

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

CTEC'S Purpose: To undertake projects and make recommendations concerning the protection or use of natural resources, including water resources and air quality, located within or directly affecting Chatham Township.

The Chatham Township Environmental Commission's goal is to provide a responsible environmental viewpoint to Township committees and boards and to undertake projects with a strong educational component in order to inform officials and residents about constructive actions that can be taken to preserve the environment.

CTEC is 50 years old

The Chatham Township Environmental Commission was formed in 1968 (Ord. No. 27-68), the same year New Jersey passed legislation allowing towns to do so, and the same year the Rolling Knolls landfill was closed. The EC's first major action was to create a Natural Resources Inventory in 1974 which the EC has since updated twice. In 1974 former mayor Erv Hoag was on the Township Committee, Sam Averett was chair of the EC, and EC members included Sylvia Boyer, Arthur Heyl, Elise Davis and Joan Farrell.

Commissioners in 2018

Frank Esposito, Cara Feeser, Peter Gallagher, Maureen Kelly, Christina Mott, Matt Palmer, Jessica Romeo, Dorothea Stillinger (EC Chair), Don Travisano (Planning Board liaison), Steve Carroll (Green Team)

Meetings. The Commission met 10 times during the year. Average attendance was 6 members.

Green Team

- The Commission also serves as the Township Green Team. The Green Team was chaired by Maureen Kelly.
- The Green Team achieved 200 points for Sustainable Jersey certification due to the efforts of Steve Carroll and Maureen Kelly, which was more than the 150 required for Bronze certification. Bronze certification was awarded to Chatham Township in 2018, good for three years through 2021.

Projects

- Pesticide-free lawn care project. With Environmental Commission leadership Chatham Township implemented an organic pesticide-free maintenance program on all its municipal playing fields and recreation areas.
- Seedling Give-A-Way in April. A thousand tree seedlings were distributed free to Chatham Township residents as part of a joint effort between Chatham Township, New Jersey Forest Service, New Jersey Soil Conservation Districts, Sustainable Jersey and the Arbor Day Foundation. Tree protective cages made by a volunteer (Joe Basralian) were handed out to participants.
- Sustainability Fair in the fall in partnership with the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission. Booths, exhibits, handouts.
- Annual Open Space Workday. Trash pickup and clipping of invasive plant species on Township-owned property along the Passaic River. **Chatham Disposal Inc.** donated pickup of bags of collected trash. **ShopRite of Chatham** donated plastic bags and work gloves. Thank-you messages were sent to participants, letters to sponsors.
- "Living with Wildlife: Bears and Foxes" presentation at the Chatham Library in partnership with the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center (Jessica Romeo).
- Green Energy Fair at the Chatham Library, a representative from the BPU talked on saving money on energy bills and reducing your carbon footprint.
- "Truth About Ticks", presentation at the Chatham Library in partnership with the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center (Jessica Romeo).
- CTEC Facebook page maintained on-going (Cara Feeser).
- Commission website updated (Frank Esposito).
- Recycling tonnage reports, Tanglewood activities, recycling initiatives reported to CTEC (Frank Esposito).
- Responded to e-mail sent to the Commission (Frank Esposito).

- Hosted scout and other work groups at the Green Village Pond trail - brambles clipped, downed tree cleared, woodchips spread, trail lined with branches. Trail is well marked with white diamond-shaped CTEC markers.
- Maintained liaison with Open Space Committee (Cara Feeser).

Site Plan and Issue Reviews

The Commission reviewed over two dozen site plan or wetland applications, studied proposed state legislation and sent 2 comment letters to the Board of Adjustment.

Resident Inquiries

- A resident attended a Commission meeting to express concerns about destruction of wetlands on Long Hill Lane.

Advocacy

- "Recycle Coach" app, available from the DPW website, was advertised more widely to residents.
- Passaic River. Several commissioners and residents attended a planning meeting for river cleanup and improvement.
- Pilgrim pipeline. Commissioners attended meetings and prepared documents opposing the pipeline.
- Development applications. Members attended Planning Board and Board of Adjustment meetings and commented on applications (Maureen Kelly, Dot Stillinger).

Training and Meetings

- A commissioner attended MUA municipal recycling coordinators meetings.
- Several Commissioners attended conferences and workshops sponsored by the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) and other environmental organizations.

Plans for 2019

- Review development and wetland applications, comment as necessary.
- Conduct an Open Space Work Day in April.
- Improve Green Village Pond trail, which has great potential for a nature trail and also gives easy access to the Kirby meadow, a great place for birdwatching.
- Co-sponsor the Sustainability Fair to be held in September.
- Work on projects that will result in Sustainable Jersey points.
- Produce educational events for residents.
- Work on organic pesticide-free lawn maintenance programs.
- Monitor environmental activities on the local and state level (e.g. Pilgrim pipeline, offshore drilling), comment as necessary.
- Investigate potential grants for projects.
- Attend conferences and training events.
- Attend Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, Township Committee meetings as needed.
- Pie-in-the-sky. It wouldn't be too hard to put in a woodchip trail along the "Pierson easement" from Green Village Road near the post office to Nash Field on Township-owned property. Needed: volunteers and woodchips.

Acknowledgements

- Grateful thanks to the Chatham Township Committee for supporting the Green Team by passing all requested resolutions and ordinances.
- Grateful thanks to **Chatham Disposal Inc, ShopRite of Chatham, and Chatham Township DPW** for donations of goods and services and providing assistance.
- Grateful thanks to ANJEC for responding to requests for information and documents.
- And most grateful thanks to the Commissioners for their faithful attendance at meetings and work on projects

==== dks March 2019