

MEETING NOTES
SUSTAINABLE JERSEY GREEN TEAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SJ GTAC)
MARCH 6, 2017

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

Members Present: Frank Altamuro (Public Works); Vicky Binetti (Environmental Commission); Karen Garrison (Board of Education); Mayor Joann Gattinelli; Maureen Pasternak (Chamber of Commerce). Members Absent: John Boyer (Planning Board); Brooke Evanko (Public); Sean Longfellow (Council); Matt Mallon (WTMUA) and Bonnie Vance (Public). Also present was Leon Lakritz (Environmental Commission and Open Space Advisory Committee).

Members reviewed meeting notes from the February 6, 2017 meeting and the proposed agenda for the current meeting.

Updates:

Vicky Binetti provided several updates on activities since the February meeting. The Township Council approved Resolution 86-2017 on February 22, 2017, supporting our applications to the Sustainable Jersey Small Grants Program. (see Grant Application discussion below.) Vicky and Leon Lakritz participated in the SJ webinar “Making a Game Plan for Getting Certified” on February 22. The Environmental Resources Inventory update is in progress, and we have received a first set of 10 maps for review. Proposals were received from two organizations to update our Open Space and Recreation Plan, and are under review.

Vicky met with our new Police Chief Patrick Gurcsik on March 2 to inform him of our continued interest in including the Police Department’s drug drop-off box in our Sustainable Jersey application, and to share ideas for enhancing awareness of the facility, including targeted outreach and production of a video. Chief Gurcsik is very supportive of the effort.

We have received a hard copy and electronic copy of a list of registered businesses from the Clerk’s Office; an initiative has been undertaken under the leadership of the Mayor’s Office and Council Member Dana Pasqualone to organize the local business listing so that information could be accessible by residents and searchable by category (e.g., restaurants, computer repair, hair salon, etc.). Members (Vicky and Bonnie Vance) will attend the March 8 meeting of the Advisory Board of Economic Development (ABED). (Maureen Pasternak, as a member of ABED, will be attending as well.)

Karen Garrison announced that Bells and Bunker Hill Elementary Schools are seeking certification under the Sustainable Schools Program, in addition to the school district-wide certification effort.

Action Inventory and Updates

Members present reviewed a revised Action Inventory dated 3/6/17. In general, changes reflected whether actions would be completed in time to support certification in 2017 (i.e., substantially complete not later than early fall), and the addition of several actions that could be added to our agenda for initiation this year. A summary follows:

- Combine *Buy Local Campaign* with *Buy Fresh/Buy Local*
- Consider *Buy Local Campaign/Buy Fresh/Buy Local* as “maybe” for this year, rather than “yes”
- Consider *Open Space Plan* as “maybe” rather than “yes” (late to start on update)
- Add *Community Education and Outreach* as “maybe” for this year
- Add *Green Business Recognition Program* as “maybe” for this year
- Add *On Line Municipal Public Services* as “maybe” for this year
- Add *Digitizing Public Information* as “maybe” for this year

Buy Local Campaign & Buy Fresh/Buy Local

Discussion regarding the potential to merge the *Buy Local Campaign* and *Buy Fresh/Buy Local* actions included the following points:

- Perhaps organize “Taste of Washington Township” tying in local restaurants and locally produced foods.
- Potential locations—the Washington Banquet Hall, Senior Center, high school
- Host cooking demonstrations featuring locally produced foods. Chefs/restaurants may donate time/space if participation fees support local cause (e.g., scholarships, Mothers Matter, etc.).
- Plan for Monday/Tuesday, slower restaurant nights.
- Plan Township Restaurant Week.
- Start effort in May, if not sooner.

Community Garden

Planning is well underway, we have begun advertising and have early sign-ups. We have also received some press coverage (Washington Sun). The “opening” of 2017 season is scheduled for April 1st; Mayor Gattinelli will be participating. Bob Timmons offered to circulate information about the Community Garden and a Gardening Basics Lecture (March 20) among realtors.

Sustainable Jersey Small Grants Program for Municipalities

Vicky Binetti reported that two grant applications were prepared and submitted to the Sustainable Jersey Small Grants Program on February 28th. In accord with previous GTAC discussions, one application for a \$2,000 capacity-building grant requested support for outreach equipment/supplies (banner, display board, table cover), promotional items, and printing expenses for the revised Water Conservation Guide being prepared by the WTMUA. A second application requested \$10,000 for an innovative waste reduction project, installation of five water bottle fillers for public drinking water fountains (Municipal Building, Public Works

Building, Police Department Building, Hurffville Fire Station/District Headquarters, Margaret E. Heggan Public Library). A portion of this grant request was also allocated for printing the revised Water Conservation Guide. The grant program officials expect an announcement of funding decisions by April 11th.

Members were reminded that a revised draft of our *Water Conservation Education* action and a new draft for the prospective *Waste Reduction* (Water Bottle Filler) action have been prepared.

Communications

The videography students at Washington Township High School are engaged in several projects but should be available to start work on a video(s) for our sustainability efforts after the first week of April. Current thoughts for first projects are the Police Department's Drug Drop-Off Box, the Community Garden, Water Conservation, and *Grass-Cut It and Leave It*.

The Environmental Commission and Open Space Advisory Committee are planning a full schedule of events as part of the annual Earth Day – Arbor Day Celebration. Members are encouraged to support those activities, where possible.

Vicky raised the possibility of asking the Washington Township High School graphic arts program for assistance in designing a logo for Sustainable Washington Township. Members concurred.

The Washington Township Sun published an extensive article on the Community Garden, and quoted Sean Longfellow as to how that effort fits with our Sustainable Washington Township program. The local editor is interested in continuing to follow and report on our progress.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Some upcoming events/deadlines to note:

- Redevelopment Forum 2017, sponsored by New Jersey Future – March 10, 9 am – 5 pm, Hyatt Regency, New Brunswick; \$110 members, \$150 non-members
<http://forum.njfuture.org/>
- Earth Day/Arbor Day Celebration – March 20 – April 30
- Community Garden opening – April 1
- ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grants; applications due April 7
<http://www.anjec.org/EnvCommissionGrantPrograms.htm>
- Shred Day Event - Municipal Building – April 8, 9 am - Noon
- National Drug Take-Back Day (DEA) – April 29

Respectfully submitted,
Vicky Binetti