

**Borough of Eatontown
Environmental Commission**
47 Broad Street
Eatontown, NJ. 07724
<http://eatontownnj.com/environmental/>

Laura Bagwell, Chair
Jessica Buck
Steve Fratini
Ken Kretsch
Mark Regan, Jr., Council Liaison
Mark Regan Sr., Planning Board Liaison

Eatontown Environmental Commission 2021 Annual Report

Members / Meetings / Minutes

Members: Laura Bagwell, Chair; Jessica Buck; Ken Kretsch; Steve Fratini; Mark Regan, Jr., Council liaison; and Mark Regan, Sr., Planning Board liaison

Meetings were held on the 4th Tuesday of each month via Zoom. No meeting was held in July due to lack of a quorum. Minutes were taken and approved for each meeting.

Committees / Regional Collaborations

- EC members also served on the Green Team, Ft. Monmouth ESAC, Community Garden, and Complete Streets committees.
- **Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan:** A member of the EC sat on the Steering Committee. Eatontown received a grant from the NJDOT Local Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Assistance Program. The EC highlighted the difficulty of crossing Route 36 at Grant Avenue with no sidewalk, curb cuts, or signals to let crossers know when it is safe to cross.
- **Monmouth Invasive Species Strike Team (MISST):** Residents from Eatontown, Rumson and Colts Neck created this team to help mitigate invasive plant species. We hosted a training in Eatontown in May 2021, and others were held in Colts Neck and Ocean Twp. Eatontown held 3 invasive plant species work parties in the Arboretum in 2021, in partnership with Shade Tree Commission, DPW, Beautify Eatontown, and Green Team.
- **Environmental Partnership:** After a lapse of many years, this group started again in July 2021. Environmental Commissioners meet on a monthly basis to discuss regional environmental issues. Eatontown chaired the meetings in 2021.

Education and Outreach (Zoom Presentations)

1. On March 30th, we organized a Zoom presentation “Inviting Hummingbirds to your Garden”. The speaker was Rutgers Master Gardener Ann Sherwood, PhD.
2. On June 2nd, the EC participated in the Green Team’s Zoom entitled “The Dirty Truth About Recycling”, presented by Emily Watts, Eatontown’s Recycling and Clean Communities Coordinator.
3. On June 16th, the EC hosted a Zoom talk entitled “Gardening for Wildlife”, presented by Kristen Hock of NJ Audubon.

Community Initiatives

Rain Barrel Workshop

On April 17th, the EC held a “make your own” rain barrel workshop at Wolcott Park. The training was conducted by Watershed Ambassador Samantha LaRocca. Samantha obtained donated rain barrels, and Eatontown purchased the parts. This event was free for the attendees.



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Pollinator Plant Swap

On May 15th, the EC organized a free native pollinator plant swap at Wampum Park. This event was to encourage people to join the Pollinator Garden Challenge and plant native pollinators to expand their habitat, which has been drastically reduced.



Identifying and Managing Invasive Plants

On May 22nd, the EC hosted a Monmouth Invasive Strike Team training on “Identify and Manage Invasive Plants”. The 3 hour workshop was held at the F. Bliss Price Arboretum, and the was conducted by Mike Van Clef, PhD, Stewardship Director and Invasive Species Strike Team Program Director of the Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space. This event was free to attend, thanks to Eatontown Borough covering the honorarium.



Mazza Recycling Tour

In partnership with the Green Team, on October 29th, we organized a tour of the Mazza Recycling Facility in Tinton Falls. This regional event also included Green Team and EC members as well as town officials from Long Branch, Red Bank, Tinton Falls, Little Silver, and Middletown.



Energy Efficiency outreach to low-income residents

On May 25th, along with Green Team, the EC worked with the Senior Citizen outreach Council Liaison to deliver 250 LED lightbulbs to the residents of Meadowbrook Senior housing complex, courtesy of BPU's NJ Clean Energy Program.

