

Sustainable Madison Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes - March 17, 2026

Kathi Caccavale called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 P.M.

STATEMENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT

“In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting of the Sustainable Madison Advisory Committee (SMAC) was provided by transmitting a copy of the meeting notice to the Madison Eagle and Morris County Daily Record, posting a copy on the bulletin board at the main entrance of the Hartley Dodge Memorial, and filing a copy in the office of the Clerk. This notice was made available to members of the general public.”

The following members acknowledged their presence:

Kathleen Caccavale, Chairperson/Regular Member
Mary Ellen Hennessy-Jones, Resident/Regular Member
Pam Hogan, Resident/Regular Member
Han Yan, Advisory Member, Drew University

Absent:

Peter Fried, Resident/Regular Member
David Duran, School Board Liaison
Deanna Schmidt, MEC Liaison, Resident/Regular Member
Susan Bailey, Resident/Regular Member
Tom Haralampoudis, Council Liaison

Guests:

Kaela Lansinger, TerraCycle, Madison resident

Due to limited attendance, the committee did not take up approval of the February minutes.

Presentation and Community Introduction

- Kaela Lansinger, a Madison resident who works for TerraCycle and expressed interest in becoming involved with local sustainability efforts. TerraCycle is a company focused on recycling “hard-to-recycle” waste streams that are not accepted in standard curbside recycling programs. TerraCycle offers a mix of brand-sponsored free programs, paid Zero Waste Box options, and commercial services for regulated waste streams.

Reports

Shade Tree Management Board

- The Trees for Schools grant is moving forward, with plantings at Madison High School, the junior school, and Central Avenue School. Planting is anticipated for April 8-10.
- Concerns were raised regarding the new digital billboard in Florham Park overlooking Madison's meadow and forest. Members noted tree loss on Madison property during billboard-related work, possible fence damage, and concern about impacts on wildlife and visual distraction.

Environmental Commission Update

- Discussion of clearcutting at the TCC meeting regarding 203 Green Ave application. The MEC had filed a letter saying the project should be denied. The applicant, who wants to subdivide and clearcut land on a New Life Baptist Church lot, maintained that since the arborist supplied a list of trees that would need permits and replacements, the project could not be considered clearcutting. If it were clearcutting, no list would be supplied.

Climate Action Committee Update

- The committee continues to work through long-term climate goals and annual action items, including commercial solar, municipal energy planning, and resilience-related priorities. Kathi noted a productive response from Borough staff regarding the Borough's green building resolution, including potential application to building systems work at the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts.

Schools Update

- New superintendent in place in Madison school district. Awaiting news on the status of the school solar study/application.

Grants and Project Updates

• **Electric Senior Bus Grant**

The Borough is still working through procurement and purchasing-agent issues related to the electric senior bus grant.

• **Electric Landscaping Equipment Grant (\$10,000)**

Members confirmed that the equipment has arrived. The original timeline was delayed due to procurement hurdles, which also postponed employee training, landscaper outreach, and public information efforts.

• **RGGI Natural Climate Solutions Grant**

Application in progress. Melissa Honohan has reached out to The Land Conservancy for support, and Michael Pelesier has resumed involvement in the effort. Han Yan and Drew student are providing GIS mapping and i-Tree support.

- **PSE&G Mini-Grant (\$2,000)**

A native shrub swap proposal was submitted in February, and the committee is awaiting a decision.

Sustainable Jersey Action Initiatives

- The committee discussed moving forward on several actions for 2027 submission cycle, including the Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI), Complete Streets-related work, a water conservation ordinance, and updates to the Community Equity and Diversity action.
- “Health in All Policies” action in progress through collaboration with the Board of Health and Health Director. A priority project identified is street safety improvement at Woodland Road and Green Village Road, where school crossing conditions need review.

Other Business

- For Green and Clean Day, the committee discussed focusing on project-based volunteer work rather than tabling. Potential projects include English ivy removal around trees at the library, maintenance at the library rain garden, and possible plant identification signage at the Cook Avenue parking lot.

Upcoming Events / Announcements

- New Jersey Sustainability Summit - May 15, 2026
- New Jersey Complete Streets Summit - April 21, 2026, at Rutgers
- Forest stewardship work at the Madison Recreation Complex scheduled - April 11.
- “How Birding Can Change the World” - March 23 7pm at community arts center.
- Arbor Day celebration May 2 with native red oak sapling giveaway and Town-Wide Yard Sale

Action Items

Kaela - send Kathi / Mary Ellen a follow-up email with links to relevant TerraCycle free programs, community options, and any helpful summary information.

Mary Ellen - Explore whether any TerraCycle free programs may be suitable for the recycling depot or other municipal collection points.

Pam + Han - Continue work on the Community Equity and Diversity update, including interviews, ACS data collection, and mapping.

Kathi - Follow up on Green and Clean Day project assignments, including library ivy work, rain garden coordination, and other volunteer options.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:13 P.M.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Han Yan.