

**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM
REGULAR MEETING**

DATE: July 11, 2022
TIME: 7:30 PM
LOCATION: Municipal Building and Remote Via Zoom

ROLL CALL

Mr. Baio	Present
Ms. Duarte	Present
Ms. Neibart	Present
Mr. Orlins	Present
Mayor Monaghan	Present

Also, present:

Mr. John M. Mills, Esq.
Mr. Jason Gabloff, Township Administrator
Ms. Maria Coppinger, Township Clerk

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE – Read by Mayor Monaghan

Adequate Notice of this meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was given to the Observer Tribune and Daily Record on January 10, 2022. Notice was posted on the bulletin board in the township offices and notice was filed with the Township Clerk.

PRESENTATION

- Historic Park at Pitney Farm Handover – Presented by Ms. Diana Orban Brown - Comments attached. Ms. Brown provided all records pertaining to the Historic Park at Pitney Farm to Mr. Gabloff. The committee thanked Ms. Brown for all her efforts on the park and grant process.
- A Public / Private Partnership for Historically Native Reforestation and Conservation - Presented by Bruce Flitcroft – Presentation attached. The Township Committee is interested in learning more about the proposal. However, they've requested additional information regarding the project and the areas identified for the project, and they asked for a draft agreement from Mr. Flitcroft. The committee would also like to host a public hearing on the proposal and receive feedback from the Environmental Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Duarte made her announcements on the 988 Suicide Prevention Hotline, Student Representatives Volunteers, Rotary Club seeking new members, and the upcoming National Night Out event.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

George De Pompignan, 314 Mendham Road West - Mr. De Pompignan spoke in support of Mr. Flitcroft's presentation.

Sam Barsa, 20 Conifer Drive – Mr. Barsa asked Mr. Flitcroft if there was any way to sell 'carbon credit' due to Mr. Flitcroft's project.

Mark Andre De Pompignan, 314 Mendham Road West – He also supported Mr. Flitcroft's presentation and would ask his troop leader to arrange for his Boy Scout Troop to assist with the project.

Stephen Wayne, 71 Ironia Road, Mendham Borough – Mr. Wayne expressed concerns with the Backer Farm Brewery Application, specifically on safety and traffic concerns.

Rob Meyer, 3 East Ridge Road – Mr. Meyer spoke in support of Mr. Flitcroft's proposal.

Bernadette Koenig, 13 North Gate Road – Ms. Koenig mentioned that Mr. Flitcroft gave a short presentation to the Environmental Commission and noted that it sounded fascinating. Ms. Koenig expressed that she doesn't know much about the public/private partnership but fully supports the science and the experiment.

Peter Banos, 47 Ironia Road, Mendham Borough – Mr. Banos requested clarification of the position outlined in the Township's Memorandum to the Morris County Agriculture Development Board regarding the Backer Farm Application. Mr. Banos noted that the memorandum neither states if the township has determined if the Backer Farm proposal meets the threshold for 'major development' nor does it outline

the requirements for a ‘major development’ as it does for projects not meeting the ‘major development’ threshold. Therefore, Mr. Banos requested that the township provide a letter to the Ag Board stating that the proposal does or does not trigger a major development.

Mary Calabro, 39 Mountainside Road – Ms. Calabro commented on Mr. Flitcroft’s presentation, which she would like to know more about the environmental study, Rutgers’ presentation, and she feels more information is needed before the township moves forward. She noted that she did not hear any negative comments regarding the proposal except questions from the committee on deer problems, fencing, and cost. She expressed that the township needs a more detailed plan about what would be expected.

Ms. Duarte made a motion to close the open to the public session; Seconded by Ms. Neibart. Voice Vote: All members present voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Regular and Executive Session Minutes of June 27, 2022

Ms. Neibart made a motion; Seconded by Ms. Duarte. Voice Vote: All members present voted in favor.

REGULAR AGENDA – RESOLUTIONS

2022-115 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Municipal Clerk to Advertise for Bid and Notice to Bidders for a Dump Truck

Ms. Duarte made a motion; Seconded by Ms. Neibart. Voice Vote: All members present voted in favor.

