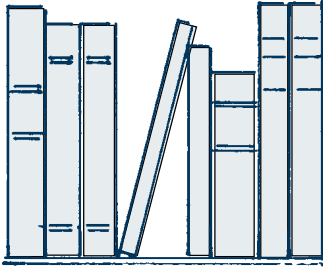


RESOURCE P A P E R



anjec

ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONS

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Municipal Environmental Commissions in New Jersey

Municipal environmental commissions, as advisory bodies to local government, can provide the expertise and information needed to address today's complex environmental issues. Environmental commissions are the primary local source of information on state environmental laws and programs. They can

- **improve local decision-making by integrating environmental policies into local plans and projects;**
- **help local boards understand the environmental consequences of their decisions;**
- **act as a liaison between the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and local boards and councils; and**
- **Investigate environmental and natural resource issues for the governing body.**

As advocates for the public interest, environmental commissions have an important role in municipal government.



B. PRETZ

Enabling Legislation

In 1968, the New Jersey Legislature passed a law that authorized municipalities to set up conservation commissions patterned after those established in several New England states. The law made commissions advisory bodies on natural resource planning and protection as well as open space issues.

Subsequent amendments have expanded environmental commission responsibilities to include other environmental matters such as pollution prevention and control, solid waste management, noise control and environmental appearance, and to allow the establishment of joint commissions by two or more municipalities. To reflect these increased responsibilities, the Legislature changed the name in 1972 from conservation commission to environmental commission. (See p. 7 for the complete text of the enabling legislation and model ordinance.)

The state law allows a municipality to pass an ordinance establishing an environmental commission, giving it legal status as an official arm of local government. A legally constituted commission is eligible to receive funds through local, state and federal budgets. It cannot be abolished without the governing body passing another ordinance repealing the ordinance that set up the commission. This process would include publishing the proposed repeal ordinance in the local newspaper and holding a public hearing on the subject.

The enabling legislation allows commissions to pursue a broad range of activities:

- Compile an index of all open areas, and make recommendations for the planning and use of the open land;
- Acquire property, including easements, in the name of the municipality;
- Develop and maintain an Environmental Resource Inventory for the municipality;
- “Study and make recommendations concerning open space preservation, water resources management, air pollution control, solid waste management, noise control, soil and landscape protection, environmental appearance, marine resources and protection of flora and fauna.”

Environmental Commission Membership

An environmental commission consists of five to seven members and may include two alternate members who vote in the absence of regular members. The mayor appoints the members and the chairman of the commission. Members are unsalaried, serve for terms of three years and must reside in the municipality. One commission member must also be a member of the planning board.

Several municipalities have gone beyond the provisions of the enabling legislation to establish other categories of commission membership. Many have non-voting associate members or advisors with specific expertise, or student members who work on special projects.

Role of Environmental Commissions

As advisors to the planning board and other municipal agencies, environmental commissions are local environmental advocates representing the public and its long-term interest.



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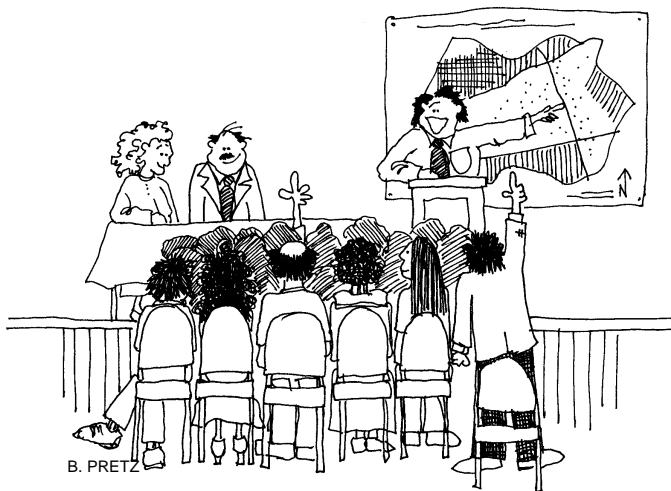
Environmental commissions:

- advise municipal planning boards and zoning boards of adjustment about the impacts of proposals for development on such issues as flooding and runoff, open space needs, water and air quality, plant and animal habitat and waste disposal;
- advocate planned open space preservation at the municipal level;
- investigate environmental problems and offer solutions;
- research and propose ordinances on a variety of topics, such as tree removal, stormwater management, open space preservation and pesticides;
- educate and inform residents, including school children on ways to help protect the environment;
- interact with neighboring commissions, watershed agencies and other organizations to tackle regional and statewide problems;
- help monitor and explain to other local officials and citizens the state and federal programs and regulations intended to combat problems with toxics, solid waste disposal, unhealthy air, contaminated water and wetlands protection.

