



ANJEC
Local Environment Matters

Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions

*EC Powers and
Responsibilities*

SPRING 2026



www.anjec.org



- This session will be recorded & available afterwards to all registrants, and on our YouTube Page.
- Please send us your questions in the Q&A.
- If we do not get to your question today, email us at info@anjec.org.
- CEUs are available from NJUCF, One credit (1) for each session attended. If you'd like to receive an attendance certificate, please email Elizabeth Ritter at eritter@anjec.org with your name, municipality/county and passcode.



ANJEC Views

ANJEC's Mission

Our Mission

To promote local action to protect and restore New Jersey's natural resources and ensure equitable, healthy communities.

ANJEC advances its mission by engaging in diverse and inclusive practices through leadership, partnerships, education, advocacy for strong public policy and support of environmental commissions, public officials and communities throughout New Jersey.



Don't forget to renew your ANJEC membership for 2026!



ANJEC Membership Information & Forms
anjec.org/memberships

As an ANJEC member, environmental commissions and organizations join a statewide network of local groups who work to protect New Jersey's natural resources, and ensure that the environment has a strong voice in local government. Membership with ANJEC includes:

- **Community Connection:**
- **Education and Resources:**
- **Policy Updates:**
- **Partnership Opportunities.**



Memberships



anjec.org/memberships

Check out the Resource Center

1 ANJEC Report

6 Sample Ordinances

2 Displays and Games

7 Resource Papers

3 DVDs with screening rights

8 Toolkits

4 Assessment tools for EC

9 Brochures

5 Past training resources

10 Open Space Grants

► Website:  <https://anjec.org/resources-and-tools/>



ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grants

Grants

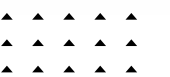
ANJEC is pleased to continue offering grants to environmental commissions in New Jersey for projects to further stewardship and community involvement in parks and other preserved spaces. The 2026 Grant cycle marks the 13th year of the program. ANJEC will accepting applications from environmental commissions for grants of up to \$1500 each for local stewardship projects.

2026 Application Deadline: April 13

More info at:



<https://anjec.org/open-space-stewardship-grants/>



Upcoming Events

April 8, 7 pm

Lame Duck Policy Update: Actions for EC's and your Town (webinar)

April 9, 7 pm

Data Centers in NJ (webinar)
Hosted by the New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance

Saturday May 2

9 am – 11:30 am

In person Commissioners Course
Branch Brook Park, Newark

April 14, 7 pm

Advocacy in Action: Crafting Powerful Campaigns That Create Change (webinar)

Sept 25, Save the Date
Environmental Congress
New Brunswick Theological Seminary



Our Experts



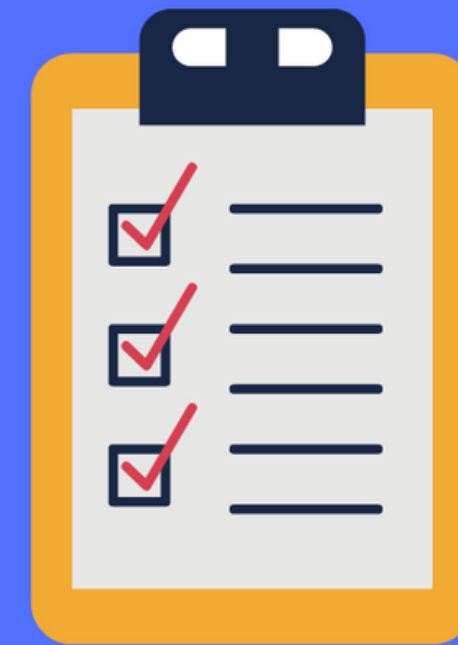
**Randi K Rothmel,
ANJEC South Jersey
Project Director**



**Timarie Diehl, Somerville
Environmental Commission,
Chair**



OVERVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION LAWS, POWERS & RESPONSIBILITIES