2022-116 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing an Extension of the Shared Services Agreement with the Township of Mendham for Randolph Township to Provide Temporary Tax Collection Services

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE	MOTION	SECOND	ROLL CALL		
			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Baio			X		
Ms. Duarte	X		X		
Ms. Neibart		X	X		
Mr. Orlins			X		
Mayor Monaghan			X		

2022-117 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing a Refund of an Erroneous Tax Payment

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE	MOTION	SECOND	ROLL CALL		
			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Baio			X		
Ms. Duarte		X	X		
Ms. Neibart	X		X		
Mr. Orlins			X		
Mayor Monaghan			X		

2022-118 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Award of a Professional Services Contract for a Licensed Professional for Asbestos Remediation to RK Occupational & Environmental Analysis, Inc

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE	MOTION	SECOND	ROLL CALL		
			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Baio		X	X		
Ms. Duarte			X		
Ms. Neibart	X		X		
Mr. Orlins			X		
Mayor Monaghan			X		

2022-119 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Payment of Bills

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE	MOTION	SECOND	ROLL CALL		
			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Baio			X		
Ms. Duarte		X	X		
Ms. Neibart	X		X		
Mr. Orlins			X		
Mayor Monaghan			X		

ORDINANCE FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST READING

11-2022 Bond Ordinance Providing a Supplemental Appropriation of \$600,000 for Capital Improvements in and by the Township of Mendham, in the County of Morris, New Jersey, and Authorizing the Issuance of \$570,000 Bonds or Notes of the Township to Finance Part of the Cost Thereof - **Public hearing scheduled for July 25, 2022**

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE	MOTION	SECOND	ROLL CALL		
			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Baio	X		X		
Ms. Duarte			X		
Ms. Neibart		X	X		
Mr. Orlins			X		
Mayor Monaghan			X		

12-2022 Ordinance Appropriating \$592,633.36 of ARRA Funds Available to the Township of Mendham, in the County of Morris, New Jersey in Order to Provide for Various Building Improvements, Road Improvements and Storm Water Improvements in and by the Township - **Public hearing scheduled for July 25, 2022**

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE	MOTION	SECOND	ROLL CALL		
			YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Baio			X		
Ms. Duarte	X		X		
Ms. Neibart		X	X		
Mr. Orlins			X		
Mayor Monaghan			X		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

George Koenig, 13 North Gate Road – Mr. Koenig expressed traffic concerns with the Backer Farm Brewery Application. On behalf of several Mendham Township and Borough residents*, Mr. Koenig asked that the committee request the Morris County AG Board to request an independent study paid by the applicant in connection with the brewery application.

**Stephen Wayne, Stephen and Judy Dreskin, Greg and Maria Moore, TJ and Theresa Moretti, John and Tracy Ervin (sp), Dave and Melissa Rainis, Kim and Eric Hart, Peter Banos, Nicholas and Nina Yacavino, Robert and Marie Fox, Terrill and Michael Doyle and George and Bernadette Koenig*

Peter Banos, 47 Ironia Road, Mendham Borough – Mr. Banos asked if the recordings of executive sessions were available to the public. The attorney noted that the committee does not record executive sessions, but the clerk takes notes for minutes. He also asked if he would be able to contact the township engineer.

Rob Meyers, 3 East Ridge Road – He provided his opinion regarding Mr. Banos's request to speak with the township engineer, noting that any public member is within their rights to approach an employee of any body and ask questions. However, the responsibility is on the part of the employee in fulfilling whatever agreement or contract they might have with the employer. He suggested it would probably be a good idea to review the expectations for anybody employed by the municipality as to what they can and cannot do in speaking on behalf of the municipality. It's not just in the protection of this body, municipality, but also the protection of the employee.

Mr. Orlins made a motion to close the open to the public session; Seconded by Ms. Neibart. Voice Vote: All members present voted in favor.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Neibart would like to introduce an ordinance requiring every homeowner to have their house number visible on their mailbox or house. This ordinance would assist the first responders in getting to an emergency.

Ms. Duarte noted that there is no sign or marker at Wysong Park, named after Marian Wysong, the first female mayor who dedicated many years of volunteer work. She asked the committee to consider putting a sign or marker at the park.