Saving Municipal Dollars

Environmental commissions provide long-range cost-effective solutions to environmental problems by developing programs that result in both immediate and long-term financial benefit, indirect savings, protection of real estate values, and protection of public health. Environmental commissions have:

- done citizen-staffed studies that would otherwise have been contracted to consultants at greatly increased cost (or remained undone);
- undertaken public health projects to supplement the working knowledge and budgets of municipal health departments;
- reduced garbage collection costs by establishing large-volume recycling programs;
- obtained funding from external sources for studies and projects that would otherwise have been financed out of municipal funds;
- played critical roles in obtaining Green Acres funding for recreation, resource



protection and open space purposes, thus helping to maintain real estate and other values in surrounding areas;

- supplemented school budgets by developing environmental education programs and volunteering assistance;
- surveyed energy use to reduce expenditures in municipal buildings, vehicle fleets and street lighting;
- averted future cleanup problems by establishing used oil recycling, water quality surveillance and other programs;
- researched and written drafts of ordinances, thus saving legal fees;
- provided public services such as the establishment of environmental libraries for official and public use;
- addressed land use issues in the planning stage to avoid future public and private expense for infrastructure to control problems such as flooding or erosion.

The Environmental Resource Inventory

One of the most important tasks of a new environmental commission is to prepare an Environmental Resource Inventory (also called Natural Resource Inventory or Index of Natural Resources). A typical inventory includes maps and text containing information on the municipality's geology, climate, soils, surface and ground water resources, vegetation, wildlife, air and water quality, waste disposal and discharge sites and historic resources. The Environmental Resource Inventory gives the municipality an

understanding of the capacity and limitations of its natural resources. It becomes the basis for the environmental commission's analysis and recommendations concerning the impact of land use and other decisions on local and regional resources. (For more information, see the "Environmental Resource Inventory" Resource Paper available from ANJEC.)

Budget

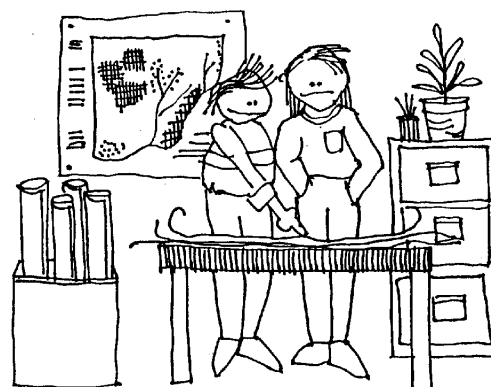
Environmental commissions operate on budgets ranging from zero to thousands of dollars. The typical commission has an operating budget of at least \$500, with additional amounts for special projects such as environmental resource inventories. Sufficient funds for the training and education of commission members and purchase of selected resource materials will benefit a municipality in the long run. NJDEP matching grants of up to \$2,500 are available for environmental commission projects. (For information call ANJEC at 973-539-7547.)

Environmental Commissions at Work – Some Examples

An environmental commission is essentially what each town makes it. The Legislature purposely made the range of commission activities broad. Its power depends on the quality and dedication of its members and their ability to influence the actions of local government and citizens.

Open Space Planning

Commissions help preserve open space by compiling inventories of all open lands in the municipality and then developing plans for the open land. Many commissions have put together open space or greenway plans that contain maps and text and reflect information in the ERI.



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Commissions often work toward implementation of the plans by informing residents about the open space goals, raising funds for local land acquisition, and working with other towns to develop regional open space preservation.

Holmdel's Environmental Commission members worked with community volunteers, town officials and the Monmouth County Planning Board to evaluate 240 open space properties in the Township. The Commission compiled its work in a report that describes the criteria and methods that it used to evaluate open space parcels, and offers a variety of preservation techniques. The report incorporates the findings of previous greenway plans and identifies 31 properties or property clusters as candidates for preservation.

Protecting the regional drinking supply was a primary concern of the Commission in its evaluation of parcels' resource value. Much of Holmdel lies within the watershed of the Swimming River Reservoir, so the Commission focused on each parcel's groundwater recharge and surface water runoff characteristics.

