

**Chatham Township Environmental Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday February 5, 2025**  
**58 Meyersville Rd. Chatham NJ 07928**

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT:** The meeting schedule for 2025 and January 2026 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.

**PROPOSED DATES FOR CTEC AND GREEN TEAM FOR 2025 AND JANUARY 2026**

The first Wednesday except the second Wednesday in January, April, July and November 2025: January 8, February 5, March 5, April 9, May 7, June 4, July 9, August NO MEETING, September 10, October 1, November 12, December 3, 2025 and January 14, 2026.

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

**1. Roll Call of CTEC Members at 7:20pm:** Present: Jessica Romeo (Chair), Jim Connelly (Open Space Liaison), Cara Pacifico Feeser, Celeste Fondaco, Amy Mason, Lisa McHugh (Co-Chair), Mike Neibert (Planning Board Liaison), Pat Wells (alt. 1), Steve Gesell (guest)  
Absent: Marty McHugh (Township Committee liaison)

**2. Public Meeting Statement** (see above)

**3. Approve Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2024 and January 8, 2025**

*Motion to approve November 13, 2024 and January 8, 2025*

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

**4. Green Team updates**

Activities that CTEC manages are all part of the Green Team. Chatham Township was awarded Bronze in 2024. CTEC may resubmit in the Spring of 2025, off-cycle, to regain Silver Certification.

## **5. Adopt-A-Drain**

CTEC hosted a town v town competition with Berkeley Heights in November 2024 to increase the adoption of drains. Chatham Township saw 5 new drains adopted, accounting for 13% of our total drains! ANJEC will run a story on the program in an upcoming issue of the ANJEC quarterly report

## **6. Podcast mechanism for CTEC events and talks**

Cara suggested we begin using a podcast format in order to change up how we deliver information. The committee was enthusiastic about this idea and talked about possible topics for mini-podcasts. First possible idea would be to talk to Matt Palmer about invasive species found in Chatham.

## **7. Township NRI discussion**

The NRI was last updated in 2013. CTEC is eager to work in tandem with the Planning Board who needs to include the NRI in the updated 2027 Master Plan. CTEC plans to apply for a grant from ANJEC for \$20,000 to assist with the completion of the NRI. The Planning Board, Open Space Committee and Mayor have been asked to write letters in support to submit with the grant application. The deadline for the submission is February 14<sup>th</sup>.

## **8. Tree Ordinance**

CTEC would like to revisit the tree ordinance and continue the conversation and propose updates to the ordinance including incorporating language regarding the Township and replacing trees on municipal lands.

## **9. Earth Day/Month 2025**

Discussed hosting a walk and learn event. Possible topic- invasive species with a knowledgeable docent.

## **10. 2025 events (running list, not complete):**

- Determine at least two educational seminars- Jessica /Lisa

  - 1. Possible idea: Water Usage and impacts of increased major weather events

  - 2. Co-sponsor League of Women Voters webinar on “Electrifying Housing” - February

- EV Expo with Madison and Chatham Borough - Date TBC- Amy

- Spring yard sale with Madison, Chatham Borough, GSWA- May 3rd (rain date May 4th)- Jessica

- Completion of ANJEC Open Space Grant/2<sup>nd</sup> planting at Shunpike- to be confirmed, April 12th

- Plant sale with the Great Swamp Watershed Association, distribution at Colony - Date TBC- JR

- \*Webinar 1- Plant for Pollinators- January 29<sup>th</sup> 7pm-8pm

- \*Webinar 2

- \*Webinar 3

- \*Webinar 4

- Native Plant Month w/ the Library of the Chatham – May 2025 – TBD- Jessica

- Fishawack- reconsidering participation for educational information for NRI- June 14th

- Fall Sustainability fair- Pat/Celeste

- Township Fall Festival/Fall cleanup event/Trail workday- Oct 18<sup>th</sup> (provide info about pumpkin

and fall plant disposal after Halloween) - Jessica, Lisa

Provide information about Pumpkins

-Fall yard sale with Madison, Chatham Borough, GSWA- October 18th (rain date October 19<sup>th</sup>)

#### **11. Reports:**

- a. Township Committee – Marty McHugh via email: Awaiting attorney language updates/recommendations for the advertising circular ordinance, eg opt in vs opt out.
- Planning Board – Mike Neibert- Update on recent applications from Fairmount CC including protective netting near the tennis courts which has potential to impact birds
- c. Open Space – Jim Connelly- No report
- d. Education and Outreach – see above
- e. Invasive Species – No report
- f. Social Media – Jessica Romeo- No Report
- g. Website – No Report
- h. Pollinator / Native Gardens – Jessica Romeo- See above re plant sale
- i. Grants – Jim Connelly- No Report from Jim but the NRI grant subcommittee plans to submit a proposal by the Feb 14 deadline

**12. Next meeting:** Wednesday, March 5th at 7:15pm

Location: The Senior Center. Parking and entrance from the lower lot.

#### **13. Adjournment**

*Motion to adjourn*

Jessica motioned to adjourn at 8:20pm; Amy 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**

- Good NJDEP website for maps, parcels and environmental information at NJ-GeoWeb, <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/gis/geoweb splash.htm> - use Internet Explorer.
- Very good Morris County mapping utility at <https://morrisgisapps.co.morris.nj.us/apps/parcelsearcher/> , hit Map and use the i tool. Gives information about each parcel and has arials layer. Search for more detailed information about a parcel at <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>.