

Chatham Township Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 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), Phil Ankel (Planning Board liaison), Polly Brophy, JoAnne Lockwood White, Amy Mason, Pat Wells, Celeste Fondaco, (alt. 1), Steve Gesell, (alt.2)
Absent: Craig Alperowitz (Township Committee liaison)
Guests: Aanya Aditya, AJ Aditya, Kristen Jones

2. Public Meeting Statement (see above)

3. Approve Meeting Minutes of February 4, 2026

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes of February 4th, 2026

Lisa motioned to approve the meeting minutes; Pat seconded.
All in favor.

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

Homegrown National Park was discussed which encourages people to plant native and remove invasive plant species at home and in their communities. It was co-founded by Doug Tallamy. Homegrownnationalpark.org. Polly mentioned she viewed “**Understanding NJPACT REAL: New Rules for Resilient Development and Flood Protection**” sponsored by ANJEC. She forwarded a recording of the presentation to the CTEC members.

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>

-Resolution from the Township Committee was obtained and the PSE&G grant for the NRI updates was resubmitted.

-Discussed free program possibly offered by **Terracycle** for the schools

6. Earth Month Events

*TBC – screening of “Your Extraordinary Caterpillar” in partnership with the Library of the Chathams; April 22nd, 6:30pm. CTEC would host the screening and distribute seeds (e.g. milkweed) and have a speaker for a Q&A after the film.

*Invasive Species Walk and Learns w/ Joanne on April 11th and April 12th

*Plant sale w Great Swamp Watershed Association. Sale dates; April 1-21

*Community Challenge: What Can You Do / Simple Steps – promote on social media

7. Tree Ordinance Review

Prior to the meeting, Lisa and Steve sent a revised draft of the Tree Ordinance they have been working on. New comments were noted. A meeting with Township officials to further discuss the ordinance is to follow.

8. Passaic River Clean up

In coordination with the Great Swamp Watershed, the Passaic River Waterkeeper and Roots & Shoots CTEC will participate in a river cleanup on Saturday May 9th, 10am-12pm. CTEC has adopted a hub in Chatham which is still to be assigned.

9. Idling at schools

An awareness campaign has been initiated including information in PTO newsletters and school newsletters. Signs are being installed at SBS and additional signs are being added near CHS and LAF. CTEC will continue communication with all local public and private schools via letter/email. CHS Environmental Club plans to host a campaign in April.

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. 2026 priority project list and events

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

12. 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. “Your extraordinary Caterpillar” in partnership with the Library of the Chathams

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

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

-Understory project at Shunpike Field- funding provided to Annabelle Palmer for Girl Scout 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, in coordination with Chatham Borough)

-Township Fall Festival/Fall cleanup event/Trail workday – **Discuss at April Meeting**

-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- Topics include impervious surfaces, steep slopes and tree removals

c. Planning Board – Phil Ankel- Discussed overlay in the Shoprite area to satisfy future affordable housing requirements

d. Open Space –Members needed.

e. Education and Outreach –JoAnne & Jessica

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 from Aanya Aditya

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 was able to demonstrate a prototype App she calls “Sort Smart.” She is waiting for approval in order to have App go live. Aanya asked about CTEC’s thoughts on presenting to the Senior Center and they enthusiastically endorsed the idea.

16. Keep on the Radar

- Noe Pond and its future preservation-
- Bioblitz- to consider for April 2027, possible site: the Fenske property

17. Next meeting: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 7:15pm

Location: Chatham Township Municipal Building

18. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn

Jessica motioned to adjourn at 8:27pm; Lisa 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/roslite.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/>