

**MEETING NOTES
SUSTAINABLE JERSEY GREEN TEAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SJ GTAC)
OCTOBER 3, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m.

Members Present: Frank Altamuro (Public Works); Vicky Binetti (Environmental Commission); Brooke Evanko (Public); Karen Garrison (Board of Education); Sean Longfellow (Council President); Maureen Pasternak (Chamber of Commerce); and Mayor Barbara Wallace.
Members Absent: John Boyer (Planning Board); and Matt Mallon (MUA). Additionally, Leon Lakritz (Environmental Commission and Open Space Advisory Committee) was in attendance.

Members reviewed meeting notes from the September 12, 2016 meeting and the proposed agenda for the current meeting.

Updates:

Vicky Binetti reported that the GTAC's Report to Council (responding to Resolution 55-2016) on our progress and recommendations for the Township's 2017 Sustainable Jersey certification submission was completed and delivered on September 30. Vicky thanked members for their quick turnaround on the draft report.

Leon Lakritz briefed members on the training he attended (9/28/16) on the NJDOT Transportation Alternatives Grant Program. There are substantial resources in the program, with a recommended minimum grant request of \$150,000. The program is very competitive, and the scope of proposals must be thoroughly detailed and receive support of any relevant transportation agencies. The consensus of members was that there would not be adequate time to develop a competitive proposal and vet it through the County before the November 10 deadline. Rather, the Township should begin to prepare a sound project proposal early next year for the 2017 funding cycle, informed by progress at that time in the *Bicycle or Pedestrian Audit* action.

Sean Longfellow reported that, at a recent meeting, Township officials and School District administration reached agreement that assistance could be requested from high school faculty and students in crafting video messaging for Sustainable Township issues. The next step would be to identify several issues/messages for a pilot effort.

Karen Garrison reported that the school district is investigating potential funding for the Sustainable Schools effort from the Gardinier Environmental Small Grants Program and the NJEA Small Grants Program for Schools.

Members briefly reviewed the updated Action Inventory. The 18 actions selected for completion total 175 points. Vicky suggested that the following members/organizations serve as leads for developing and monitoring the respective actions, to assure progress continues:

Community Gardens – Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC)
Smoke-Free/Tobacco-Free Public Places – Frank Altamuro/Public Works
Drinking Water Protection – Environmental Commission (EC) & WTMUA
Buy Local – Maureen Pasternak/Chamber of Commerce
Natural Resources Inventory - Vicky/EC & OSAC
Open Space Plans – Vicky/OSAC & EC
Water Conservation Education – WTMUA & EC
Adopt Behavioral Policies – Frank/Public Works
Recycled Paper – Brooke Evanko
Improve Public Engagement in Municipal Government – Sean/Council
Grass – Cut It and Leave It – Brooke

Discussion Items:

Adopt Behavioral Policies – Brooke shared language that had been developed to describe energy- and resource-saving actions that could be regularly employed by municipal employees. These “green” work practices are expected to be incorporated into the update of the Township’s Policies and Procedures Manual, which will be submitted to Council for approval later this calendar year. Suggestion edits offered to the presented language will make it clear that the practices are expected to be implemented whenever feasible.

Buy Local Campaign – The Wine and Food Tasting event sponsored by the Greater Washington Township Chamber of Commerce is scheduled for Sunday, October 23rd; the tasting will feature wine distributors organized by Salina Liquors and hors d’oeuvres from local restaurants. The Township will list the event on the Township website and Facebook page. Competition from an afternoon Eagles game on the same day may impact participation.

The Chamber has also begun looking into coordinating a Small Business Saturday event on November 25th. Several GTAC members offered assistance in promoting and coordinating activities and information sharing. The “Dine Around the Township” initiative, to encourage patronage of local restaurants, has been postponed.

Natural Resources Inventory (aka Environmental Resources Inventory, or ERI)– The Environmental Commission has been receiving responses to a request for Quotes for the project, and anticipates expediting its review, in order to get the project underway very soon.

Open Space Plans – A process similar to that followed for the ERI (Request for Quotes, expedited proposal review) will be undertaken to secure assistance in the update of the Township’s Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Vicky led a brief discussion described several possible future actions that could get underway within the next year, as other actions are implemented or completed. However, while we want to continue to grow our portfolio of Sustainable Township actions, we need to be strategic in where and when we deploy our resources and energy.

- *Community Forestry Plan and Tree Cover Goal* – A meeting with a NJ Department of Environmental Protection/State Forest Service representative is scheduled for October 11th, to learn more about requirements and benefits of the program. Township attendees will include the Mayor, Business Administrator, Director and staff of the Public Works Department and members of the Open Space Advisory Committee.
- *Buy Fresh* – This action would encourage residents to improve nutrition and save energy by eating locally grown foods. In addition to information on local opportunities for fresh/local foods and dining, the initiative could use materials available through the Jersey Fresh program (including Jersey Seafood and Jersey Wines). This could be combined with the *Buy Local* action, or be developed as a separate effort.
- *Municipal Communications Strategy* – This action would promote the availability and use of new communication opportunities with the Township’s website, and further exploit its existing capabilities. Additionally, use of social media to supplement traditional tools could be investigated for communication with and engagement of the community in civic life.

Upcoming Presentation to Township Council

Members reviewed a draft outline prepared by Vicky for a PowerPoint presentation on the GTAC’s October 1st Report to Township Council. The presentation will cover background on Sustainable Jersey; activities of the GTAC; and recommendations for our “Sustainable Township” submission for bronze certification in June 2017.

All members are asked to be present at October 12th Council meeting, to indicate support for the effort.

Communications

Members discussed the potential content of our Sustainable Township web page. There was a brief discussion of relative merits of the GTAC hosting an independent Sustainable Township website, as opposed to maintaining a page on the Township’s website. At least for the time being, it seems prudent to remain part of the Township’s website.

Members agreed that it would be desirable to use the occasion of our presentation to Township Council to obtain some press coverage of our Sustainable Township efforts. Vicky will prepare a press release.

The next GTAC meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 7, at 6:00 pm.

Some upcoming events/deadlines to note:

- GTAC Presentation (10/1/16 Report) to Washington Township Council at Council Meeting – 10/12/16
- Wine and Food Tasting (Greater Washington Township Chamber of Commerce); Washington Banquet Center – 10/23/16, 2:00-6:00 pm

- Application deadline: Gardinier Environmental Fund Small Grants Program (school districts & municipalities)—10/28/16; energy projects: http://www.sustainablejersey.com/fileadmin/media/2016_Gardinier_Small_Grants_Cycle_Information_Package_Final.pdf
- Application Deadline: NJEA Small Grants Program for Schools – 10/28/16; projects and capacity building: <http://www.sustainablejerseyschools.com/grants-resources/sustainable-jerseysmall-grants-program/njea-cycle/>
- Sustainable Jersey Annual Luncheon & Networking Session– 11/15/16 (Sheraton Convention Center, Atlantic City), \$35/person for municipal employees/Green Team members. Event occurs during NJ League of Municipalities Meeting; additional workshops on sustainability subjects scheduled throughout conference agenda (separate registration for conference). <http://www.sustainablejersey.com/events-trainings/annual-luncheon/>

The meeting concluded at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicky Binetti