

Chatham Township Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 4, 2026
58 Meyersville Rd. Chatham NJ 07928

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT: The meeting schedule for 2026 and January 2027 is posted on the main bulletin board at the Township municipal building, in two newspapers and on the Chatham Township Environmental Commission website at <https://www.chathamtownship-nj.gov/environmental>. The public is cordially invited to attend all meetings, join the discussions and participate in projects.

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.

DATES FOR CTEC AND GREEN TEAM FOR 2026 AND JANUARY 2027

The first or second Wednesday, depending on the month: January 14, February 4, March 4, April 8, May 6, June 3, July 1, August NO MEETING, September 2, October 7, November 11, December 2, and January 13, 2027.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Roll Call of CTEC Members at 7:15pm: Present: Jessica Romeo (Chair), Lisa McHugh (Vice-Chair), Craig Alperowitz (Township Committee liaison), Polly Brophy, JoAnne Lockwood White, Pat Wells, Celeste Fondaco (alt. 1), Steve Gesell (alt.2)
Absent: Phil Ankel (Planning Board liaison), Amy Mason
Guests: Aanya Aditya and AJ Aditya

2. Public Meeting Statement (see above)

3. Approve Meeting Minutes of January 14, 2025

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes of January 14, 2025

Celeste motioned to approve the meeting minutes; JoAnne seconded.

All in favor.

4. Discussion of upcoming training sessions, special meetings or workshops

JoAnne mentioned she attended an informational session on **Terracycle** and Pat distributed information about **Ridwell.com**. Both companies address keeping hard to recycle materials out of landfills.

5. Green Team updates

Activities that CTEC manages are all part of the Green Team, including Sustainable Jersey. Chatham Township was awarded Bronze in 2024. Jessica suggested the committee visit the Sustainable Jersey website at <https://www.sustainablejersey.com>

-In anticipation of the Sustainability Fair, Jessica suggested we proactively contact the Borough and be active participants/partners in the planning.

6. Light Pollution Initiative

CTEC, with co-sponsors CBEC AND MBEC, will present a Light Pollution Seminar with the GSWA- tomorrow- Thursday, February 5th at 7pm at The Library of the Chathams. GSWA is collecting RSVPs. Please attend.

7. Tree Ordinance Review

Prior to the meeting, Lisa and Steve sent a draft of the Tree Ordinance they have been working on. There was a brief discussion. All were in agreement it was making good progress. The consensus for the next step is to add to the Purpose, and other appropriate sections, the idea of considering the neighbors/neighborhood when removing trees particularly in regards to water runoff and flooding. Lisa and Steve will make edits and asked the committee to do a thorough review. It was also suggested the draft ordinance be sent to the Mayor Rowland, Ziad and Ruschke to preview.

8. Leaf Blower Discussion and Update

On 1/12/26, Jessica met with three other representatives from the neighboring towns of Chatham Borough, Madison and Morris Township. It was another productive discussion and sharing of resources. The discussion included obstacles and successful efforts of limiting gas-powered leaf blowers. Part of their discussion included the pros and cons of petitions and collecting signatures of support. CTEC discussed possible timelines as retired gas equipment gets replaced with electric and time to transition from a seasonal ban to a full ban. The importance of engaging local landscaping businesses was reiterated. Also discussed were carveouts/exceptions for some larger properties. The 4 towns group will continue working on a draft ordinance. No update at this meeting.

9. Idling at Chatham Public Schools

It has been observed that idling in the pick-up lines at the schools has become a renewed problem. CTEC would like to reinvigorate the awareness campaign. No Idling signage has been ordered for Southern Blvd School and CHS. Efforts will expand to the borough schools, including Milton Ave and CMS. CTEC also plans to involve the CHS environmental club in no idling efforts.

10. CTEC Tracker

Jessica has created a Google spreadsheet to track all of the CTEC activities. Jessica reminds all members to enter all of their community activities and individual meetings, seminars, workshops and site visits for ease of preparing the end-of-year report for the Township Committee.

11. Keep on the Radar

Noe Pond and its future preservation.

12. 2026 priority project list and events

Projects where public health intersects with the environment will be the priority.

