

Cups 5

Packaging Materials 16

Pieces 19

Plates 1 Trays 1

Takeout Containers 4

Other Foam Plastic (specify) SURF BOARD PART

3

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Disposable Face Masks 6

Reusable Face Masks 1

Disposable Gloves 35

BALLOONS & RUBBER

Balloons

Mylar/Plastic 8

With String/Ribbon 1

Rubber/Latex 8

With String/Ribbon 1

Condoms 1 Rubber Bands 2

Reusable Gloves (Tally disposable under PPE) 1

Tires (piece) 1 (whole) 1

Other Rubber (specify) SHOE SOLE, CANTREAD

2

METAL

Batteries (car) 1 (other) 1

Bottle Caps 21

Cans 220

Beverage Cans 1

Other Cans 7

Fishing: (hooks) 1 (sinkers) 3

Foil 13

Nails 1 Wire 3

Pieces 9

Pop Tabs 5

Other Metal (specify) SHEET METAL PC, GRILL GRATE, 1DKs = 4

6

PAPER

Beverage Cartons/Boxes 6

Cardboard 2

Cups 6

Newspaper/Magazines 1

Paper Bags 2

Pieces 13

Plates 1

Other Paper (specify) TISSUES-3 UKN-2

5

CLOTH

Blankets/Sheets/Towels 5

Clothing (specify) HAT, SHIRTS 4

Masks (see PPE section) BRIEFS-1 Sock-1

Shoes/Sandals 2

String (no balloon) 1

Other Cloth (specify) BAG, SANDAL, BANNER

4

WOOD

Ice Cream Spoon/Sticks 1

Lumber Pieces 3

Pallets 1

Other Wood (specify) TILES, TRIM, PRESSED WOOD

6

GLASS

Bottles/Jars:

Beverage Bottles 165

Other Bottles/Jars 3

Pieces 297

Other Glass (specify) 1

VOL
WRITES
1 DK =
1 DON'T
KNOW

UKN = UNKNOWN
WATER
UNKNOWN



BEACH SWEEPS

Beach Captain Report

To be returned
to COA:

- ☐ Beach Captain Report
☐ Master Data Card
☐ Individual Data Cards

Instructions: Please complete this form as thoroughly as possible. Be sure to review each individual data card for details like number of volunteers, participating groups/schools, and unusual items.

Site Details (required)

Date of Cleanup: 4/9/2022 Location (circle one): oceanfront river lake/pond
back bay stream wetlands

Beach Captain Name(s): MICHAEL PALMISANO, LYNNE KOSOBUCKI

Junior Beach Captain Name(s): NONE

Location: CEDAR ST. PARK KEYPORT MONMOUTH
Site City County

Geographic Coordinates: 40.440794 74.194183
Latitude Longitude

Data Card Information (required)

Please check the front of each data card for the following information, and list in space provided:

Total Number of Volunteers: 41 Unusual items: Whirly pop Popcorn Popper,
BUOY-"SLOW DOWN", FISH NET ON POLE, BEACH UMBRELLA, PRESTONE GAL. CONTAINER, Knife,
Shoe Sole,

Please avoid abbreviations and list schools/groups in full form, if known:

Participating Schools	Participating Groups
<u>KEYPORT HIGH SCHOOL</u>	<u>KEYPORT HIGH SCH ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB</u> <u>KEYPORT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION</u> <u>PELLA WINDOWS + DOORS</u> <u>GIRL SCOUTS TROOP 574</u>

Additional Details

Tide: Low Weather Conditions: DRY CLOUDY COOL
Number of Trash Bags: 7 Number of Recycling Bags: 2 RECYCLE BINS
Est. Pounds Collected: 320 Est. Distance Cleaned (miles): 1/4
Did volunteers bring buckets for trash collection? ☒ Yes ☐ No If yes, how many? 10
Please list any donations (including in-kind) and who gave them: COFFEE + MUNCHKINS
BEACH CAPT.