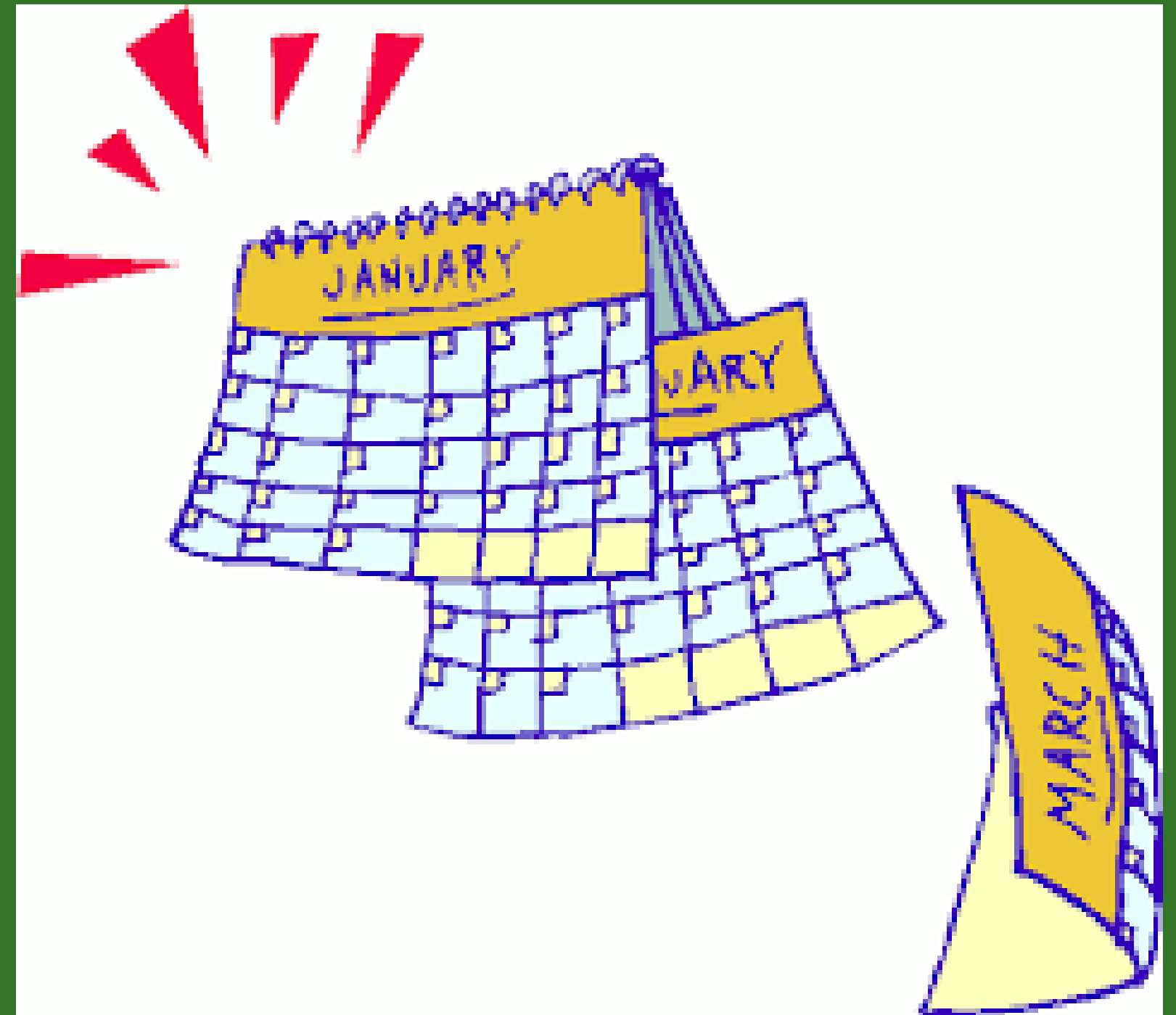
Powers and Responsibilities



Poll Question 1

How long have you served on your EC or EAC?

1. Never/I'm not on an EC
2. 0-1 years
3. 1-3 years
4. 3-6 years
5. more than 6 years





What the Law Requires

EC serves in an advisory role

What the law requires

Enabling Legislation
NJSA 40:56A:

Five to seven members and two alternates appointed by mayor, one of whom shall be a member of the Planning Board