Wetlands and Wildlife Awareness

The Metuchen Environmental Commission worked with local high school students on a project to increase community awareness of the Metuchen Dismal Swamp, one of the few remaining wetlands in northern Middlesex County. The Commission produced a brochure, "Dismal Swamp Community Awareness," and a slide show to inform residents about the importance of wetlands and indigenous wildlife in the area. Metuchen High School students wrote a script for slides taken by a local nature photographer. The slide presentation was shown to several schools and community groups. Union County Vo-Tech students constructed an information kiosk at the Swamp's entrance, where visitors can obtain historic and geological information about the swamp, a species sighting checklist, directions and information on requesting a presentation of the slide show.

Pesticide Reduction

To help reduce the use of pesticides on municipal parks and playing fields, the Madison Environmental Commission carried out a two-year pilot project. It tested the application of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which reduces the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers through the selection of "least toxic" methods of landscape maintenance. The

Commission's comparison of the IPM test fields to control fields showed that IPM was effective and cheaper than conventional field maintenance using pesticides and fertilizers. Based on these results, Madison adopted the use of IPM for all Borough-owned lawns and parks.

The Livingston Environmental Commission used a NJDEP Environmental Services matching grant to produce and distribute a brochure about environmentally friendly lawn care that also included information on stormwater runoff, correct disposal of hazardous waste, recycling and composting. Local high school students helped sort the 11,000 brochures for bulk mailing to township residents. The Commission also hosted a community seminar on Integrated Pest Management and was successful in convincing the town Council to adopt an IPM Resolution.

Computer Mapping

The Moorestown Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) has worked on a comprehensive Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database for the municipality. This database contains a collection of land use, tax and natural resource information. The Committee persuaded the Township Council to appropriate funds for acquisition of GIS hardware and software, and for training for the Advisory Committee and Township staff. They purchased a Global Positioning System (GPS) and a digital camera, which they used to locate and map 1,771 storm drains, 593 fire hydrants and parking meters. Committee members entered block and lot data for 8,199 land parcels, then added land use, zoning, watershed, open space, election districts, fire districts and grids for each lot. MEAC has produced maps to meet the special needs of other Township departments.

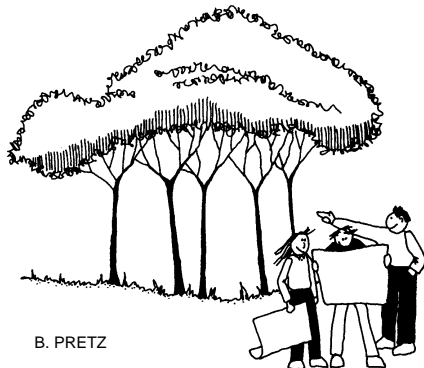


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Moorestown enacted an ordinance to protect stream corridors based on a (MEAC) study done for the Planning Board. The Committee mapped all stream corridors showing the adjacent parcels and a 25-foot stream buffer. The project illustrated that the stream buffer was typically to the rear of parcels, so buffers would not create a major loss of property use or risk of a “taking.”

Site Plan Review

In their review of development plans, commissions often point out when construction would damage important natural resources or require future municipal infrastructure to rectify such problems as flooding, erosion or traffic congestion. The commissions supply planning boards with data to show what natural resources are threatened and why specific applications should be modified or denied.



While conducting a review of a proposed 15-house subdivision of nine acres, the South Plainfield Environmental Commission noted many potential environmental problems. Development would have resulted in the destruction of large trees, loss of open space, and the likely degradation of a stream that flowed through the tract. The members decided that it would be best if the tract were preserved as open space. The Environmental Commission got the support of the Recreation Commission and Board of Education, and then approached the Mayor and Council, pointing out that the development’s two short dead-end streets would pose a difficulty for town’s emergency services. Seeing broad-based support for the idea of preservation, the governing body entered into negotiations with the developer. A purchase price was reached with 90 percent of the funding coming from the Middlesex County Open Space Fund.

Water Quality Monitoring

The Environmental Commissions in Kingwood and Delaware Townships combined efforts to protect streams that flow through both towns. The commissions cooperated on a biological stream monitoring project over two years. Volunteers collected samples of macroinvertebrates, which are good indicators of the health of the stream, and recorded their findings. To educate the public on their findings and the conclusions drawn from them, the commissions produced a booklet on the local streams. In addition to specific data on the streams and their watersheds, the booklet includes background information on how streams function and what people can do to protect water quality.