Please use the space below to tell us about your cleanup:

BEACH WAS RELATIVELY CLEAN COMPARED TO PREVIOUS SWEEPS.
APPROX 3 WEEKS PRIOR "SAVE COASTAL WILDLIFE" + "WATER SPIRIT"
DID A CLEANUP IN THE SAME AREA.

Additional Comments and Suggestions:

I DIDN'T SEE ANY VERSION NUMBER PRINTED ON THE DATA CARDS. I THINK
THAT IS ^{IMPORTANT} ~~VERY IMPORTANT~~ IN CASE ^{the} CARD GETS REVISED IN THE FUTURE. I WASN'T
SURE IF THERE WAS A CHANGE IN CARD DESIGN FROM LAST SWEEPS. IT WOULD BE
EASIER TO ID PAST VERSIONS IF THE CARDS DISPLAYED A VERSION #.

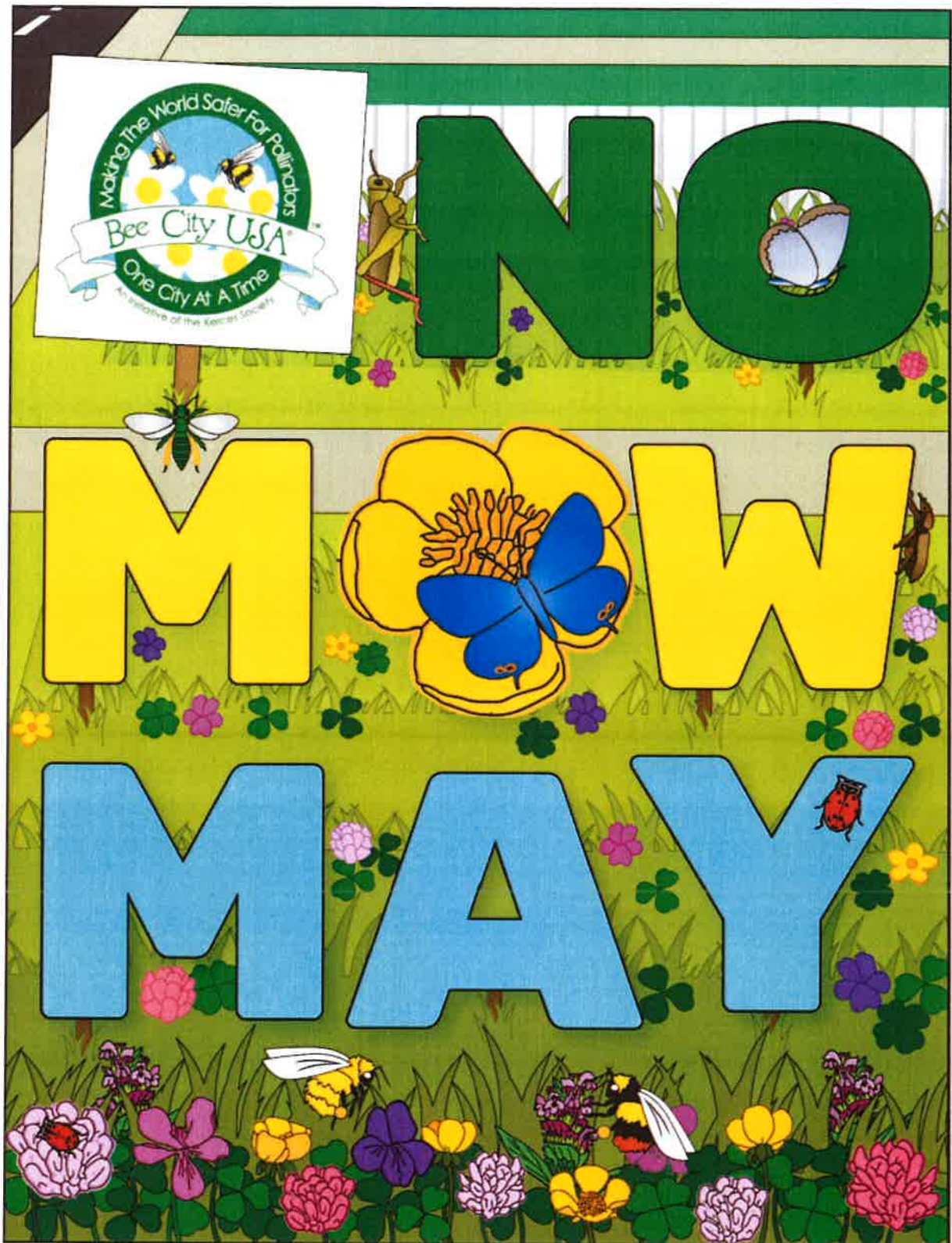
For Office Use Only

Notes:

Check if returned:

- ☐ Beach Captain Report
☐ Master Data Card
☐ Individual Data Cards

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____



BEE CITY USA

Help us empower communities to protect the life that sustains us!

DONATE

Photo: Xerces Society / Anne Stine

NO MOW MAY

A lush, green, weed-free lawn has historically been center stage in American landscaping. It tells the whole neighborhood that you are a competent, hard-working, contributing member of society. Dandelions and an overgrown lawn are a sign of neglect, incompetence, and laziness—or so our culture would have you believe.

Americans have a love affair with lawns—maintaining roughly 40 million acres, or 2% of land in the US, making them the [single largest irrigated crop we grow](#). Lawns require frequent mowing, raking, fertilizing, weeding, chemical treatment, and watering—sucking up time, money, and other resources. Not only are lawns burdensome for the people maintaining them, but they also provide little positive benefit to wildlife, and in fact are often harmful. The traditional monoculture lawn lacks floral resources or nesting sites for bees and is often treated with large amounts of pesticides that harm bees and other invertebrates. When we think of habitat loss, we tend to imagine bulldozers and rutted dirt, but acres of manicured lawn are as much a loss of habitat as any development site.

