

For Immediate Release

Contact: Maureen Kelly, Chair, Chatham Township Green Team, 58 Meyersville Rd., Chatham, NJ 07928, 973-635-4600

#### CHATHAM TOWNSHIP AWARDED SUSTAINABLE JERSEY CERTIFICATION - AGAIN

CHATHAM TOWNSHIP - Chatham Township is pleased to announce that it has once again been awarded Bronze Certification from Sustainable Jersey as it has for every cycle since the Sustainable Jersey program began. Achieving 200 points for environmentally sustainable actions ranging from creating municipal energy audits, changing to energy efficient lighting systems in the municipal building, updating the natural resources inventory to participating in the Sustainability Fair indicates that the Township is in the forefront of environmental awareness among all New Jersey municipalities.

Additionally, as it was in 2009, the Township has been selected to receive the annual Collaboration Award, this time along with Chatham Borough and Madison for the municipalities' active involvement with the Tri-Town 55+ Coalition. The award recognizes municipalities that have advanced sustainability by building strong partnerships.

The Sustainable Jersey program awarded its first certifications in 2009 when Chatham Township was one of only 34 towns to become certified. Currently only about a third of the 565 New Jersey municipalities have received certification. The Chatham Township all-volunteer Green Team, the group charged with achieving SJ program requirements, is led by its chair, Maureen Kelly, who along with past chair Steve Carroll spends endless hours working on programs and documentation. "All the hard work to increase environmental stewardship is well worth it for the town and future generations," said Maureen. Sustainable Jersey is a certification program for municipalities in New Jersey that want to go green, save money, and take steps to sustain their quality of life over the long term.

"The Township has always been a leader in environmental preservation and it's rewarding to see our efforts acknowledged," said Chatham Township former Deputy Mayor and Green Team/Environmental Commission liaison Karen Swartz. The Green Team consists of the Environmental Commission members.

Preserving open space, an important Sustainable Jersey action, has always been a Township priority. Joe Basralian, chair of the Open Space Committee, has repeatedly emphasized that "open spaces increase livability and enhance property values. In addition the protection of natural areas can help resolve water-related environmental problems. Protection of wetlands, for instance, will remove the need for costly and environmentally questionable flood-control structures."

Since 2009, Sustainable Jersey has empowered municipalities through training, financial incentives and support to develop programs that preserve and enhance the environment. Founded under the auspices of The College of New Jersey and initially funded by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. Sustainable Jersey now has sponsors ranging from the Dodge Foundation to PSE&G to New Jersey American Water.

###