



**Chatham Township Environmental Commission
Meeting Agenda**

Wednesday November 13, 2024, 7:15pm

58 Meyersville Rd. Chatham NJ 07928 in the Senior Center, lower level

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT: The meeting schedule for 2024 and January 2025 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 2024 AND JANUARY 2025 –

The first Wednesday except the second Wednesday in January April and July 2024:

January 10, February 7, March 6, April 10, May 1, June 5, July 10, August NO MEETING, September 11, October 7, November 13, December 4, 2024; January 8, 2025.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Roll Call of CTEC Members: Jessica Romeo (Chair), Cara Pacifico Feeser, Amy Mason, Jim Connelly, Celeste Fondaco, Lisa McHugh, Dan Miller (Planning Board), Pat Wells (alternate 1); John von Knorring (alternate 2); Mary McHugh (Township Committee liaison)
2. Public Meeting Statement (see above)
3. Approve Meeting Minutes of October 2024
4. Green Team updates – Chatham Township was approved for Bronze Sustainable Jersey, see attached email from Sept 17, 2024.
 - Activities that CTEC manages are all part of the Green Team: clean ups, gardens, plant sales, educational webinars/meetings, etc. Silver Certification received October 2021. Bronze Certification received September 2024.
 - 2024 Sustainable Jersey team members: Jessica Romeo and alternate commissioner: Pat Wells.
 - The subcommittee has identified areas where we do a lot but don't capture SJ points.
 - We'd like to re-submit off cycle in 2024 to return to Silver certification
 - Discuss our priorities as related to Sustainable Jersey given our limited resources on the Green Team and EC.
5. Shunpike Restoration Project – CTEC has been approved for an ANJEC Grant and a grant from the Chatham Jaycees for educational signs for this project and our native plant gardens. We hosted our community work day on October 26, 2024, from 8:30-10:30am. CTEC was able to install 10 native American Holly's and 10 native Flowering Dogwoods as well as three fenced in areas at Shunpike. We also hosted our annual Township cleanup at Shunpike Field/Castle Playground. This was one of our most successful community volunteer days with

members from Chatham Girl Scouts, Chatham Field Hockey, the CHS Key Club, the Open Space Committee, the Garden Club and interested residents joining CTEC for the event.

-We have an ongoing watering program, watering every other day during the drought period.

6. Review 2024 priorities:

-NRI Update and Master Plan updates (sync with the Planning Board)

-Climate Action Plan

-Climate resiliency in the face of extreme weather (rain events, droughts and fires due to extended dry periods, extended periods of high temps, etc)

-Solar on municipal assets (Township administration is working on this, JVK is in the loop)

-Food waste, explore potential municipal programs

-Native Plant ordinance (adopted on 6/25/24) – discuss how this should be applied to Township projects like the traffic island on Fairmount

-Adopt-a-drain program implemented in Q1 2024; keep pushing for engagement

-Improve the tree removal and replacement ordinance - [https://chathamtownship-nj.gov/vertical/sites/%7B440F80DF-7E94-40B8-B1AE-CE161FC4406A%7D/uploads/Tree Removal Permit.pdf](https://chathamtownship-nj.gov/vertical/sites/%7B440F80DF-7E94-40B8-B1AE-CE161FC4406A%7D/uploads/Tree%20Removal%20Permit.pdf)

-Address the health and environmental impact of gas leaf blowers (noise is NOT the focus here)

-Ordinance related to curbside dropped advertising each Friday

-Land use moving forward: eg paving of municipal property such as parking lots, use of pavement for open space trails, development in sensitive areas, etc.

7. Opt-in option for the free weekly advertising drop to all driveways. CTEC to review DRAFT language for an ordinance. Draft ordinance sent to CT Administrator, CTEC liaison and Mayor on August 18 and again on August 29, 2024. Discussed at the 10/8/24 Township Committee meeting and not raised again.

8. Grants – eg: NRI technical assistance; Climate Action Plan

9. Food waste composting, where is NJ at? All three NY Boroughs enacted curbside composting starting 10/6/24 after a successful pilot program. Please see info [here](#). JR to update on meeting with Summit.

10. Creating a Chatham Township Strike Force Team, kick off with an invasive species Walk and Learn with Matt Palmer in the Fall of 2024. We may need to schedule this without Matt, using materials from the Strikeforce Team, or put off to 2025. Z has expressed support here.

11. 2024 events (running list, not complete): Assign 2024 events/programs to commissioners

-Determine at least two educational seminars (Cara and Celeste)

-EV Expo with Madison and Chatham Borough – 4/27/24 9am-2pm (Jessica and John)

-Spring yard sale with Madison, Chatham Borough, Great Swamp Watershed Association - 5/4/24 (Jessica)

-Tree seeding giveaway – 4/13/24 (Cara and Jim) TBD; we missed the deadline to apply for seedlings

-Native Plant sale with GSWA, distribution date 5/4/23, 9-10:30am at Colony Pool (Jessica, Celeste, Pat)

**Creating a Woodland Garden with Indigenous Plants & Vertical Structure - 1/18/24*

**Plug in To Native Groundcovers (2/15/24)*

**Pollinator Conservation: Creating and Protecting Habitat for NJ's Bees, Butterflies, and Biodiversity (3/13/24)*

**Plants for Pollinators: Plant Sale Overview and Kick off with Hazel England GSWA (4/1/24)*

-Native Plant Month w/ the Library of the Chatham – May 2024 (Jessica and Pat)

-Speaker event, Library of the Chathams, May 6th at 7pm, *Fight Invasives, Go Native* with Ilona Ontscherenki

-Fishawack - 6/8/24 (Cara, Jim, Celeste)

-Fall Sustainability fair - 9/21/24, 8am-1pm (John) CTEC needs volunteers to help with the event and the CTEC table

-Mosquito management seminar with Morris County Mosquito Control – 10/9/24, 7pm at the Library of the Chathams (Lisa)

- Fall yard sale with Madison, Chatham Borough, Great Swamp Watershed Association - 10/18/24 (Jessica)
- Township Fall Festival – 10/26/24, 11am-1pm. (who will manage this table?)
- Fall cleanup event and Shunpike Restoration workday – 10/26/24 (Jessica, Lisa, Jim)

12. NRI. (Subcommittee Lisa, John, Jessica). Jim C identified a grant that CTEC should review and apply for. Grant update from Lisa/John/Jim.

13. Reports:

- a. Township Committee – Marty McHugh
- b. Planning Board – Dan Miller
- c. Open Space – Jim Connelly
- d. Education and Outreach – Jessica Romeo; Lisa McHugh
- e. Invasive Species – Jessica Romeo
- f. Social Media – Jessica Romeo
- g. Website – Jessica and Jim and Cara
- h. Pollinator / Native Gardens – Jessica Romeo and Pat Wells (see above agenda item/explore new locations for Spring and Fall 2024)
- i. Grants – Jim Connelly (NRI grants?)
- j. Monthly editorial (600-700 words for the Courier)

14. Update to the conservation easement inventory. Things have changed since the conservation easement inventory was created in 1999 and the last update. Confirm if we need to update the map. Conservation easements since January 2020: 700 Fairmount Ave (Block 60; Lot 18.2) in 2020; Hillside Ave subdivision in 2020; 580 River Road in 2022. Amy has updated the map in August of 2024.

15. CTEC informational articles subcommittee: Jessica, Pat. March 2024: Leaf blowers; April: Anti idling; July, Adopt-a-Drain; August: Shunpike Restoration project grant announcement; September: TBC

APPLICATION/ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT REVIEW – Lisa has been doing a great job, 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>.