Chapter 40:56A - COMMISSION; APPOINTMENT; TERMS; VACANCIES

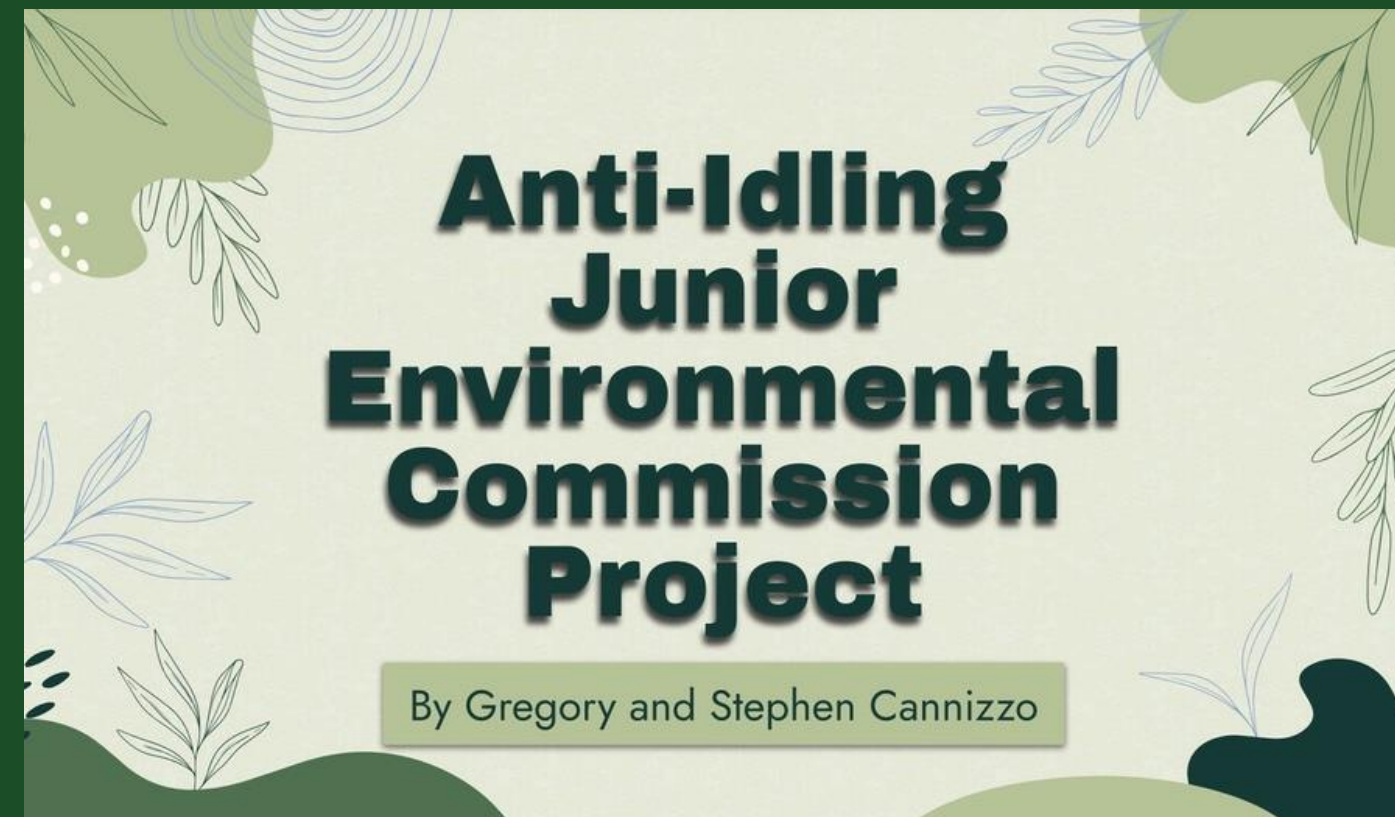
[Browse as List](#) [Search Within](#)

- Section 40:56A-1 - Commission; appointment; terms; vacancies
- Section 40:56A-2 - Powers of commission
- Section 40:56A-3 - Acquisitions by commission
- Section 40:56A-4 - Records and annual report
- Section 40:56A-4.1 - Definitions relative to authorities, boards, commissions
- Section 40:56A-5 - Appropriation
- Section 40:56A-6 - Studies and recommendations
- Section 40:56A-7 - Conservation commission as environmental commission
- Section 40:56A-8 - Joint environmental commission; creation by ordinance; members; compensation
- Section 40:56A-9 - Chairman; qualifications; term of office
- Section 40:56A-10 - Expenses; apportionment; appropriation
- Section 40:56A-11 - Functions, duties and powers
- Section 40:56A-12 - Succession of established commission by joint commission; transfers



Different Formats – Cranford EC Associate Members

Wyckoff EC - Junior Commissioners



Visit the My Green Cranford website for more information.

Board Members

Name	Title
Jay Stevens	Chairman
Dave Coughlin	
Steve Jandoli	
Kathleen Murray	
Carol Berns	
Zach McCue	
Kate Rappa	Rep. to the Planning Board
Daniel J. Aschenbach	
Michael Bond	
Ann Darby	
Nelson Dittmar	
Dana Friedman	
Jane Glass	
Kevin Harrison	
Marya (Tina) Helmstetter	
Donald Jones	
Lauren King	
Barbara Krause	
Ronald Margulis	
Kevin O'Brien	
Ana Pinto	
Jeffrey Pistol	
Mary Sudiak	
Michael Venditti	
Patricia Vogler	
Christian Wurzberger	
Patricia Pavlak	Alternate #2
Ben Cohen	Alternate #1
Terrence Curran	Commissioner, Liaison
Matthew Lubin	Fire Prevention Official
Monika Koscova-Jencik	Health Officer/Sanitarian



What's the Difference?