2026 events (running list, not complete):

-Priority projects

1. Leaf Blower Ordinance
2. Tree Ordinance
3. NRI Update

-Educational seminars-

1. Light Pollution Awareness Seminar with GSWA 2/5/26
2. To be decided

-Earth Month Celebration- Invasives Walk & Talks with JoAnne– April 11th & 12th

And Take Action “What can you do” campaign. Discussion about list of “Simple Ideas for Earth Month.” Send Jessica any ideas

-Understory project at Shunpike Field- funding provided to Annabelle Palmer for GS Silver Award

-Spring yard sale with Madison, Chatham Borough, GSWA- 5/2/26 –(Jessica)

-Resubmission of ANJEC NRI Grant

-Plant sale (April 1st-18th) with the Great Swamp Watershed Association.

Sale dates April 1st -21st. Distribution date: May 2nd at Colony pool

*Webinar 1: Jan 27th, 7-8pm (Soft Landings- Add life Under Trees)

*Webinar 2: Feb 24th 7-8pm (Native Pollinator Interactions)

*Webinar 3: March 31st 7-8pm (Plant for Pollinators- Plant Overview and Preparation)

-Fall Sustainability Fair 9/19/26 (Celeste and Pat)

-Township Fall Festival/Fall cleanup event/Trail workday

-EV Expo with Madison 7 Chatham Borough 10/3/26 (Bottle Hill Day)

-Fall yard sale with Madison, Chatham Borough, GSWA- 10/17/26 (Jessica)

13. Reports:

a. Township Committee – Craig Alperowitz- No update

b. Zoning Board- Lisa McHugh- Fairmount Country Store property, approved

c. Planning Board – Phil Ankel- No update

d. Open Space – Joe Basralian stepping down as Chair. Members needed.

e. Education and Outreach –JoAnne & Jessica- Looking for one more idea for an educational seminar

f. Invasive Species –Joanne– planning a program for April 11th & 12th when the Spring peepers are emerging,

g. Social Media – Jessica Romeo- Facebook page is active

h. Website – No Report

i. Pollinator / Native Gardens – Jessica Romeo- Tom Salvas would like to find a location for a garden to honor veterans. Shunpike Field was discussed.

j. Grants – All

14. Update for Aanya Aditya

At her third appearance at CTEC, Aanya updated CTEC about her ongoing work to affect change in the household waste of Chatham residents. She reported that she continues to work on a user-

friendly App to facilitate and improve resident's recycling accuracy. She reported her App is currently about 80% accurate and she has plans to improve it. She will circulate the QR code to the members. She also reports she is considering ways to advance her ideas of a Household Waste Audit. It was suggested she get a table at the Farmer's Market as well as attend the Sustainability Fair.

15. Next meeting: Wednesday, March 4th, 2026 7:15pm
Location: Chatham Township Municipal Building

16. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn

Lisa motioned to adjourn at 8:25pm; Jessica seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Abigail Maddi

APPLICATION/ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT REVIEW – Lisa will continue attending site visits and preparing comments for Board of Adjustment and Planning Board applications.

ONLINE RESOURCES (update DS Feb 2026)

- NJDEP website for maps, parcels and environmental information at NJ-GeoWeb.

<https://dep.nj.gov/gis/nj-geoweb/>

- View parcel information for Morris County. Zoom in for parcels. Has owner information.

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/7651b23561f54d4c8176d6df4b2207f0>

- Old map of Morris County parcels. Parcel information is out-of-date but map is still very useful.

<https://morrisgisapps.co.morris.nj.us/apps/parcelsearcher/>

- Details about each parcel in Morris County.

<https://mcweb1.co.morris.nj.us/MCTaxBoard/>

- View open space and Green Acres properties at

<https://www.state.nj.us/dep/greenacres/ga50/docs/rosi.lite.pdf>

and

<https://www.state.nj.us/dep/greenacres/openspace.html>

- Legiscan to view and track NJ bills in the legislature

<https://legiscan.com/NJ/legislation>

- Chatham Township permits that have been filed. Free but have to create an account.

<https://www.sdlportal.com/>

- NJDEP status of environmental permits that have been filed

<https://dep.nj.gov/bulletin/>

- NJ State Plan Map. Zoom to see streets. Planning Area 5 is the most environmentally restrictive.

<https://dosopa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=fbb0c0a8c7ce4a31b05d123426c4a79a>

- NJ State Plan. Updated 2025.

<https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/state-plan/development/>

- NJ State OPRA records request

<https://nj.gov/opra/>