Ms. Duarte also asked if there would be a follow-up on the Master Plan around the accessory apartments, traffic study, and business overlays.

ADJOURN

Ms. Neibart made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Mr. Orlins. Voice Vote: All members present voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Distributed: 07/18/2022
Approved: 07/25/2022

Maria F. Coppinger
Township Clerk

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. Historic Park at Pitney Farm Handover, presented by Ms. Diana Orban Brown
- 2. A Public / Private Partnership for Historically Native Reforestation and Conservation, presented by Bruce Flitcroft

Notes for Historic Park at Pitney Farm Handover – 7/11/2022

Thank you for giving me a few minutes to update you on the status of the Mendham Township Historic Park at Pitney Farm and to reflect on the process that got us all to where we are today. At the end of this short presentation, I will be passing the Pitney Park baton to Jason Gabloff, our administrator.

It's hard to believe that it was four years ago that Mayor Rich Diegnan appointed a steering committee of seven residents to determine what to do with the preserved seven acres of the former Pitney Farm. The tract totaled 12 ½ acres originally, and five-and-half unencumbered acres had been sold for development. The public consensus was that the seven acres should become a quiet oasis in the heart of the Mendhams.

appointed
Here are a couple of stories that now can be told:

I was ~~as~~ the working chair of the task force. At our meeting, everyone came to the table with their individual concepts and wish lists. As an example, one of the members suggested building a stockade fence around the park for privacy. Ed Clark, the landscape architect brought in to consult, gently pointed out that parks are meant to be open and inviting, so the stockade fence was quickly dismissed. ~~Dum~~

The group's agenda included having several meetings with the Pitney neighbors and with interested residents to hear their views and wishes, including a general Town Hall-style meeting and a formal presentation with public comment.

Prior to the Town Hall, the question of the cost of all these great ideas came up. The answer from the landscape architect was that it would cost breathtaking 1.5 million dollars! My response was "No it won't, because neither I nor the mayor would think of taking a project of that cost to the Township Committee or the taxpayers." So it was back to the drawing board.

The result was our beautiful park for about half the cost of the original estimate. And better yet, a huge percentage of the cost was covered by state and county grants.

A great deal of credit for reducing the cost has to go to Dave Read, our public works superintendent, and his crew who did a lot of the prep work, including tree removal and grading. And Wicklow and Laurano, the landscaper/builders deserve credit for making this a labor of love and going above and beyond the strict requirements of the construction contract.

What was amazing about the process was a willingness to compromise on each facet of development. A suggestion to clearcut the property and start from scratch gave way to

selectively clearing dead, dying or useless flora. At another time, some residents pushed for a parking lot of 20 or more cars, while the Pitney neighbors asked for eight or less. The compromise was about 12 spots, with some reserved for special needs.

When the concept plan for the park was presented in a Township Committee meeting, almost all concerns were addressed and the result was seven acres of grass, native plant rain gardens, flat environmentally sensitive pervious surface trails suitable for able-bodied users as well as those with mobility issues. If you visit today, you are likely to see parents pushing strollers, including dads and moms safely using jogging strollers; little kids learning how to ride a bike in a safe place; dads and daughters jogging; daughters strolling with their elderly mom and the grandkids; dogwalkers; and more. That was the concept – and it is now the reality.

Today, the park is about 99% finished. The grass is growing; the interpretive historical signs are installed (and being read by visitors!); markers for donations to sustain the park have been engraved and installed next to the various trees, benches, the flagpole and other items in the park; the Walled Garden has been restored to its past beauty thanks to the Gardening Angels who were honored here several weeks ago; the Seed House has been painted and its doors and windows replaced. ~~Truly~~, if you haven't visited the Historic Park at Pitney Farm, please do.