Environmental **Commission** or
Environmental **Committee**

Environmental Commission



Borough of Point Pleasant Beach

Environmental **Commission**
and/or **Green Team**



Environmental Commission / Green Team

Environmental Advisory
Committee



Environmental Advisory Committee



What the law requires

- Rolling three-year terms
- Open public meetings
(Sunshine Law)
- Annual report
- Index of open lands



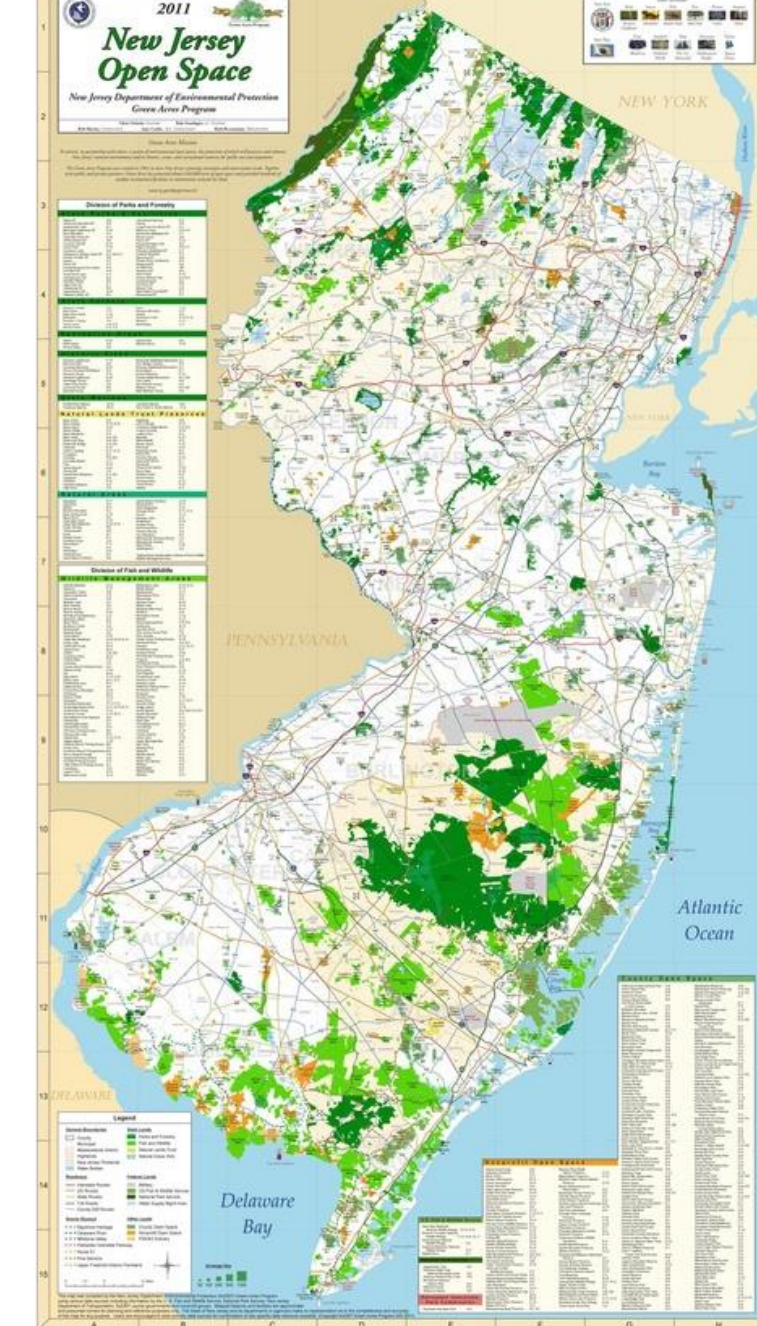
As of March 1, 2026, public notices will no longer be required to appear in New Jersey newspapers.

- Municipalities, County Government, Planning Boards, Zoning Boards other Public Bodies - are required to post legal notices directly on their official government website.
- Submit a hyperlink to Statewide Legal Notices Listings. (<https://tinyurl.com/bde82mx9>)
- Website must be accessible, free of charge, with the notice clearly placed.
- Display notice for at least one week, or time period as required by law.
- Archive notices for at least one year.
- Print publications can still be used.
- If posted on an online news publication, a hyperlink to the website notification must be included.
- Online newspapers must publish legal notices within 24 hours of receipt.
- Cost to publish online notices cannot exceed the rate established in N.J.S.A. 35:2-1



Commission Powers

- Study and make recommendations on water, air, waste, noise, landscape protection, environmental appearance, flora and fauna
- Create an Open Space Index and Recommendations



YEAR OF OPEN SPACE: REIMAGINING OUR PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

