

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT
2010

JANUARY 2011

2011 Environmental Commission

Arnold S. Vernick, Chairman
Arnold W. Schmidt, Vice Chairman
John Clyde
Cecile MacIvor
Dianne Pydeski
David Triggs
Paul Walitsky
Eugene Unger
Walter Andrews

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In accordance with the provisions of Ordinance No.676 adopted in August 1974, establishing an Environmental Commission for the Township of Franklin, the Environmental Commission is pleased to submit this annual report for calendar year 2010 to the Mayor and Township Council. The organization, responsibilities, powers and activities of the Commission adhere to the provisions of the Ordinance as well as the State legislation (NJSA 40:56A) passed in 1968, governing the establishment of environmental commissions.

Powers and Responsibilities

The state statute and municipal ordinance outline a broad range of powers and responsibilities for the Environmental Commission to help preserve and protect the environmental wellbeing of the Township. Principal powers and responsibilities include:

- Promote the conservation and development of the natural resources of the Township
- Advise the Mayor and Council and other municipal officials on environmental issues effecting the Township
- Inform and advise the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment regarding the environmental impact of proposals for development
- Investigate environmental and natural resource issues for the Township and recommend solutions
- Inform residents on environmental matters and ways to help protect the environment
- Interact with neighboring Commissions and other organizations concerning regional and state environmental issues
- Develop and maintain an inventory of the environmental resources and land use constraints of the Township.

Activities and Accomplishments

The Environmental Commission held a total of 20 regular official meetings during 2010, meeting bi-monthly except for two summer months and December. An additional meeting on December 6th did not have a quorum, and therefore was unofficial. Minutes documenting the activities of each meeting were recorded and posted on the Township website. Principal activities and accomplishments for the year were as follows:

- Reviewed and commented on a total of 48 site plans for proposed residential and commercial development within the Township. A total of 42 site plans were reviewed during calendar year 2009, while 96 site plans were reviewed during 2008.
- Sponsored a Green Forum that was held in the Municipal Building on Saturday, April 17, 2010. The Forum was co-sponsored by the Environmental Commission, the Theta Psi Lambda Chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha service fraternity, PSEG and the NJ Board of Public Utilities.
- Received a total of \$1000 in awards from the New Jersey Clean Energy Council for sponsoring the Green Forum (\$200), developing a wind energy ordinance (\$500) and recognition of new home construction with Energy Star certification (\$300).
- Continued the Environmental Stewardship Awards program for an outstanding citizen and local business by presenting the two awards at the Township Council meeting on November 23, 2010. The 2010 awards were presented to Walter Andrews and the Cedar Brook Green Space Cleanup Group.
- Updated and maintained the Environmental Commission's section of the Township's website.
- Co-sponsored and participated with the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association in a cleanup of Mile Run on April 24, 2010. A total of 22 volunteers removed approximately 1,460 pounds of debris during the cleanup.
- Completed the construction of a community garden in Naaman Williams Park with 34 plots available for use by the public. The garden was used this past summer by residents for growing fruit and vegetables.
- Obtained a Community Development Block Grant of \$5000 for the establishment of a second community garden in the Township at the Pine Grove Manor School. The garden is expected to be operational by the Spring of 2011.
- Provided support to the Township's Project Team for the County's Energy Audit Grant Program, and participated in Somerset County's Renewable Energy Initiative.
- Provided input to appropriate Township officials regarding environmental issues affecting the Township.
- Participated in the Township's effort to obtain certification in the Sustainable Jersey program. Several Environmental Commission members are serving on the Township's Green Team, which is being chaired by Councilman Theodore Chase, a former member of the Commission. A total of 180 points were achieved, and the Township was awarded bronze certification at the League of Municipalities meeting in Atlantic City in November.
- Continued to represent the Township in the Sustainable Raritan River program sponsored by the Rutgers University Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy. Several members of the Environmental Commission are serving on the program's working groups.
- Updated the flyer describing the Environmental Commission's role and accomplishments.

- Initiated consideration of revising and updating the Township ordinance governing septic systems.
- Reviewed and commented on the Township's draft stormwater ordinance.
- Met with the Executive Director of the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association concerning the program to remove two dams in Franklin Township on the Millstone River. Removal of the dams would facilitate the use of the river by anadromous fish such as American shad.
- Participated in a meeting with the consultants to the New Jersey Water Supply Authority regarding the proposed dredging of the Delaware and Raritan Canal. The dredging is planned for the section of the canal between Kingston and East Millstone.

Expenditures

The Environmental Commission spent a total of \$480 in 2010. The expenditures included \$320 for annual membership in the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) and \$160 for the two Environmental Stewardship Award plaques.

Membership

Two members of the Environmental Commission ended their service in 2010, and their contribution to the community is acknowledged and appreciated. John Walker, a Regular Member, resigned from the Commission in August. His position was filled by Alternate Member Paul Walitsky, and Eugene Unger was appointed as the new Alternate Member. Lawrence Lewis' term as an Alternate Member ended on December 31, 2010, and Walter Andrews has been appointed to that position .