

**CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
23A North Main Street
Cranbury, New Jersey 08512**

James Gallagher, Chair
John Reinfelder
Anna Drago
Barbara Rogers
Susan Goetz
Dietrich Wahlers
Andrew Johnson
Haiyan Wang
Paul Mullen

TO: Cranbury Township Committee
FROM: James Gallagher, Environmental Commission Chair
DATE: January 17, 2012
SUBJECT: Environmental Commission 2011 Year-End Report

The activities of the Cranbury Township Environmental Commission in 2011 are summarized in this Year-End Report.

Membership – The EC had full membership for 2011.

Cranbury Book Preserve – The EC continued replanting native plants, continued the eradication of Bradford pear trees, multi flora rose and other invasive species, and continued the management of the grasslands.

Eagle Scout Projects - Eagle Scout Patrick Sockler completed a project in the Preserve, which consisted of eradicating the Multiflora Rose in a certain area within the Preserve, marking native trees with identifying posts and reviving existing native vegetation that has been harmed by the Multiflora Rose. Patrick also made a map for the kiosk on Main Street to identify the native trees by the markers that he installs.

NJ Invasive Species Strike Team – The Strike Team visited the Preserve in April and treated approximately thirty (30) callery pear trees. Two NJISST interns came to

Cranbury June 27, 28 and 29, to survey four township owned properties (Cranbury Brook Preserve, Hagerty Property, Unami Woods and Reinhardt Property). These sites were selected because they had never been surveyed previously for emerging invasive species and are township owned open spaces that will be managed to encourage and preserve native species. Barbara Rogers and Anna Drago accompanied the interns. The interns re-sprayed callery pears in the Cranbury Brook Preserve that had survived an April spraying.

Alfred Meiss Environmental Appreciation Award – The EC again sponsored an award for Cranbury School 8th grade students. Entrants were required to identify a natural resource in Cranbury that inspires and is important to them. They were then asked to share their favorite place in whatever way they deemed appropriate, i.e. essay, song, photo, poem, etc. EC members reviewed the submissions using a judging criteria rubric. Student Jessica Powell was chosen the winner of a \$100.00 Savings Bond, out of eleven (11) entries received. Her DVD entry was titled, “Waiting for the World to Change.” Anna Drago and Susan Goetz attended the award ceremony in June and Mrs. Drago presented the award.

Stream Clean up – The EC participated in the 5th Annual Stream Clean-up sponsored by the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed. Approximately 46 volunteers collected mostly plastic bottles and soda cans, some tennis balls and a traffic barrel. In total, 56 bags of trash and recyclables were collected, totaling 394 pounds.

Reinhardt Property – The EC continues to monitor the property, now a preserve, and work towards the installation of a parking lot. In conjunction with the Township Engineer and DPW, EC members chose a site for the lot and ensured the clean up of the property.

Riparian Zones – Township Ordinance – The EC discussed this at length and recommended to the Township Committee that the then-proposed ordinance be modified so it complies with the Township’s existing Ordinance, which states that no building or parking area shall be located within 200 feet of the center line of any stream or within a floodway. The TC passed the ordinance as recommended.

Educational Activities –

The EC continues to provide environmental public education through our Cranbury Day activities. In 2011, we educated the public on native plants and on the benefits of using rain barrels and purchased a rain barrel as a raffle prize. Leigh Isleib of Cranbury was the winner of the rain barrel. At the table, we also displayed a storm water drain model to educate the public about storm water management and run-off.

Rain barrel workshop – In April, the EC sponsored a successful, informative and fun two-hour workshop for residents to make rain barrels for their homes. Held at the

Cranbury Barn Park, there were seventeen (17) attendees. Eighteen (18) barrels were sold at \$45 each. The trainers were EC members James Gallagher, Paul Mullen, Susan Goetz and Linda Scott of the Recycling department. The DPW set up tables and chairs.

Rain barrels to Cranbury School – The EC purchased and donated three barrels to the school's art and science department. Erica Katz, art teacher, will lead her students in painting the barrels. Bridget Lundquist, science teacher, and her students will utilize them in the outdoor science courtyards.

Articles about EC activities were included in the Township's newsletters.

Environmental Initiatives

Sustainable Jersey – The EC registered for this in February and authorized the secretary to serve as the township's agent for the certification process via resolution. The EC is working towards certification by accumulating points. They are forming a "Green Team," led by Barbara Rogers.

No Net Loss Reforestation at Hagerty Property – Barbara Rogers and Dietrich Wahlers participated in a subcommittee to advise the Township Committee on the planting of over 2,400 trees as a part of the New Jersey Turnpike Mitigation Project. Mr. Wahlers was chairperson. They advised on tree placement, species choice, soil condition, water, deer protection and staking. The planting was complete by the end of the year.

Applications – Numerous applications for development were reviewed, and comments were submitted to the Planning Board and Zoning Board, as appropriate.

Development Review Committee (DRC) – EC Chairman James Gallagher serves as the EC representative to the DRC and provides input from an environmental standpoint to applicants seeking land use approvals.

Track Subcommittee – John Reinfelder participated in this subcommittee of the Recreation Commission. They are investigating the feasibility of constructing a running track for the township.