Re-thinking the American lawn can take a variety of forms from reducing mowing frequency or area mown to permanently converting lawn to a more diverse and natural landscape.

[Read our No Mow May FAQ](#)

Help us empower communities to protect the life that sustains us!

DONATE

Mowing your lawn less creates habitat and can increase the abundance and diversity of wildlife including bees and other pollinators. One way to reduce mowing is by participating in No Mow May. No Mow May is a conservation initiative first popularized by [Plantlife](#), an organization based in the United Kingdom, but which is gaining traction across North America. The goal of No Mow May is to allow grass to grow unmown for the month of May, creating habitat and forage for early season pollinators. This is particularly important in urban areas where floral resources are often limited.

In 2020, residents of Appleton, Wisconsin, an affiliate of [Bee City USA](#), became energized about No Mow May and the City Council agreed to suspend their weed ordinance for the month of May. Over 435 registered property owners participated in the campaign, and Lawrence University, an affiliate of [Bee Campus USA](#), partnered with Appleton to conduct research on the impact of No Mow May on pollinators. Researchers Israel Del Toro and Relena Ribbons collected data on the abundance (the number of individuals) and species richness (the number of species) of flowers and bees found in unmown yards of a subset of the properties participating in No Mow May. They then compared those numbers to the abundance and richness of flowers and bees found in nearby urban parks that are regularly mowed. The findings were impressive! Not only were the abundance and richness of bees higher in the yards of properties participating in No Mow May, but they were way higher. Participating yards had three-times higher bee species richness and five-times higher bee abundance than nearby parks that had been mowed. This study was published in 2020 and is available for [free download online](#). Empowered by their success in 2020, Appleton has spread the word and attracted even more participants in 2021.