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Invasive plant mitigation work parties

In 2021, in partnership with the Shade Tree Commission, Beautify Eatontown, Green Team, DPW and Monmouth Invasive Species Strike Team, the EC held work parties to mitigate invasive plants in the Arboretum on 9/18, 10/30, and 12/4. We plan to continue with these events to help manage the invasive plants.



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Eatontown Day

In partnership with the Green Team, on October 2nd we tabled at Eatontown Day. We distributed information on planting native plants and had an activity to make pollinator “seed balls” as an easy way to grow pollinators in blank spots in the garden.



Pollinator Garden Challenge

Eatontown residents are invited to participate in a pollinator garden challenge with either an existing garden or a new garden. The intent is to expand this challenge (in 2022) to rain gardens, wildlife habitats and pollinator gardens, and also encourage businesses to participate. A web page was created to track the habitats: <https://github.com/sfratini33/eatontown-pollinator-gardens/wiki/Eatontown-Pollinator-Gardens---Hall-of-Fame>



Before



After

Projects

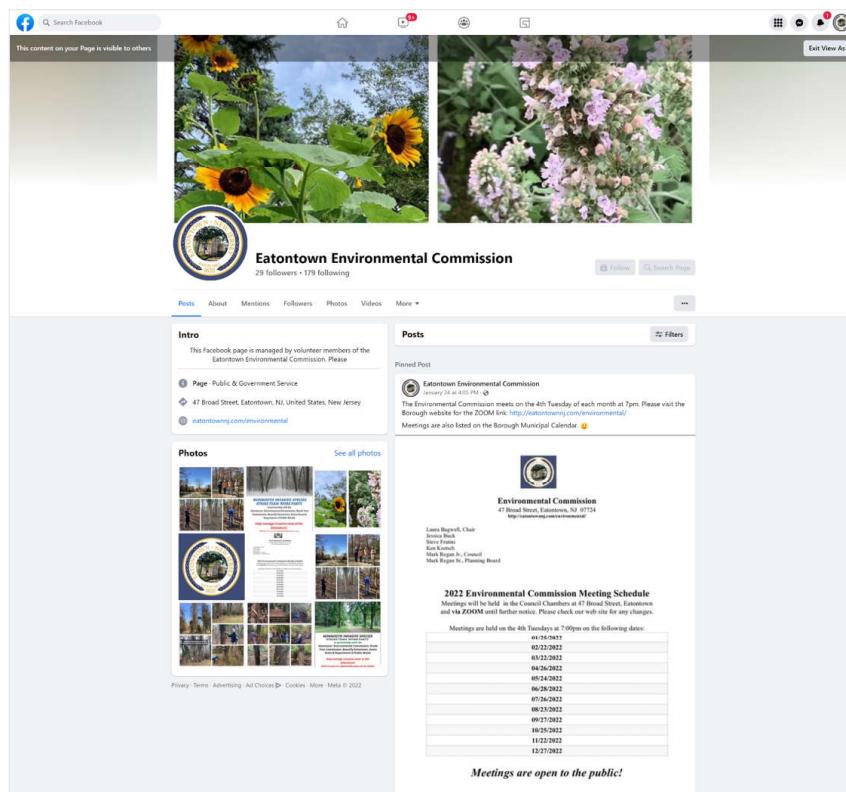
1. **Stormwater ordinance:** supported and advocated for enhancing the baseline mandatory stormwater ordinance to also reduce the size of what constituted a major development, and to include redevelopment. The ordinance was adopted included redevelopment, which was one enhancement to the original language of the standard ordinance.

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2. **Grant Avenue and Route 36 Intersection:** The EC adopted this spot given the lack of sidewalks and mowing in this NW corner of the intersection.
3. **Social Media Presence:** On June 1, 2021, the EC published a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/EatontownEEC>) for the primary purpose of publicizing monthly meetings and community initiatives. Posts published on the Page include educational information relevant to topics covered in EC meetings and community initiatives, from resources such as ANJEC, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, and The National Wildlife Federation.

