



**Chatham Township Environmental Commission
Meeting Agenda**

Wednesday September 11, 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 2, 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 May 1 and June 5, 2024
4. Green Team updates – 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. We are up for recertification in 2024. 2024 application dates to focus on: February 25, May 10 and July 31. 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.
 - Second submission was sent to SJ on 5/10/24 application deadline.
 - Final submission sent to SJ on 7/31/24.
 - Discuss our priorities as related to Sustainable Jersey given our limited resources on the Green Team and EC. Goal is to submit off cycle in 2025 to get back to our Silver status.
 - CTEC has started our monthly press campaign: March was about leaf blowers; April is about idling.
 - We launched Adopt-a-drain for March 2024;
 - CTEC has worked with DPW to provide some wonderful educational materials to the K-3 schools in the SDOC around recycling and waste.
 - The anti-idling campaign will again be promoted at CHS and CTEC has written an editorial for local papers. We did not do a May editorial. Need a topic for June.
 - CTEC kicked off a Chatham Challenge in April 2024, challenging residents to pick up trash on a walk or while visiting a park, adopt a drain, utilize native plants in their landscaping projects.

-June 1, CTEC marked National Trails Day with a social media campaign to highlight our trails and encourage residents to get outside and enjoy the open space in the Township.

5. Shunpike Restoration Project Planning Session 1 – 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. This project will be part of the Fall 2024 workday and the public is invited to assist, October 26, 2024 from 8:30-10am. We need to create a social media post, press release, invite groups to join the work day. This should be coupled with a clean up at Shunpike Field/Castle Playground which also needs to be promoted as part of Clean Communities.
6. Review 2024 priorities: Native Plant ordinance (adopted on 6/25/24) – discuss how this should be applied to Township projects like the traffic island on Fairmount; we have implemented an adopt-a-drain program this year, starting in Q1 2024; we are looking to improve our tree removal and replacement ordinance - https://chathamtownship-nj.gov/vertical/sites/%7B440F80DF-7E94-40B8-B1AE-CE161FC4406A%7D/uploads/Tree_Removal_Permit.pdf; we are keen to address gas leaf blowers on some level – this is a health issue as well as an environmental issue. CTEC should keep an eye on 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.
8. Grants
9. Creating a Chatham Township Strike Force Team, kick off with an invasive species Walk and Learn with Matt Palmer in the Fall of 2024.
10. Solar Energy Generation – discussion regarding areas to investigate for opportunities (eg: parking lots, rooftops / buildings, etc.); research grants for such projects.
11. Pollinator Pathway project – Amy to provide an update
12. 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
 - Township Fall Festival – 10/26/24, 11am-1pm.
 - Fall cleanup event and Shunpike Restoration workday – 10/26/24 (Lisa and Jim)
 - Trail workday – TBC / tie this into the invasive species walk with Matt Palmer (Jessica)
 - Shunpike Restoration – 2024-25 project (Pat, Jessica, Lisa). First official community workday on 10/26/24
 - Fall yard sale with Madison, Chatham Borough, Great Swamp Watershed Association - 10/18/24 (Jessica)

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

14. 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)

15. 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.

16. 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>.