

Chatham Township Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 12, 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.

The Committee will discuss next year's meeting dates at the December meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Roll Call of CTEC Members at 7:20pm: Present: Jessica Romeo (Chair), Lisa McHugh (Vice-Chair), Amy Mason, JoAnn Lockwood White, Pat Wells (alt. 1)
Absent: Celeste Fondaco, Marty McHugh (Township Committee liaison), Steve Gesell (alt.2)
Vacant 1, Vacant 2
Guests: Anya Aditya and Ajay Aditya

2. Public Meeting Statement (see above)

3. Approve Meeting Minutes of October 1, 2025

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes of October 1, 2025

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

Approval of September minutes pending

4. Recycling Discussion

Guest CHS student, Anya Aditya, attended the meeting to discuss her ideas for more effective recycling in the Township. Anya has observed that many residents do not recycle appropriate items. She has been considering the development of an App to identify what can and cannot be recycled. CTEC encouraged Anya with feedback and additional ideas that could make her App more unique from existing Apps like Recycle Coach. CTEC suggested contacting MCMUA and touring the facility. Other suggestions included working with the Environmental Club at CHS,

talking to the Borough Committee person Jocelyn Mathiasen and learning more about recycling in neighboring towns such as Madison. Anya was invited and accepted to stay for the remainder of the meeting to learn more about the role and activities of CTEC.

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 has reconnected with the group Advocates for Transforming Landscapes, a group of individuals representing neighboring towns, to further the discussion of reducing the use of gas-powered leaf blowers. Using existing models in the nearby towns of Maplewood and Montclair, CTEC and others are considering next steps to address this public health and environmental detriment.

6. Adopt a Drain

The 2nd Annual ‘Scary Drain’ contest with Berkeley Heights runs from 10/31-11/27 to encourage awareness and participation in the program. The contest was advertised in all local media. As of 10/30/25, 44 drains have been adopted and 40 have had reported cleanings.

7. Leave the Leaves

On 11/22 at 10am, Pat will lead a “Leave the Leaves” workshop for Cub Scouts at Shunpike Park which will be followed by a clean-up. Jessica will assist. Pat has created colorful signage to remind residents to leave their leaves. CTEC discussed having more signs made and adding our logo.

8. Girl Scout Silver Award

CTEC was approached to partner with a Girl Scout to achieve her Silver Award. Her project will be at Shunpike Park to help rehabilitate the understory in the Oak Grove and trail. Jessica requested CTEC approve the use of the Jaycee’s grant of \$500.00 to assist in the purchase of plantings for this rehab project. All were in favor to use the funds for this Silver Award project. Jessica will be the advisor on the project and will report back on its progress.

9. Idling at Chatham Public School

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. Ideas include PTO newsletters and announcements, school newsletters and working with student groups at CHS and CMS. Tory VanWie, the advisor of the Environmental Club at CHS was suggested as an initial contact.

10. Tree Ordinance

Steve and Lisa submitted their suggestions to Ziad and Mayor Choi. Update will be provided at the December meeting.

11. Proposed Resolution

Jessica presented a resolution “opposing New Jersey Senate Bill #4736 which would enhance the ability of religious and nonprofit organizations to convert certain property to preempt local zoning with high density housing” regardless of existing municipal master plans, local planning and zoning. The resolution was reviewed and discussed. See attached.

Motion to approve a resolution opposing New Jersey Senate Bill #4736

Pat motioned to approve the resolution opposing New Jersey Senate Bill #4736;

Lisa seconded. All in favor.

Jessica will submit the resolution to Greg LaConte, Chatham Township clerk and send to the named legislators.

12. Miscellaneous Business

-For the CTEC showcase of the new Shunpike Grove to ANJEC Environmental Congress on October 10th, Pat created a weatherproof banner explaining the importance of the understory which will be displayed on site and will also serve as a deer deterrent.

-CTEC continues to await a Planning Board and an Open Space liaison.

-To be discussed: 2026 Commissioners and priority project list

9. 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 Votes 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-

-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

-Fall Sustainability fair-9/20/25

-Shunpike Grove Showcase 10/10/25

-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)

10. Reports:

a. Township Committee – Marty McHugh- No report, absent.

b. Planning Board – a new liaison needed. Lisa reported on updates to the CDS application to install an artificial turf field.

c. Open Space – a new liaison needed.

d. Education and Outreach – Joanne will reach out to Hazel England at GSWS to discuss a light pollution workshop / seminar. Possible community trip to Sheep Hill Observatory which is open to the public every 3rd Friday of the month. This would be part of the new initiative to raise awareness of night skies/light pollution.

e. Invasive Species –Joanne Lockwood White – discussed a program in early April when the Spring peepers are emerging,

- f. Social Media – Jessica Romeo- No Report
- g. Website – No Report
- h. Pollinator / Native Gardens – Jessica Romeo
- i. Grants – All

11. Next meeting: Wednesday, December 3rd 7:15pm
Location: Chatham Township Municipal Building

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn

Lisa motioned to adjourn at 8:20pm; 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.
Most recent: Chatham Day School

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>.