There are many people to thank:

- The original steering committee and consultant/architect Ed Clark, a partner of Wicklow and Laurano
- The Historic Preservation Committee and particularly Patricia Zimmerman and Melissa Saharko
- The diligence of township engineer Denis Keenan, and the early efforts of former Township Administrator Debbie Bonanno
- The outstanding vision and hands-on efforts of Bill Moran, Al Sferra, Kris West and all the Gardening Angels who transformed the Walled Garden
- The developer, Anatol Siemieniczuk, who personally, with a colleague, scraped and painted the Seed House and paid for and installed the new doors and windows
- The three young Girl Scouts of Troop 97847 who came up with a plan for the greenhouse area by the Seed House
- The stakeholders group appointed as construction began to provide feedback on the progress
- The 50 or so donors who are supporting the sustainability of the park for the future
- The State of New Jersey Green Acres program and the Morris County Commissioners' Morris County Trails Construction Grant program that provided much of the funding for the park

- And, of course, the Township Committees going back to 2009 until today that made the park possible

Thank you also to Jason Gabloff who has offered to be the park liaison from here on out. And with that, I pass the baton – well, literally the flash drive of more than 1,000 files and 1.5 gigabytes – to Jason. Best wishes, and if you have questions, you know where to find me.

Now if there are any questions from the committee?

Entrance sign still to come

Donations are still possible

Several specimen trees

Home Roll for Walled Garden, Seed House, Gazebo + Greenhouse





FOUNDED MAY OF 2022



**23 Tingley Rd. Mendham Township,
NJ 07960**





MISSION

Our mission is to partner with Mendham Township and other private and public woodland landowners to sustainably farm a wide variety of native mushrooms to help restore our New Jersey forests to their former native resilient state. With community involvement, our efforts can raise awareness while helping to address ecological issue such deforestation, carbon capture, blights and invasive species, while simultaneously creating healthy agricultural products.



TEST AND DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE WOODLAND FARMING TECHNIQUES

INTRO

Create a P3 agreement with the Mendham Township to reforest and maintain key woodland lots using the woodland agricultural techniques that we are developing for North Jersey woodlands. We plan on getting the support of the USDA, NRCS and NJDEP. We believe that this might also help MT get grants from NJ DEP RGGI program.

Start with two or three lots for expediency and trial purposes and look at expanding later with legal approval to other preserved or un preserved lots owned by MT.

Within the P3 agreement would be a 10 year lease for custodial and woodland agriculture purposes only. The terms of the agreement would make MM responsible for woodland restoration, trail building and all maintenance on the property.

Create a hands-on educational program for residents to practice woodland restoration and preservation on their own private property

PROBLEM DEFINITION

NJ native hardwood woodlands were almost completely wiped out during the 18th and 19th centuries due to lumber harvesting and farming. Later in the 20th century by urban sprawl. The mycorrhizal fungal colonies in our soil were also all but wiped out. During the last 130 years new tree species have spread in the void left by the old traditional oak, hickory, chestnut stands that were killed. The mycorrhizal fungal colonies have not materially returned in their previous composition. Generalist Mycorrhizae have replaced the specialist varieties that evolved with the larger slow growing Hardwood trees. White ash is a relatively fast growing hardwood that filled a large part of the void left by the harvested slower growing hardwoods, but even that tree species is subject to an insect blight.

The loss of these fungal colonies left our existing and new forests exposed to blights and the unchecked spread of various fungus and soil bacteria which are not beneficial in quantity to our woodland. Such as oak wilt, Dutch elm disease, chestnut blight, North Shelf and many others. It also caused the acceleration of ground litter decomposition allowing a faster spread of invasive plants like Rosa Multiflora, Barberry and others. Recent science has identified that Mycorrhizal Fungi in their exchange of nutrients with their Symbiont tree partners, provide not just phosphates, minerals and nitrates to the tree but also complex chemical compounds to fight off; invasive insects (insecticides), parasitic fungi and even help make bark fire retardant. Mycorrhizal fungi also help feed saplings with Nutrients from the parent tree to enhance establishment of new trees. Without this network in the soil and its chemical production our woodland forests are more vulnerable.

Simply Preserving the land and setting it aside doesn't fully protect the woodland environment in fact those practices alone here in North Jersey are changing the profile of our forests in many ways. Besides making our woodlands more susceptible to blights and diseases, it is replacing the historic woodland eco system with new forest that does not support, as well, traditional fragile historic flora, fauna and fungal populations. This is due to the introduction of so many new species of trees, plants and fungi over the last 130 years.