The Medford Lakes Environmental Commission conducted a water quality monitoring project on several lakes in the Borough. Seeing an increase in weed problems, the Commission suspected that the town’s lakes were suffering from an increase in nutrients. Commission members sampled several lake sites monthly for seven months, testing for phosphorous, pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature and clarity. Their study showed that phosphorous levels had increased by a factor of ten in the seven years since a similar water quality study. Based on these findings, the Commission recommended additional phosphorous monitoring, and also a study of nitrate levels. Continued high readings will require investigation into the sources of the excess nutrients, and a plan to control them.

Non-point Source Pollution

The Mountain Lakes Environmental Commission worked with Borough officials and the Department of Public Works (DPW) to reduce non-point source pollution (water pollution from diffuse sources such as runoff) from the DPW yard. The yard was a leaf composting area and now is used as a recycling center. The site is in the watershed of the Borough’s main lake and over a prime aquifer recharge area. Flooding and runoff became a problem after a large paving project occurred at the yard several years ago. The area also became an illegal dumping ground for construction material and old tires. The Commission got a private environmental consultant to volunteer to inspect the site and make recommendations and then persuaded Borough officials to remove the pavement and reclaim the site. They replanted buffer areas and upgraded the recycling to reduce environmental impacts.

To educate residents about non-point source pollution, Cranford's Environmental Commission created an exhibit for the Public Library, with photos of pollution sources and maps showing the location of Cranford's storm sewers and streams. The exhibit showed how rain washes fertilizers, pesticides, oils and other contaminants from streets, lawns and other surfaces into rivers through the storm sewer system. The display was featured in two local newspapers and on a half-hour cable TV broadcast of an interview with Commission members. A local Eagle Scout candidate joined the project and stenciled 84 storm sewers with "Don't Dump" and "Drains to River." The Commission also developed an educational pamphlet that will be mailed to all Cranford residences.

Education and Training for Environmental Commissioners

For environmental commissions to be effective advocates, members need to be informed about a broad range of environmental laws, programs and technical information. Established in 1969, the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions is a statewide, nonprofit membership organization. It offers professional guidance, research, training and technical support to environmental commissions, local officials and interested citizens.

ANJEC members receive the following benefits and services:

- *ANJEC Report*, a quarterly magazine with practical articles on current environmental subjects, news about special projects, book reviews and information on what environmental commissions around the state are doing;
- ANJEC Resource Center, a 7,000 volume reference library, including an extensive collection of model ordinances. ANJEC staff are available to answer questions, research issues and provide referrals and assistance;
- ANJEC courses and workshops that train commissioners on the tools and techniques for preserving natural resources and protecting environmental quality. The environmental commissioners' course is offered annually;
- The annual Environmental Congress, a statewide gathering of environmental commissions, activists, government officials and interested citizens. The day-long event offers speakers, workshops, exhibits and environmental achievement awards;
- A 20 percent discount on ANJEC local environmental publications and free copies of all new fact sheets and publications;
- The ANJEC website (www.anjec.org) offering information on current seminars, contact information and useful links.



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ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION ENABLING LEGISLATION

STATE LEGISLATION

N.J.S.A. 40:56A; originally passed 1968; amended 1972, 1975, 1989

Section

- 40:56A-1 Commission; appointment; term; vacancies.
- 40:56A-2 Powers of commission.
- 40:56A-3 Acquisitions by commission.
- 40:56A-4 Records and annual report.
- 40:56A-5 Appropriations.
- 40:56A-6 Studies and recommendations.
- 40:56A-7 Conservation Commission as environmental commission.
- 40:56A-8 Joint environmental commission; creation by ordinance; members; compensation.
- 40:56A-9 Chairman; qualification; term in office.
- 40:56A-10 Expenses; appointment; appropriation.
- 40:56A-11 Functions; duties and powers.
- 40:56A-12 Succession of established commission by joint commission; transfers.

40:56A-1 COMMISSION; APPOINTMENT; TERM; VACANCIES

The governing body of any municipality may by ordinance establish an environmental commission for the protection, development or use of natural resources, including water resources, located within its territorial limits. The commission shall consist of not less than five nor more than seven members, appointed by the mayor of the municipality, one of whom shall be a member of the municipal planning board and all of whom shall be residents of the municipality; the members shall serve without compensation except as hereafter provided.