Eatontown Environmental Commission Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/EatontownEEC> - Published June 1, 2021



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4. **Pollinator Garden:** August 2021 was the garden's first full year. Made up of mostly native perennial flowers, we continued to cultivate, weed and partially expand the garden. A bench was donated. We are in the works to obtain an educational sign for it. It is located in the Community Garden.

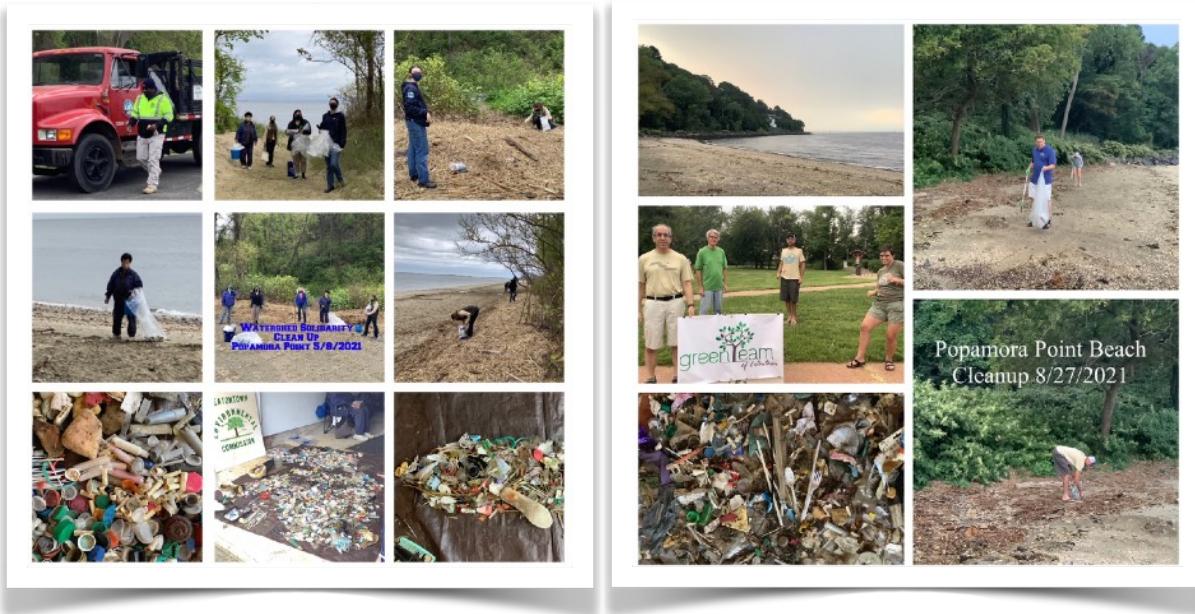
Clean ups

Earth Day: The EC organized an Earth Day clean up of Parkers Creek with the Shrewsbury Environmental Commission, 4/24/21



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Popamora Point Beach (2 clean ups): On May 8th, in partnership with the Watershed Ambassador and Monmouth County Clean Communities, the EC organized Microplastics Clean ups at Popamora Point Beach, Atlantic Highlands. On and August 27th, the EC participated in a cleanup organized by the Green Team.



Grant / Route 36 (2 clean ups): On April 18th, and October 17th, the EC participated in clean ups organized by Beautify Eatontown. Below is a before and after picture of Grant/Rte. 36.



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Industrial Way: On November 9th, the EC assisted in coordinating a clean up for employees of Bernicker, Eiger & Lang. They cleaned the eastern intersection of Industrial Way and Route 35, north of the Sheraton Hotel. DPW supplied all the clean up supplies and removed the debris collected.

Volunteer Hours:

Adding up the pollinator garden, clean ups and work parties, there was a total conservative estimate of 115 work hours performed by volunteers in 2021. This number does not count the time spent reviewing site plans, researching ordinances, writing up minutes/ reports, attending meetings/activities, tabling, and hosting trainings.