REFORESTATION SOLUTION

REFORESTATION ENTAILS A LOT MORE THAN PLANTING TREES. IT MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FOLLOWING;



1.
Planting Native
Hardwood trees



2.
Soil Health
Bacterial content



3.
Soil Health
C:N ratios



4.
Invasive plant
removal



5.
Thinning fast
growing
softwood tree
stands



6.
Soil Health pH



7.
Soil Health
Mycorrhizal Fungal
colonization

Lots that have been cleared need all of these activities (1-7) to properly restore the woodland forests.

Newly forested lots will require activities (4-7) to properly restore the woodland forests.

BENEFITS (1)

Almost all land plants form symbiotic associations with mycorrhizal fungi. These below-ground fungi play a key role in terrestrial ecosystems as they regulate nutrient and carbon cycles, and influence soil structure and ecosystem multifunctionality. Up to 80% of plant N and P is provided by mycorrhizal fungi while Mycorrhizal fungi increase plant carbon capture and use by 20-30%. Many plant species depend on these symbionts for growth and survival. Estimates suggest that there are over c. 50 000 fungal species that form mycorrhizal associations with more than c. 250 000 plant species which includes all 6000 species of trees.

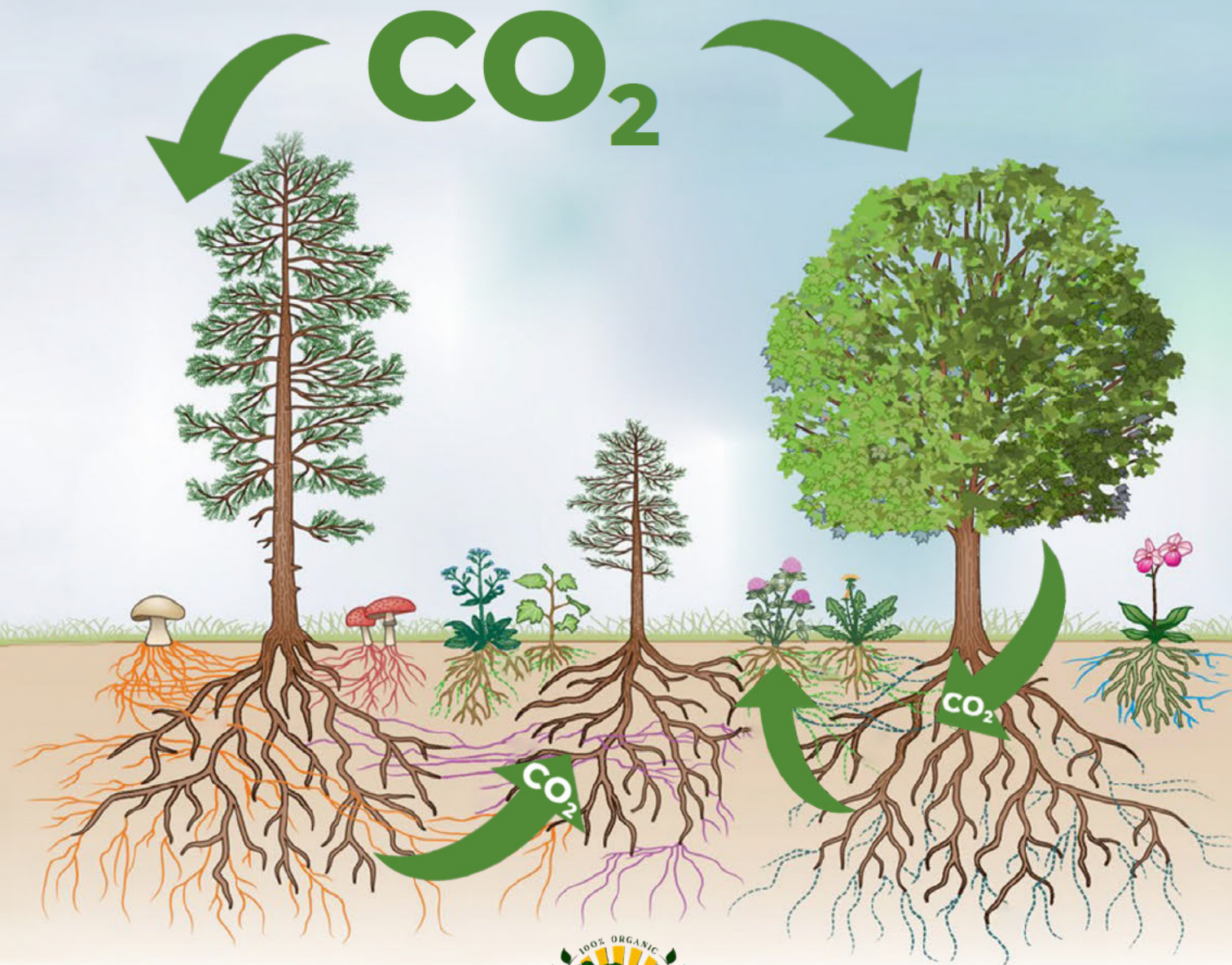
Carbon and nutrients can be transferred from one plant to another through fungal hyphae. In boreal forests, mature trees allocate significant amounts of Carbon into mycorrhizal networks.