2022
YEAR OF
OPEN SPACE
C JERSEY TY



MAY 11, 2021

NEWARK ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION APPROVES INAUGURAL ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE INVENTORY WITH FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

[← Back to News overview](#)



Commission Powers

Develop the Municipal Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI)



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE INVENTORY




**PRINCETON NJ
MASTER PLAN**
ADOPTED APRIL 17, 2025



ANJEC
Local Environment Matters

Commission Powers

Assist in stormwater education/outreach for MS4 permit

Category 5: Community Involvement Activities		
Activity	Description	Points
Volunteer Stormwater Assessment or Stream Monitoring	Establish a volunteer stormwater facility assessment (inspection, inventory and/or mapping) or stream monitoring program for a waterbody within the municipality to gauge the health of the waterway through chemical, biological or visual monitoring protocols. Contact NJDEP's AmeriCorps NJ Watershed Ambassador Program or review USEPA National Directory of Volunteer Monitoring Programs.	3
Rain Barrel Workshop	Organize or participate in a rain barrel workshop. This could be a partnership exercise with a local watershed organization, university, school, youth/faith-based group, and/or another nonprofit.	3
Rain Garden Workshop	Organize or participate in a rain garden training or installation workshop. This could be a partnership exercise with a local watershed organization, university, school, youth/faith-based group, and/or another nonprofit.	3
Community Event	Organize or participate in the organization of a community event to carry out stormwater activities such as stormwater measure maintenance or a stream buffer restoration. The municipality may identify and enter into a partnership agreement with a local group such as a watershed organization, university, utility, school, youth/faith-based group, and/or other nonprofit to carry out these activities.	3
Community Involvement	Organize a project with a local organization to create and post signs at either green and/or gray stormwater infrastructure sites or facilities that describe the function and importance of the facility, contact phone number, municipal identification number, and/or website for more information.	5*

*Signs receive 0.5 points per sign. A maximum of 5 points is allowed.



Poll Question 2: Which **requires** an ordinance to be established?

- a. Environmental Commission
- b. Environmental Committee
- c. Green Team
- d. A and B
- e. A, B, and C.



Getting organized

Mission statement

Bylaws

Annual goals

Annual report

Budget

Mission Statement

- Why does the EC exist?



Mission Statement

The Paramus Environmental Commission seeks to protect and improve the quality of our land, water, and air by advising the Borough of Paramus on actions and policies of sustainability. Through education and outreach, the Commission seeks to inspire our community, both residential and commercial, to incorporate environmentally responsible practices in their daily lives.

Mission Statement

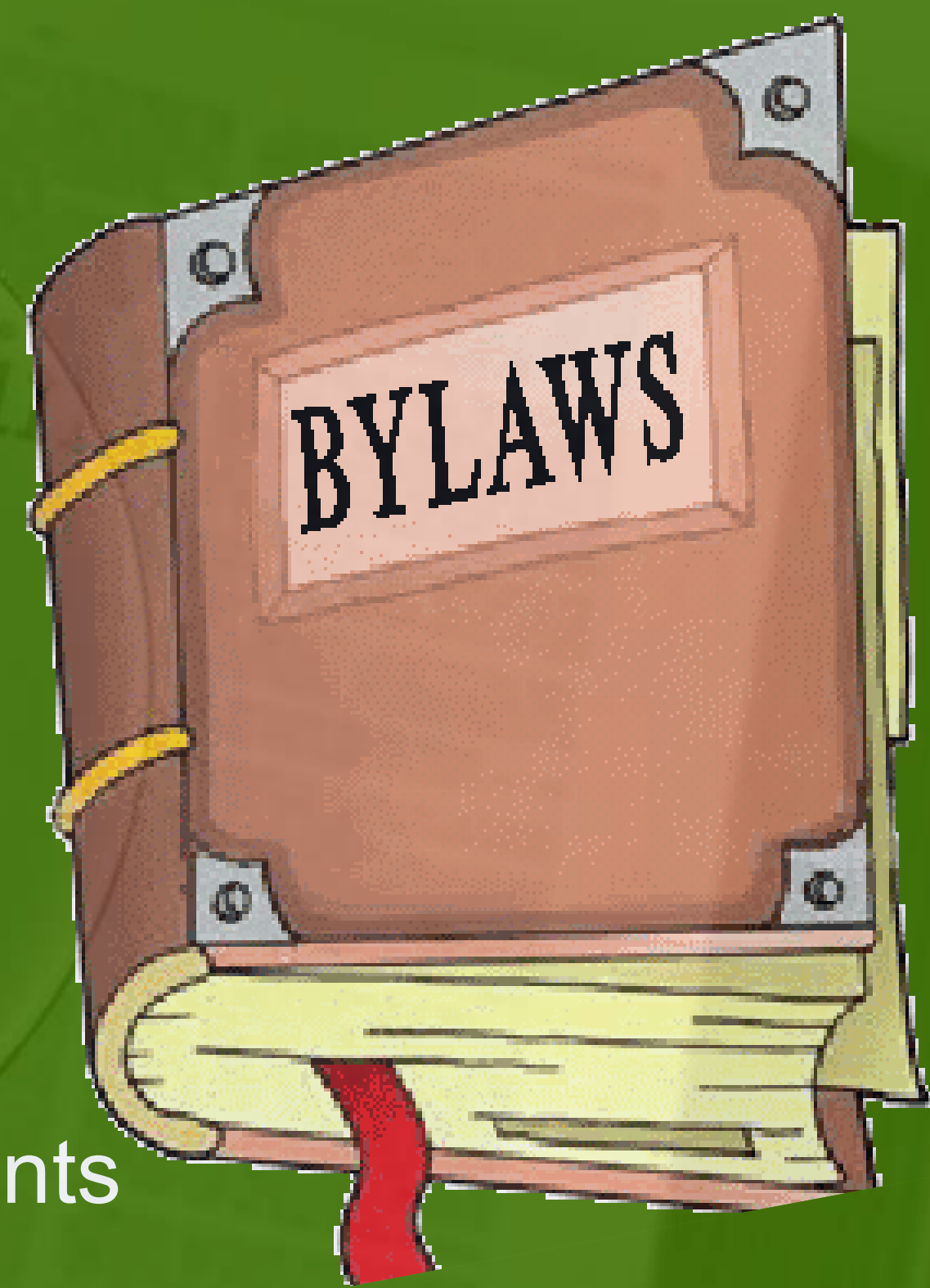
“The Mantoloking Environmental Commission seeks to improve the environmental quality of our land, bay, and ocean. Through education and outreach, the Commission encourages citizens to incorporate environmentally responsible practices into homes, gardens, and daily life. The Commission’s goal is to improve the health of the land and the surrounding waters while reducing the potential to harm the environment.”