Other studies have looked into how reducing the frequency of mowing throughout the growing seasons impacts bees. In a [recent experiment](#) conducted by Susannah Lerman, a research ecologist with the USDA Forest Service's Northern Research Station, Lerman and her collaborators explored whether different lawn mowing frequencies influenced bee abundance and diversity. The team mowed herbicide-free suburban lawns at different frequencies (every week, every other week, and once every three weeks) in Springfield, Massachusetts. The results of their study found bee abundance increased when lawns were mown every other week. Mowing every three weeks resulted in more than double the number of flowers available in lawns (mainly dandelions and clover), and increased bee diversity—yet lowered overall bee abundance versus the every-other-week strategy. The researchers hypothesize that, while the three-week mowing cycle left more flowers in the lawn, the length of the competing turfgrasses made the flowers harder to find. Lerman and her colleagues documented a staggering 93 species of bees, with supplemental observations bringing the total number to 111 bee species—nearly a quarter of all bee species native to the area!

The efficacy of reducing mowing may be expanded upon by altering the composition of your lawn to include more flowering species. A “bee lawn” may include Dutch clover (which captures nitrogen and helps feed the lawn) as well as other low-growing flowering plants such as creeping thyme (*Thymus* spp.), self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), and others. Some plants, such as native violets (*Viola* spp.) may already be present and should be encouraged as they are valuable host plants for fritillary butterflies. For more information about creating a flowering lawn please see the resources at the end of this blog.

In addition to benefiting pollinators, reducing mowing frequency will save water, help your lawn become more resilient to drought, and reduce emissions from gas-powered lawn equipment that often lacks the emission reduction

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GO LAWNLESS

Lawn certainly has its place. It provides a perfect platform for kicking a ball around, provides “accommodation” for the needs of pets, and can be used to define space in landscape design. But how much lawn do you really need, and to what standard must it be maintained? Do your kids need a perfect, weed-free lawn to play on? Do you really need to measure your lawn in acres rather than feet? In addition to reducing the amount you mow—think about reducing the amount of lawn that needs mowing. In place of that lawn, consider [planting a rain garden](#), [pollinator garden](#), or [wildflower meadow](#)—or replacing your turf grass lawn with native lawn alternatives.

WHAT ABOUT WEED REGULATIONS?

Most cities and municipalities have some form of weed ordinance that dictates the height and sometimes even the types of plants a homeowner is allowed to grow. Unfortunately, many of these ordinances are woefully out of date and out of touch with the modern movement towards creating yards that support wildlife in urban settings. While local ordinances will vary greatly from place-to-place, here are a few tips for keeping local officials, and your neighbors happy:

- **Maintain a mowed buffer.** Yes, after spending a considerable amount of time discussing the problems with lawn, we are suggesting you keep some—strategically. Keeping a mowed edge in front of or around a natural planting of a foot or two may be all that’s needed to define “lawn” from “garden” and keep you in step with local ordinances or Homeowner Association guidelines. Maintaining a tidy mowed edge also makes a busy natural planting look less overwhelming, and makes these spaces look intentional rather than neglectful.
- **Engage with your city council, health department, or other local officials.** Tell them what you are doing, why, and begin a conversation about how they can support natural landscapes in their community. [This fact sheet from Penn State](#) can help arm you with facts to overcome the common myths that have led to overly restrictive weed ordinances.
- **Suggest an “opt-in” program, such as a Natural Lawn Registration program** to sidestep the need to re-write a health code ordinance. Under such a model, a homeowner may register their natural landscape with their local health department. The health department can then decline to fine registered properties as long as they are maintaining the natural landscape properly and not encouraging the spread of noxious weeds.

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signs for No Mow May and you can receive a pollinator habitat signs as a thank you for your donations through our [gift center](#).

EXPLORE RESOURCES

[Lawn mowing frequency affects bee abundance and diversity in suburban yards](#)

[BlueThumb.org: Pollinator-Friendly \(Bee\) Lawn](#)

Guidance from Natural Resources Defense Council: [More Sustainable \(and Beautiful\) Alternatives to a Grass Lawn](#)

White paper from Yale's Environmental Protection Clinic: [Toward Sustainable Landscapes: Restoring the Right NOT to Mow](#)

NO MOW MAY SIGNS

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