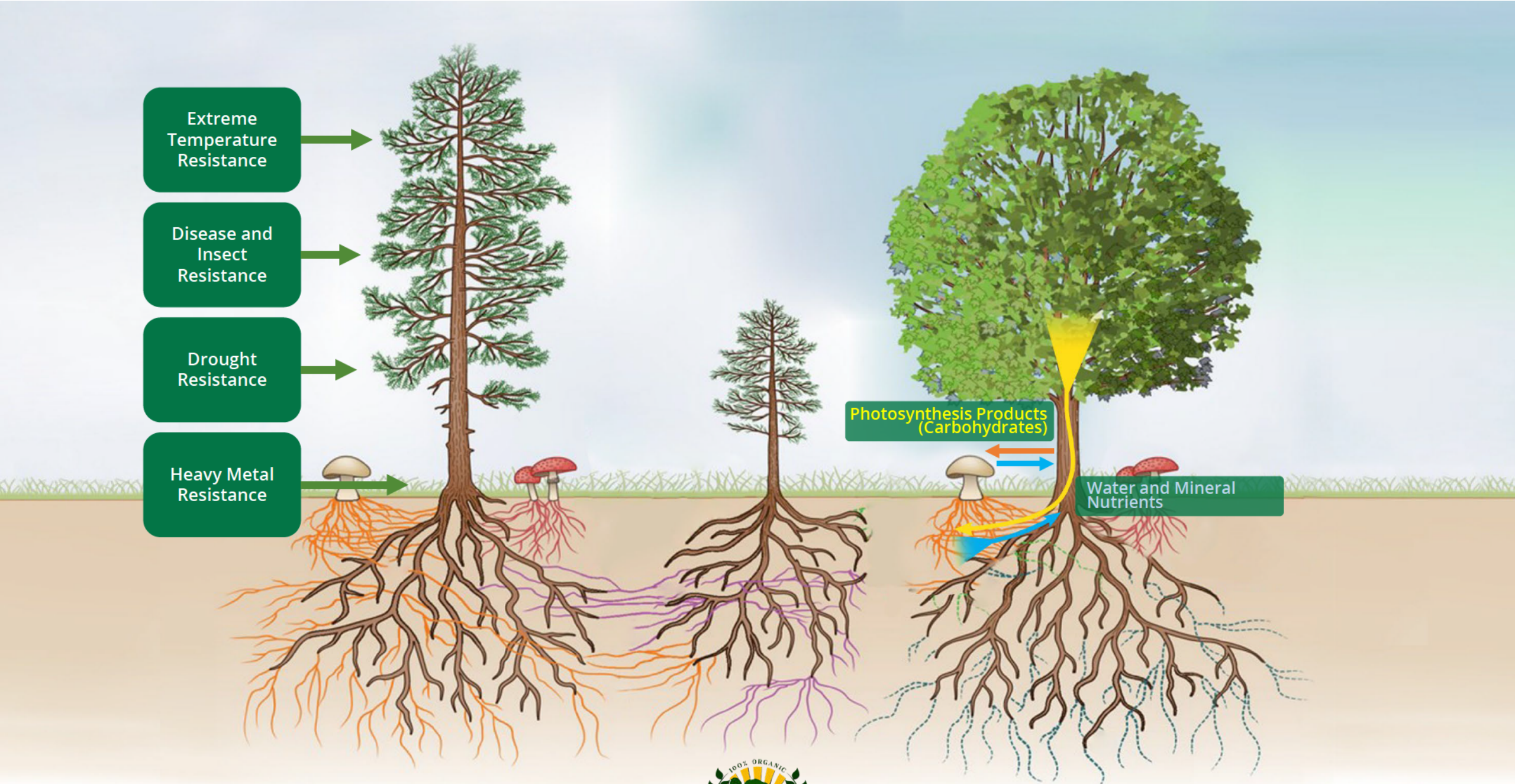
BENEFITS (2)