The mayor of the municipality shall designate one of the members to serve as chairman and presiding officer of the commission. The terms of office for the first commissioners shall be for 1, 2 or 3 years, to be designated by the mayor in making his appointments so that the terms of approximately 1/3 of the members will expire each year, and their successors shall be appointed for terms of 3 years and until the appointment and qualification of their successors.

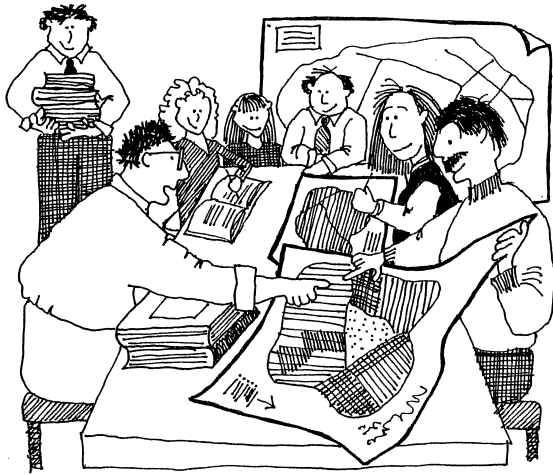
The mayor or governing body of the municipality may remove any member of the commission for cause, on written charges served upon the

member and after a hearing thereon at which the member shall be entitled to be heard in person or by counsel. A vacancy on the commission occurring otherwise than by expiration of a term shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as an original appointment.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law to the contrary, the powers of appointment and removal hereby accorded to the mayor of a municipality shall be vested in the elected official so designated or, where there is a vacancy in the office of mayor, on the duly designated acting mayor.

The governing body may, by ordinance, provide for the appointment of not more than two alternate members. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law or charter heretofore adopted, the ordinance shall provide the methods of appointment of alternate members. Alternate members shall be designated at the time of appointment by the authority appointing them as "Alternate No. 1" and "Alternate No. 2."

The terms of the alternate members shall be for two years, except the terms of the alternate members first appointed shall be two years for Alternate No. 1 and one year for Alternate No. 2



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so that the term of not more than one alternate member shall expire in any one year. A vacancy occurring otherwise than by expiration of term shall be filled by the appointing authority for the unexpired term only.

An alternate member shall not be permitted to act on any matter in which he has either directly or indirectly any personal or financial interest. An alternate member may, after public hearing if he requests one, be removed by the governing body for cause. An alternate member may participate in discussions of the proceedings but may not vote except in the absence or disqualification of a regular member. A vote shall not be delayed in order that a regular member may vote instead of an alternate member. In the event that a choice must be made as to which alternate member is to vote, Alternate No. 1 shall vote first.

40:56A-2 POWERS OF COMMISSION

An environmental commission organized under this act shall have power to conduct research into the use and possible use of the open land areas of the municipality and may coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes, and may advertise, prepare, print and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets which in its judgment it deems necessary for its purposes. It shall keep an index of all open areas, publicly or privately owned, including open marshland, swamps and other wetlands, in order to obtain information on the proper use of such areas, and may from time to time recommend to the planning board or, if none, to the mayor and governing body of the municipality plans and programs for inclusion in a municipal master plan and the development and use of such areas.

40:56A-3 ACQUISITIONS BY COMMISSION

An environmental commission may, subject to the approval of the governing body, acquire property, both real and personal, in the name of the municipality by gift, purchase, grant, bequest, devise or lease for any of its purposes and shall administer the same for such purposes subject to the terms of the conveyance or gift. Such an acquisition may be to acquire the fee or any lesser interest, development right, easement (including conservation easement), covenant or other contractual right (including a conveyance on conditions or with limitations or reversions), as may be necessary to acquire, maintain, improve, protect, limit the future use of, or otherwise conserve and properly utilize open spaces and other land and water areas in the municipality.

40:56A-4 RECORDS AND ANNUAL REPORT

An environmental commission shall keep records of its meetings and activities and shall make an annual report to the governing body of the municipality.

40:56A-5 APPROPRIATION

The governing body of a municipality may appropriate funds for the expenses incurred by the environmental commission. The commission may appoint such clerks and other employees as it may from time to time require and as shall be within the limits of funds appropriated to it.

