

Chatham Township Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday March 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), Amy Mason, Lisa McHugh (Co-Chair), Marty McHugh (Township Committee liaison), Mike Neibert (Planning Board Liaison), Pat Wells (alt. 1), Steve Gesell (guest), Tom Evans (guest). Absent: Cara Pacifico Feeser, Celeste Fondaco,

2. Public Meeting Statement (see above)

3. Approve Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2025

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2025

Lisa motioned to approve the meeting minutes; Jim 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. Review unsolicited printed materials ordinance and discuss

The Ordinance which addresses opting out of unsolicited printed materials that are delivered to resident's is awaiting approval of the Township Committee. It is on the agenda for March 25th. After adoption, any company who distributes unsolicited printed materials will receive a copy of the Ordinance. CTEC discussed placing an editorial and information on the Township website so residents know that opting out of receiving unsolicited printed material is an option for them.

6. Adopt-A-Drain

CTEC plans to continue to raise awareness of the Adopt-A-Drain program. No specific plans were made at this time.

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 submitted an application for a Sustainable Jersey/PSE&G technical assistance grant on Feb 13th, 2025 with letters of support from Mike Neibert of the Planning Board, Rich Young of the Township DPW and from Mayor Mike Choi of the Township Committee. The requested amount for the grant was originally going to be for \$20,000 but the actual grant request was for \$10,000 which was deemed to be more attainable.

8. Tree Ordinance

CTEC began to revisit the tree ordinance. CTEC has set a deadline for July 2025 to get proposed updates to the Township Committee. Discussion points included: a Tree Bank; a town arborist; recommendations to residents about what type of trees to replant, the best time of year and the size of tree for the best chance of survival; the current lengthy application to remove trees; and, enforcement mechanism for those who remove trees without proper approval or who don't actually do the required replanting.

9. Earth Day/Month 2025

Discussion about Earth Day to be celebrated April 26th. In addition to a walk and learn program and a clean-up, CTEC will host a tree seedling giveaway with trees purchased with CTEC funds from the NJ Forest Service.

Motion to approve spending funds to purchase tree seedlings from NJ Forest Service for a tree giveaway on April 26th in celebration of Earth Day

Jessica motioned to approve spending funds to purchase tree seedlings; Jim seconded.
All in favor.

11. New Ideas for 2025

Ideas included: 1) a possible ordinance regarding small engines mainly leaf blowers and other landscaping types of equipment. More information will be gathered for discussion. Existing ordinances will be reviewed; 2) a possible Clean-up Program more targeted to roadways rather than public parks and fields, possibly involving the Garden Club and police for safety; 3) being more proactive on invasives including writing letters to the legislature about the sale of invasive

Ornamental Barberry; 4) options for composting, guest Tom Evans described the Green Cone Digester.

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” – 2/24/25

-EV Expo with Madison and Chatham Borough – 4/26/25- Amy

-Spring yard sale with Madison, Chatham Borough, GSWA- 5/3/25 (rain date 5/4/25)- Jessica
*sign-up is available

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

-Plant sale (April 1st-18th) with the Great Swamp Watershed Association, distribution at Colony on 5/3/25 JR

*Webinar 1- Plant for Pollinators- 1/29/25 7pm-8pm

*Webinar 2- 2/27/25

*Webinar 3- 3/19/25

*Webinar 4- 3/31/25

-Earth Day Celebration- Seedling giveaway, Walk and Learn about invasives with Matt Palmer, and clean-up. 4/26/25

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

-Fishawack- reconsidering participation for educational information for NRI- 6/14/25

-Fall Sustainability fair- Pat/Celeste

-Township Fall Festival/Fall cleanup event/Trail workday- 10/18/25 (provide info about pumpkin and fall plant disposal after Halloween) - Jessica, Lisa

Provide information about Pumpkins

-Fall yard sale with Madison, Chatham Borough, GSWA- 10/18/25 (rain date 10/19/25)

11. Reports:

a. Township Committee – Marty McHugh reported it is budget season so that is taking the majority of their time.

Planning Board – Mike Neibert reported there was no meeting. Marty asked that Mike consider discussing a timeline for the NRI review with the Planning Board as it will be time consuming.

c. Open Space – Jim Connelly reports that Open Space and the Scouts will be involved with April 26th earth Day Celebrations. Also, there have been discussions about the public use of the utilities right of ways.

d. Education and Outreach – Electrifying Homes

e. Invasive Species – Matt Palmer has agreed to speak about invasive species 4/26/25

f. Social Media – Jessica Romeo- No Report

g. Website – No Report

h. Pollinator / Native Gardens – Jessica Romeo-

i. Grants – Jim Connelly- awaiting to hear about Sustainable Jersey/PSE&G technical assistance grant submitted 2/13/25

12. **Next meeting:** Wednesday, April 9th at 7:15pm

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

13. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn

Pat motioned to adjourn at 8:45pm; 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 aerials 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>.