Mycorrhizal networks are important for seedling establishment in perennial vegetation ^[1] ^[2]. Small seedlings then have immediate access to a low-cost 'nutrient adsorption machine', provided and maintained by the surrounding vegetation ^[3].

Plants investing the largest amount of C into mycorrhizal networks often obtain the largest amount of nutrients in return, indicating that resource exchange is, at least to some extent, controlled ^[4] ^[5].

AM symbiosis is considered ancestral among land plants, and it probably allowed their transition from water to land 470 Million years ago ^[6]. Ectomycorrhizal associations are much younger than the AM symbiosis and evolved c. 100–200 million year ago during a period of rapid angiosperm radiation in the Jurassic and Cretaceous ^[7]. EM interaction networks display an intermediate structure, showing modularity and nestedness ^[8], with generalist EM fungal species having a broad host range, colonizing many trees in a forest, and more specialized EM fungi associating with particular hosts





PROPOSAL

Enter into a PPP agreement between Mendham Township and Mendham Mushrooms with the following objectives;

Set up a trial by leasing two or three lots of Township owned land for reforestation and forest maintenance

Collect Soil and VFS data for NJDEP

Agree to resilient native reforestation objectives for each lot

Coordinate with the Mendham Township forestry plan

Execute agreements by Sept 22, 2022

PROPOSAL OPTIONS (1)

IF AGREEMENTS CAN BE REACHED BY SEPT 23RD SEVERAL OPTIONS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE;

1

Mendham Mushrooms would establish a reforestation and mycology conservation facility at one of the approved/leased lots.

2

Mendham Mushrooms would create a public education curriculum in conjunction with the environmental Commission for Mendham residents on woodland restoration and growing edible mushrooms on your private property

3

Mendham Mushrooms would engage Rutgers University to engage in a more scaled and comprehensive study of the Woodlands of Mendham Township for woodland restoration options beyond the trial.

PROPOSAL OPTIONS (2)

IF AGREEMENTS CAN BE REACHED BY SEPT 23RD SEVERAL OPTIONS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE;

4

Mendham Mushrooms would conduct a Carbon Capture analysis annually and soil condition analysis annually for the Township.

5

If the Trial is successful according to the USDA, Mendham Township at their option could expand the PPP agreement to whatever properties in the Township determined to be beneficial to the public good.

6

Create profit sharing clause in years 4-10 to fund other ecological initiatives

SUPPORT

Involve the Environmental Commission In planning, site selection and educational objectives

Solicit scout troops, high school students or town volunteers to do tree inventories and initial soil samples

Monthly educational trial hikes.



NEXT STEPS



1.

Get township approval
to proceed with a
limited Pilot project



2.

Identify lots and
collect VFS data



3.

Draft, approve and
execute PPP agreement



4.

NJDEP RGGI grant for
Mendham Township
(optional)



5.

USDA CSP and SHD
grants for Mendham
Mushrooms

APPENDIX

[1] Grime et al., **1987**

[2] van der Heijden & Horton, **2009**

[3] Newman **1988**

[4] Kytoviita et al., **2003**

[5] Kiers et al., **2011**

[6] Selosse & Le Tacon, **1998**

[7] Brundrett, **2002**

[8] Bahram et al., **2014**