40:56A-6 STUDIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An environmental commission shall have power to study and make recommendations concerning open space preservation, water resource management, air pollution control, solid waste management, noise control, soil and landscape protection, environmental appearance, marine resources and protection of flora and fauna.

40:56A-7 CONSERVATION COMMISSION AS ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Any conservation commission established pursuant to this act shall be an environmental commission.

40:56A-8 JOINT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION; CREATION BY ORDINANCE; MEMBERS; COMPENSATION

- a. The governing bodies of two or more municipalities may, by adoption of substantially similar ordinances, create a joint environmental commission for the protection, development or use of natural resources, including water resources located within their combined territorial limits.

b. The number and qualifications of the members of such joint environmental commission, and their terms and methods of appointment or removal shall be such as may be determined and agreed upon by said governing bodies and set forth in the ordinance creating such joint commission, except that

- (1) when such joint commission is created by two municipalities only, there shall be at least three members from each municipality;
- (2) when such joint commission is created by three or more municipalities, there shall be at least two members from each municipality;
- (3) at least one member from each municipality shall be a member of the planning board (if any) of the municipality, and
- (4) a majority of the members of the joint commission shall hold no other public office, except membership on a municipal or other planning board.

c. Members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but may receive reimbursement for actual expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties as members of the commission.

40:56A-9 CHAIRMAN; QUALIFICATIONS; TERM IN OFFICE

A joint environmental commission shall elect its chairman, who shall hold no other public office or position, except that he may be a member of a municipal or other planning board. The term of the chairman shall be one year, and he shall be eligible to succeed himself unless the ordinance

creating the commission shall otherwise provide. The ordinance creating such commission may provide that the chairmanship of the commission be rotated annually so that over each period of years corresponding to the number of participating municipalities it shall be held in each year by a member appointed from a different participating municipality.

40:56A-10 EXPENSES; APPORTIONMENT; APPROPRIATION

The proportion of the expense of the joint environmental commission to be borne by each participating municipality shall be such as may be determined and agreed upon by the participating municipalities, and said municipalities are hereby authorized to appropriate their respective shares of such expenses. Within the limits thus agreed upon and duly appropriated the commission may employ such clerical and technical or other assistants and may incur such other expenses as it may deem necessary to carry out its functions.

40:56A-11 FUNCTIONS, DUTIES AND POWERS

A commission created pursuant to this supplementary act shall have, with respect to all the participating municipalities, and to each of them, all the functions, duties and powers of an environmental commission established in a single municipality under section 2 and 3 of PL.1968, c. 245 (C.40:56A-2 and 40:56A-3) and section 7 of PL.1972, c. 35 (C.40:56A-6).

40:56A-12 SUCCESSION OF ESTABLISHED COMMISSION BY JOINT COMMISSION; TRANSFERS

If any municipality which has heretofore established an environmental commission under the act to which this act is a supplement shall enter into participation in a joint environmental commission, such environmental commission heretofore established shall be abolished upon the taking effect of the ordinance establishing the joint environmental commission, and the terms of the members of such abolished environmental commission shall immediately cease and terminate. Except as may otherwise be provided in the ordinance establishing such joint commission, all employees of such abolished environmental commission, and all the records, property and funds in its possession or under its control shall be transferred to the joint environmental commission, and its debts and other financial obligations shall be assumed by the joint environmental commission.



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Legislative Statement 1968 Enactment

This bill would enable a municipality to establish a conservation commission as a functioning unit of municipal government to promote the conservation and development of the municipality's natural resources. A conservation commission would be responsible for providing the impetus and taking the leadership in natural resources planning at a local level where no organized effort towards these ends has been noticeable in the past.

A commission's activities would be devoted to planning, implementing and informing the public about local conservation programs. It would produce natural resource inventories, plans and projects for development and recommend conservation measures to be included by planning boards in master plans for land use. It could accept gifts of land, interests therein or funds, or apply for grants to acquire land or interests therein, all on behalf of the municipality for conservation purposes. It could manage donated or purchased land for conservation purposes and operate conservation programs. It would act as the coordinating agency of the community on conservation matters and a liaison between local conservation needs and regional, state and federal agencies ministering to those needs.

Such enabling legislation has been adopted by several New England states and the record of accomplishment of those conservation commissions established under such laws has been outstanding. The experience of other states has been that a properly constituted conservation commission will complement, not overlap or conflict with, existing organizations.

