

Chatham Township Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday May 7, 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), Amy Mason, Lisa McHugh (Co-Chair), Pat Wells (alt. 1), Steve Gesell (alt.2) Absent: Jim Connelly (Open Space Liaison), Cara Pacifico Feeser, Marty McHugh (Township Committee liaison), Celeste Fondaco

2. Public Meeting Statement (see above)

3. Approve Meeting Minutes of April 9, 2025

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes of April 9, 2025

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

4. Green Team updates

Activities that CTEC manages are all part of the Green Team, including Sustainable Jersey. Chatham Township was awarded Bronze in 2024.

5. Adopt-A-Drain

Chatham Township has renewed the Adopt-a- Drain program for 2025 and has added 25 Welcome packets for new participants. Chatham and Berkeley Heights were featured in the Spring 2025 issue of ANJEC Report. There was a discussion about continuing to promote the

Adopt-a-Drain program, in coordination with DPW for the summer of 2025, including Citizen Scientist and other incentives. Communicating through Facebook, TAP, church flyers, schools, PTOs, summer camps and the library were offered as ideas.

6. 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. Although expected by late April, there has been no word yet on the result of the grant submission.

7. Earth Day/Month 2025 recap

On 4/26, at Shunpike Field, there was a tree seedling giveaway including Persimmons, Red Oaks and Dogwoods. There was accompanying information about the trees and planting tips as well as a display on how to protect them with chicken wire. There was also a clean-up on site; one large, bag of trash was collected. Trails Day ran simultaneously coordinated by the Open Space Committee. The weather was rainy. On 5/3, during the native plant sale distribution, the remaining tree seedlings were given away. In total, 75 tree seedlings were given out to residents. Two trees were given to a faculty member at Chatham Middle School for a project with the students on the school property.

8. Tri-town Yard sale recap

On Saturday 5/3, the Yard Sale took place in coordination with the GSWA, Maison and Chatham Borough. There were 106 signups, close to the record 114, generating \$1,060 for the GSWA.

9. SAVE THE DATE

On May 21st at 5pm, there will be a ribbon cutting at the newly planted Shunpike Oak Grove. There will be the new "Leave the Leaves" signs displayed.

10. Fenske Property adjacent to Nash Field

The Township is looking for best use practices for our newly acquired open space, currently called the Fenske property. Jessica emphasized the importance of engaging the community.

11. Tree Ordinance

CTEC is revisiting the tree ordinance. CTEC has set a deadline for July 2025 to get proposed updates to the Township Committee. Next steps will be for Jessica and Lisa to merge two drafts of the ordinance. Lisa and Steve will be meeting with an arborist from Rutgers to advance the proposal. The idea of a Tree Bank is still being fleshed out.

12. Leaf Blowing Ordinance

CTEC had begun to investigate options for how the Township can address noise, environmental and health issues. Several existing ordinances regarding leaf blower use have been reviewed and favorable language in each has been identified. Next step is to present a model ordinance and findings to the Township Committee in June/July.

13. 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

-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, trails awareness and clean-up. 4/26/25

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

-Fall Sustainability fair- Pat/Celeste will meet with Susie Robertson of the to discuss ways to participate more with the Borough. One idea was to coordinate a Kid’s Zone with interactive activities.

-Snake Hill Clean-up with DPW, CTPD and Chatham Township Historical Society; date TBD

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

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

14. Reports:

a. Township Committee – No Report

b. Planning Board – a new liaison will be appointed– No Report

c. Open Space – No Report

d. Education and Outreach – Fall Sustainability

e. Invasive Species – Jessica Romeo

f. Social Media – Jessica Romeo- No Report

g. Website – No Report

h. Pollinator / Native Gardens – Jessica Romeo-

i. Grants – Jim Connelly-

15. Next meeting: Wednesday, June 4th at 7:15pm

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

16. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn

Lisa motioned to adjourn at 8:22pm; Pat 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.
Most recent: 355 Green Village Road

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>.