Site Plans Reviewed

1. DCH Eatontown Ford, January 2021
2. Eatontown 36 LLC (Chick-Fil-A), March 2021
3. Eat Clean Bro, April 2021
4. CVS, May 2021
5. Shaare Telfilah Ben Moshe, May 2021
6. East Coast Eaton Crest Apartments, July 2021
7. Eatontown 36 LLC (Target), July 2021
8. Garden State Veterinary Hospital, July 2021
9. DCH Kay Honda, July 2021 & September 2021 (resubmission)
10. 80 Corbett Way, October 2021
11. Eatontown Parker Road Developers LLC, October 2021
12. Industrial Way West, December 2021
13. Eatontown Wyckoff (Panda Express), December 2021

Seminars / Meetings attended

The following trainings / meetings were attended by Eatontown Environmental Commissioners:

- 1/12/21 The Good Guys: Beneficial Insects in the Landscape (Jersey Yards)
- 1/27/21 ANJEC Goals for 2021
- 1/28/21 Clean Ocean Action Rally for the Two Rivers meeting
- 2/15/21 Native Plant Society meeting
- 3/9/21 Insect Ecosystems (Jersey Yards)
- 3/16/21 ANJEC Land Use Planning: The Municipal Master Plan, Municipal Ordinances
- 3/24/21 met with Watershed Institute's Municipal Coordinator re: stormwater ordinance
- 4/6/21 Edible plants (NOFA)
- 4/12/21 ANJEC Acting Locally to Protect Open Space
- 4/13/21 The Invasive Spotted Lanternfly (Jersey Yards)

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- 4/14/21 Watershed Institute stormwater class
- 4/19/21 Rain gardens (Native Plant Society)
- 4/22/21 2021 Earth Day Celebration & Fair (attended)
- 4/26/21 PFAS (Sierra Club)
- 5/5/21 Lambertville Becoming a NWF Certified Community Wildlife Habitat
- 5/11/21 Native Plants and Pollinators (Native Plant Society)
- 6/21/21 Today's Pollinators: Why we Care
- 6/24/21 NJ's Food Waste Recycling Mandate for Businesses (NJLCV)
- 6/25/21 Pollinator Science and Bee Identification 101
- 8/26/21 Rising Tides (University of Delaware)
- 10/19/21 ANJEC congress (some classes)
- 10/19/21 We Are The Ark: Acts of Restorative Kindness (Native Plant Society)
- 10/2021 Complete Streets (League of Municipalities training)
- 11/4/21 How Can My Town Fund Green Infrastructure Projects (Watershed Institute)
- 12/7/21 Managing Troublesome vines (EPA)

Goals for 2022

1. Create and pass a Green Development Check List for Planning & Zoning applications.
2. Continue work to pass a native plant ordinance and research new potential ordinances such as a solar ordinance, and update our lighting ordinance.
3. Follow up on open space plan to work with the Council in adding 20 acres to the ROSI list and provide input on how to use the Borough's open space funding.
4. Hold an educational event about the benefits of wetlands.
5. Work with the Complete Streets team to hold events that highlight Grant Avenue and Route 36 intersection improvements.
6. Continue organizing and participating in clean ups.
7. Work to expand Eatontown's public Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure.
8. Expand Monmouth Invasive Species Strike Team (MISST) invasive plant mitigation efforts to include other parks.
9. Expand the Pollinator Garden challenge to Eatontown becoming a Certified community wildlife habitat.

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10. Hold a workshop on Monitoring Water Quality through Biological Assessments.
11. Continue to collaborate with the Environmental Partnership to take a regional approach to environmental issues. Goal is to host a Roundtable about Stormwater / Flooding issues and practical solutions.
12. Support and work with the Green Team on actions in order to achieve Sustainable Jersey recertification for May 2022.