This bill is vital in order to ensure more effectively the preservation of New Jersey's natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of the citizens of our state now and in the future.

Legislative Statement 1972 Enactment

In 1968 the legislature passed an act authorizing municipal conservation commissions. Since that time over 100 municipalities have created conservation commissions. This act is designed to strengthen and promote this movement by broadening the powers and responsibilities of the commissions. The act authorizes studies into all areas of environmental concern while continuing the commissions as citizen advisory bodies which make recommendations to the elected governing bodies.



B. PRETZ

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MODEL ORDINANCE

An ordinance to establish an Environmental Commission in the (*municipality*), County of (*county*) and state of New Jersey.

SECTION 1. Creation: The (*municipality*) Environmental Commission is hereby established pursuant to Chapter 245 of the Laws of 1968 (N.J.S.A. 40:56A-1 to 40:56A-12), as amended by Chapter 35, PL. 1972.

SECTION 2. Members: The Commission shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Mayor, one of whom shall also be a member of the Planning Board and all of whom shall be residents of (*municipality*); the members shall serve without compensation except as hereinafter provided. The Mayor shall designate one of the members to serve as Chairman and presiding officer of the Commission. The terms of the office of the first commissioners shall be for 1, 2 or 3 years, to be designated by the Mayor in making his appointments and their successors shall be appointed for terms of 3 years and until the appointment and qualification of their successors. The first members of the Commission shall be appointed for the following terms:

- 2 members for the 1-year term expiring December 31, (year),
- 2 members for the 2-year term expiring December 31, (year),
- 3 members for the 3-year term expiring December 31, (year).

The Mayor or governing body may remove any member of the Commission for cause, on written charges served upon the member and after the hearing thereon at which the member shall be entitled to be heard in person or by counsel. A vacancy on the Commission occurring otherwise than expiration of a term shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as an original appointment.

SECTION 3. Powers of Commission: The Commission is established for the protection, development or use of natural resources, including water resources, located within territorial limits of (*municipality*). The Commission shall have power to conduct research into the use and possible use of the open land areas of the municipality and may coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes, and may advertise, prepare, print, and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets which in its judgment it deems necessary for its purposes. It shall keep an index of all open areas, publicly or privately owned, including open marshland, swamps and other wetlands, in order to obtain information on the proper use of such areas and may from time to time recommend to the Planning Board plans and programs for inclusion in the Master Plan and the development and use of such areas.

SECTION 4. Acquisitions by Commission: The Environmental Commission may, subject to the approval of the governing body, acquire property, both real and personal, in the name of the municipality by gift, purchase, grant, bequest, devise or lease for any of its purposes and shall administer the same for such purposes subject to the terms of the conveyance or gift. Such an acquisition may be to acquire the fee or any lesser interest, development right, easement (including conservation easement), covenant or other contractual right (including a conveyance on conditions or with limitations or reversions), as may be necessary to acquire, maintain, improve, protect, limit the future use of, or otherwise conserve and properly utilize open spaces and other land and water areas in the municipality.

SECTION 5. Records and Annual Reports: The Environmental Commission shall keep records of its meetings and activities and make an annual report to the governing body.

SECTION 6. Appropriations: The Commission may appoint such clerks and other employees and incur such expenses as it may from time to time require, providing the same shall be within the limits of funds appropriated to it by the governing body or otherwise available to it.

SECTION 7. Studies and Recommendations: The Environmental Commission shall have power to study and make recommendations concerning open space preservation, water resources management, air pollution control, solid waste management, noise control, soil and landscape protection, environmental appearance, marine resources and protection of flora and fauna.

SECTION 8. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its passage and publication according to law.



ANJEC RESOURCE CENTER

The Resource Center offers the following services free to all ANJEC members:

- Unique reference collection of more than 7,000 books, pamphlets, documents and

government publications ranging from academic texts to environmental resource inventories;

- More than 1,200 current files covering topics from acid rain to zoning;
- Extensive material and files on state and federal laws including current legislation and regulations;
- Extensive files of municipal ordinances covering topics such as tree protection, noise pollution, critical areas protection and hazardous materials;
- Extensive files of chemicals and hazardous substances;
- Response and referral center for questions and requests for information and materials relating to local, state and national environmental issues, problems and projects.

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Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

The Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) is a statewide non-profit organization that informs and assists environmental commissioners, open space committee members, local officials and other concerned citizens in their efforts to preserve and protect New Jersey's environment.

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