

Environmental Commission Annual Reports

What should it include?

- **Roster of members**
- **Meeting dates for the year**
- **List of activities and accomplishments**
- **Consider including goals for the coming year**

There are some samples with this file and one is below.

Notice how the photos really bring the projects to life. You can never have too many photos. They come in handy for so many uses, the town website, your EC facebook page and any flyers and signs you produce.

Washington Twp. EC posted this first sample on the municipal website. It's also important to share it with Council, the Planning Board and other town officials and departments, and send it to local media too.



Washington Township Environmental Commission

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report highlights significant activities and accomplishments of the Washington Township Environmental Commission during 2015.

2015 Membership

Appointed Members:

Leon Lakritz, Chair
 Vicky Binetti, Vice Chair
 Harry Larzelere, Treasurer
 John Boyer, Planning Board Member
 Ann Culkin
 Anne Hastings
 Russ Price
 Lola Pellegrino, Alternate
 Chet Nawoyski, Alternate

 Dorothy Hunter, Secretary

Associate Members:

Ed Andricola
 Cheryl Reardon (ANJEC)
 Robin Dahm
 Rich Fini
 Steve Hastings
 Michael Keating
 Bill Neimeister
 Mark Phillips
 Jodie Smith
 Bob Starrantino
 Devin Walker

*The purpose of the
 Environmental
 Commission is the
 protection, development
 and use of natural
 resources, including
 water resources, in
 Washington Township
 (Washington Township
 Code §2-61)*

Council Liaison: Sean Longfellow

2015 Meetings

The Environmental Commission meets on the first Thursday of each month, with workshop meetings on third Thursdays, as needed. The business meeting scheduled for March 5 was cancelled because of inclement weather. Meetings in 2015 were convened on the following dates:

January 15	July 2
February 5	August 6
March 19 (workshop)	September 3
April 2	September 17 (workshop)
May 7	October 1
May 21 (workshop)	November 5
June 4	December 3
June 18 (workshop)	

Minutes of meetings are posted at www.twp.washington.nj.us (see Boards & Commissions).

Earth Day Celebration

The Environmental Commission marked its twenty-fifth celebration of Earth Day by departing from its tradition of outdoor fairs in Washington Lake Park, and instead sponsoring numerous activities that reflected the historic intention of the holiday: *Think globally. Act locally.* The Commission sought to engage our residents in educational events and locally-based activities on the days surrounding Earth Day (April 22nd) throughout the Township. We partnered with community and civic groups, neighborhood associations, and local experts to encourage appreciation of the natural environment and an understanding of ways to improve environmental stewardship at the local level and in our individual actions.

A main feature of the 2015 events, on weekends before and after Earth Day, was Neighborhood Beautification. The Master Gardeners, landscape architect Alan Koch, and Environmental Commissioners joined volunteers to refresh and renew entrances to several subdivisions in the Township: weeding, clearing and trimming vegetation in islands and entry areas and replanting beds and gardens with a focus on attractive, low maintenance and water conserving ground cover and shrubs. Assistance with debris removal, watering and mulching was provided by the Township Public Works Department, Whitman Square Fire Company and Peach Country Tractor, respectively. An objective of this effort is to encourage other developments to undertake similar facelifts, with the result of enhancing the appearance and



environmental performance of these local elements of our landscape. Shown here are projects at Robindale Manor, Twin Ponds, Bateman Farms and Whitman Square.



Community-Wide Clean-Up Day



Since 2004, the Environmental Commission has sponsored an Annual Community-Wide Clean-Up Day. On October 10th, 2015, more than 300 volunteers from school groups, community and civic organizations, businesses and the general public joined forces to remove litter and trash from 19 areas throughout the Township. The clean-up activity focused on parks, roadsides, open space parcels and other public areas. The accumulated bags of trash and recyclables were collected by Township Public Works staff.



After the morning's efforts, volunteers were invited to a barbecue in Washington Lake Park, as a token of the Township's appreciation for their efforts.

Over hot dogs and hamburgers grilled by members of Washington Township Council, the Administration, and other

volunteers, participants bragged about their most unusual trash discoveries and shared their pride in making the Township sparkle.



Purchases of safety vests, trash bags, gloves and collection tools, as well as food, drinks and supplies for the barbecue were supported by generous contributions from Township business, professional and civic organizations and individuals. Our successful 2015 Clean-Up Day was truly a community-wide event.

Other Natural Resource-Related Activities

Endangered Species Protection



Swamp pink grows in shady, wooded wetland areas; populations have diminished because of destruction and deterioration of the plant's habitat. Swamp Pink plant once occurred in wetland areas from New York to Georgia, but today 70% of the known remaining sites are in New Jersey.

In August 2014, a 2100-linear foot fence was installed on one of the Township's open space parcels to protect a local population of the Swamp Pink plant. The purpose of the fence is to deter damage to the plants by human vandalism or animal foraging. Swamp Pink (*Helonius bullata*) is listed as a threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act and is categorized as endangered by the State of New Jersey.

The installation of the fence was funded by a grant to Washington Township from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP); the South Jersey Land and Water Trust (SJLWT) has provided assistance with the installation and maintenance of the fence. Unfortunately, a number of very large trees felled by the June 23rd microburst caused extensive damage to portions of the fence. The largest fallen trees were removed, with support from the USFWS and the Township's Tree Trust Fund, and the collapsed portions of the fence were repaired by volunteers from the SJLWT, the Environmental Commission and the Township's Open Space Advisory Committee in December 2015.