EC Bylaws

How does an EC operate?

- Attendance requirements
- Meeting requirements and cancellation policy
- Subcommittee and advisory member appointments
- Preparation and distribution of meeting minutes
- Other record keeping



Sample Bylaws

Excerpt from Jersey City Environmental Commission Bylaws

1.7 - Meetings

1.7-1 Regular meetings of the Environmental Commission shall be held in the place and at the time and day designated at the annual reorganization meeting. The Commission will hold an annual reorganization meeting at the regularly scheduled May meeting of the Commission.

1.7-3 Public participation shall be **limited to five minutes per person** unless otherwise stated by the Chairman.

Sample Bylaws

Excerpt from Hamilton Twp. Environmental Commission bylaws (Mercer)

Associate Members

The mayor may appoint four associate members for a term of one year. Each year each associate member term appointed shall expire. The associate members shall not be entitled to vote with the commission.

Attendance Requirements

The unexcused absence of a member from two (2) consecutive meetings or four (4) total meetings within a calendar year shall constitute recommendation for removal of such member from the Commission with just cause.

EC Goals

What do we plan to accomplish this year?



EC Goals

What do we plan to accomplish this year?



Annual Checklist for ECs

ACTIVITY	PLANNED	ACCOMPLISHED	NOTES/RESOURCES
ITEMS TO REVIEW ANNUALLY			
Review and/or make recommendations on the stormwater ordinance			https://thewatershed.org/the-watershed-institute-releases-enhanced-stormwater-management-model-ordinance/
Review and/or make recommendations on the ordinance			https://www.njlm.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2779
Review other environmental ordinances, make recommendations			https://cwp.org/updated-code-ordinance-worksheet-improving-local-development-regulations/
Review and make recommendations on the Permit Publicgement			https://www.njfuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/NJF_MS4PermitPrimer.pdf
Write ERI Environmental Resource Inventory			https://anjec.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/ERI-2013.pdf
Review site plans (is anyone trained?)			https://anjec.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ANJEC-Site-Plan-Review-updated-6-2022.pdf
Review zoning			https://anjec.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ANJEC-Site-Plan-Review-updated-6-2022.pdf https://www.njlm.org/Archive/ViewFile/Item/1566

TO-DO LIST			
January			
Committee reorganization			
Set meeting dates for the year, give info to township administrator to post on website			
Set annual goals - coordinate with local ECs, watershed organizations?			
Go before governing body and present your annual report on the EC's past year's activities (read it into the minutes)			https://anjec.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/EnvCommissionersHandbook2017.pdf (page 8)
Begin spring cleanup planning			https://njclean.org/volunteer-cleanups
Send updated commissioners list (with contact info) to ANJEC (info@anjec.org)			https://anjec.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2024-MembershipContactListBlank.pdf ANJEC accepts member contact information in alternate format, please email member lists or updates to info@anjec.org
February			

Tools to Help ECs



EC Goals What do we plan to accomplish this year?



**MANCHESTER
TOWNSHIP**
OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

GOALS and OBJECTIVES 2025

- GOAL 1: Continue working with the Manchester Green Team to achieve Sustainable Jersey Bronze or Silver Certification; participate in "Green Day" event; and organize a cleanup of Township Property; organize an Earth Day.
- GOAL 2: Continue to provide timely recommendations to the Planning Board on Development Applications and Areas in Need of Redevelopment.
- GOAL 3: Improve communication and develop a relationship with the Zoning Board of Adjustment.
- GOAL 4: Continue to hold regular educational presentations on topics of public interest at our meetings.
- GOAL 5: Promote recreational use of open space in Manchester and develop a relationship with the Township's Open Space Committee.
- GOAL 6: Review and make recommendations on the Township's Master Plan.
- GOAL 7: Provide more education and awareness about the Township's Forest fire safety programs



Working to preserve and protect our precious natural resources and quality of life in all parts of the Township



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES- 2024

Promote Environmental Awareness and Communicate Environmental Issues to the Public

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	TASKS AND PROJECTED TIMELINE
Reduce motor vehicle idling within the Township through zoning.	Work with the Franklin Township Planning Board to amend the Municipal Sign Ordinance (§1112-108) to include requirements for anti-idling signage.	The EC added drafted a memo to the Township Council with requirements for the installation anti-idling signage at specific commercial, institutional, and industrial properties. The recommendation included that anti-idling signage must be depicted on site plan application submitted after the date of adoption of Ordinance #4440-24 , dated May 14, 2024.
Stream Cleanup (Annual)	Cleanup of a designated stream in the Township annually	The Annual Stream Cleanup was held on April 15, 2024 in partnership the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership and the New Brunswick EC at Mile Run. Planning for the 2025 Annual Stream Cleanup is underway.

Volunteer Hours & Goals

Total Volunteer Hours: 981
equivalent to \$33,177

Summary of Environmental Commission and Green Team Goals and Efforts

2023 Goals Progress

- ✓ • Submit our Sustainable Jersey application
- ✓ • Maintain a volunteer list
- ✓ • Maintain and improve our Community Garden
- ✓ • More community engagement
- ✓ • Further engagement with the Borough and Council
- • Champion an updated Environmental Resource Inventory (\$)
- • Update our Community Forestry Plan (\$)

2024 Goals

- Continued engagement with the Borough and Council
- Creation of a Budget
- Increase Tree Canopy in Borough
- Champion Green Infrastructure
- 2023 Goal Completion



How to become an influential EC

- Give electeds easy wins
 - Small grant project, movie night, etc.
- Attend council/committee meetings
- Be willing to listen and learn
- “Thanks & spanks”
- Don’t take it personally



Berkeley Heights Mayor Devannee and Councilman Yellin help cut the ribbon on their new community garden, led by the EC Chair Rich Leister

Poll Question 3

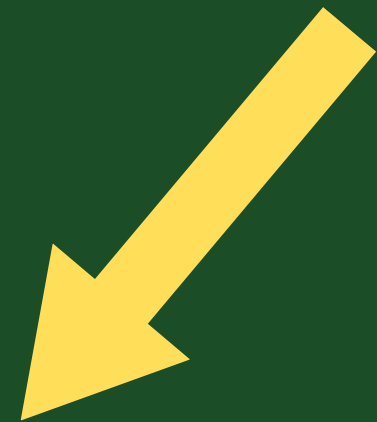
Who should an EC reach out to for building relationships and trust?

- a. General public
- b. Town council
- c. Schools
- d. Businesses
- e. Clubs, organizations
- f. All of the above

Relationships build success



Town Council,
administration,
departments, boards,
commissions



General public

Schools, businesses, clubs,
organizations, watershed
organizations/ambassadors



Adopt a Drain, BH!

Help Keep Our Town Clean!



Creating trust



- **Seek alliances**
- **Find common ground, shared needs**
- **Be open to new ideas**
- **Pool resources**
- **Share credit liberally**
- **Demonstrate value**

Dealing with a Challenging Administration

Don't take it personally

Offer Solutions. For example, if funding is an issue – offer other funding options such as grants when proposing projects

Build base of support – involve the community in commission activities; use publicity

Work on projects that are of interest to the governing body (e.g., park cleanups, tree planting)

Annual Report

What should it include?

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

Annual Report



SOMERVILLE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Reaching Our Audience

Communication Channels



Newsletter Launch

16

emails direct to community



Social Media

20+

educational posts on various topics for our 1,171 followers



EC Site Page

12

article-style posts & revamped EC page



Carol PAGER Kiosk

4

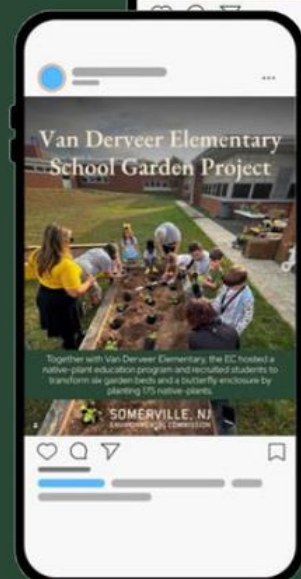
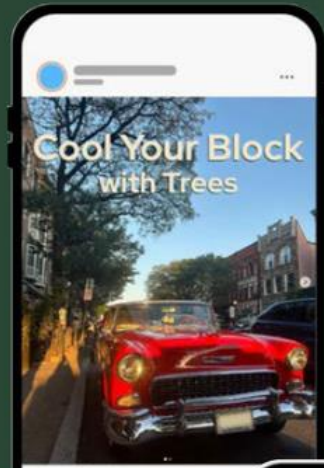
Updated quarterly by Green Team member



In the Media

9

Taplnto articles featuring EC work



Reaching Our Audience

Events and In-person Opportunities

Earth Day Weekend



76

volunteers at the annual Town Clean Up collected 6 cu yards of waste!



350

total tree seedlings and plants donated to the community



35

vendors and community partners joined to table at the Green Fair!

National Night Out

Annual opportunity to connect with other Somerville teams and community members.

Electric Vehicle Show

Successful educational event that helps neighbors understand the EV space.

Educational Seminars

New Jersey's Changing Climate:

We learned about NJ's past and future from a Rutgers professor and NJ's Climatologist.

Climate Proof Your Yard:

Building on that foundation, we learned what each of us can do in our space to ensure we're ready for those changes.

Plans, Resolutions & Ordinances

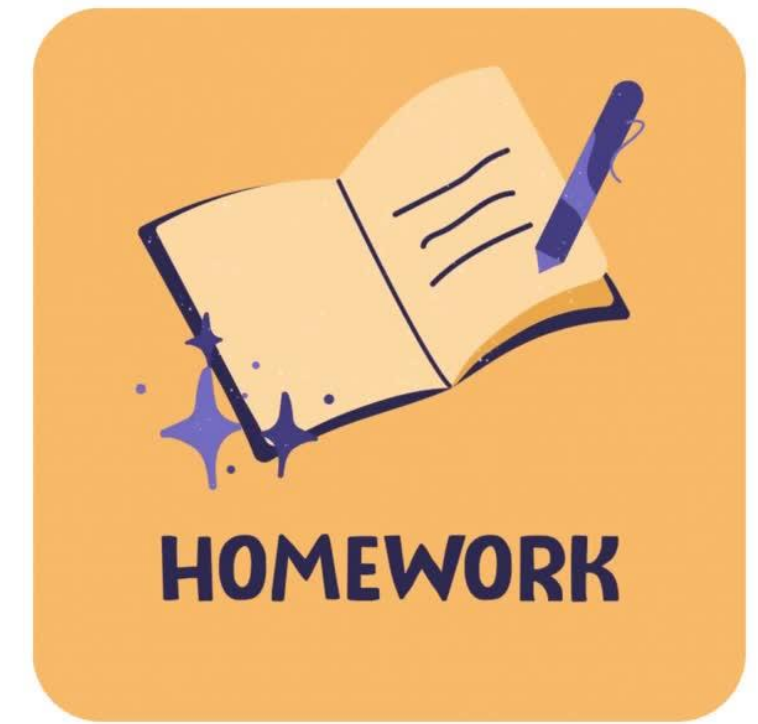
- (Submitted) Reviewed and submitted updated **Environmental Resource Inventory**
- (Passed) Submitted the **Skip the Stuff Resolution**, which was passed by Council

EC Budget

- ANJEC dues
- Courses and conferences
- Supplies for educational programs & events
- Professional fees, i.e. environmental consultant
- Outreach expense, i.e. website, FB advertising, printing, postage, signs
- Development of ERI, plans, studies or inventories
- Software or hardware needs



Homework Assignments:



- Find your EC's establishing ordinance
- Look for your Open Space Plan and/or Open Space Index
- Find your Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI/NRI)
- Find your town's stormwater management page
- Find out who your town's stormwater manager is
- Find out where on your municipal website are public notices being posted



Stay in touch!



@ANJECposts



ANJEC Views



@ANJEC.bsky.social



@ANJECpage



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