

BORDENTOWN CITY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

www.bcec.us

2007 ANNUAL REPORT



Volunteers created a trail along Thorntown Creek in November

I - Administrative

- 2007 BCEC Regular membership of eight members plus two associate members.
- Continued BCEC membership in the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC).
- Conducted eleven regular monthly meetings at Carlslake Community Center (August canceled).

II - Outreach & Education

- Received input from, and addressed concerns of, Bordentown City residents at regular monthly meetings.
- Communicated with residents via regular monthly BCEC meetings; email inquiries to BCEC; email alerts

to BCEC resident database; and articles and letters to the editor in the Register-News regarding pertinent local issues and public meetings. (*see Appendix*)

- Published 4 editions of BCEC newsletter, containing articles and information designed to inform and educate City and area residents about local environmental issues. Distributed newsletters at annual Street Fair and Cranberry Festival, posted on City Hall bulletin board, and distributed to local businesses. Newsletters were also distributed via e-mail to BCEC mailing list. (*See Appendix*)

- Staffed exhibit table at the Bordentown Street Fair & Cranberry Festival. Distributed environmental education material. Created and presented educational exhibit regarding

local environmental issues, including the Land Use Zoning Ordinances, Conservation Element of the Master Plan, Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan, Open Space Plan, and other local issues. Gathered names/addresses for database of volunteers. Conducted free raffle of two compost bins and distributed composting information at both events.

- Maintained BCEC website. Increased the content on Local Info and Maps sections. The web site contains BCEC newsletters, links to local organizations, and photos of BCEC events and topics of local interest. Visitor traffic includes over 5000 hits in 3 years, and approximately 125 hits per month. Website helps inform residents and reduce printing and mailing costs.

- Participated in ongoing Crosswicks Creek/Doctor's Creek Greenway regional study. This project includes five municipalities in our region, including Hamilton, Allentown, North Hanover, Plumsted and Chesterfield. Provided information and evidence as to importance of inclusion of Bordentown City in this process.

- Completed a "visioning process", which produced a long-range plan for BCEC projects and activities. Top, Medium and Low tier priorities were identified, and subcommittees were created for high priority issues, including Outreach, Parks/Trails and Recycling.

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- Responded to residents' inquiries regarding various issues and concerns.
- Distributed 10 BCEC "Top Ten Ways to Keep Bordentown City Green" T-shirts.
- Distributed 25 copies of "Special Places of Bordentown City" brochure.
- Distributed 25 dog waste bag leash dispensers
- Attended ongoing Burlington County Route 206 Corridor Study meetings.
- Participated in ongoing State Plan Cross-Acceptance process via Burlington County oversight.
- Maintained 6 pet waste bag dispensers at various locations throughout the City.
- Consulted with representatives from Fieldsboro regarding creation of an Environmental Commission.



Dr. Mary Leck, Friends for the Marsh trustee, gave a talk in October about the Hamilton-Trenton-Bordentown Marsh

Public Events and Programs

The Environmental Commission organized, promoted and/or conducted the following programs in 2007:

- **Public Meeting, Conservation Element of the Bordentown City Master Plan (January):** BCEC encouraged city residents through email, web and newspaper publicity to share comments, questions or an interest in environmental and conservation issues and to attend the public meeting and provide input to this process.
- **APA Bike/Ped Mobile Workshop (April):** Hosted American Planning Association workshop, drawing more than 30 planners from across the United States. Highlighted the City's Bicycle & Pedestrian plan during a walking tour.

- **Earth Day Cleanup (April)** of the Bordentown Beach area and the RiverLINE station. Over 30 volunteers collected dozens of bags of garbage and over 1000 pounds of miscellaneous refuse, which was removed by the City Public Works Department. Volunteers from The College of New Jersey also helped clean up Park Street roadsides near Rt. 206.
- **Third Annual Open Space Ramble (October)**, highlighting several recent and proposed open space acquisitions, including Lime Kiln Alley/PSEG property, Railroad Avenue Promenade, and proposed Thorntown Creek Greenway. Distributed *Fall 2007 Open Space and Trails Update* brochure/map to over 25 attendees.
- **Thorntown Creek Trailbuilding Day (November)** : 25 volunteers cleared an 1/8 mile trail that will become the first nature trail in the City. Signage, benches, bike racks and a foot-bridge will be installed in 2008.
- Co-sponsored with Friends of the Marsh an historic/nature tour of Point Breeze property (*December*).
- Sponsored 7 *Earth Talks*, held the fourth Tuesday of the month, with over 300 people attending. 2007 *Earth Talks* featured films and guest speakers on topics including:
 - Organic Gardening in the City (February)
 - Recycling: Trash or Treasure? (April)
 - "An Inconvenient Truth" (March)
 - Threatened & Endangered Species of NJ (May)
 - The New Jersey Pine Barrens (June)
 - "Turning the Tide": The Hamilton-Trenton-Bordentown Marsh (October)
 - "The End of Suburbia?" (November)

Initiatives

- Recommended the signature of Bordentown City to the US Mayors Climate Protections Agreement, which was adopted in April.
- Launched NJ Clean Power Choice and Change A Bulb Campaigns in Bordentown City. Goals are to have 2% of Bordentown City households (35) choose clean energy, and have 200 residents switch 5 incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).
- Created interim trail at Lime Kiln Park, including trail alignment and vegetation removal, installation of temporary signage and literature holder, and creation of access point through chain link fence.
- Facilitated removal of chain link fence at entrance to PSE&G property off Lime Kiln Alley.
- Liaised with Bordentown Library to ensure use of energy-saving "sleep mode" for computers when not in use.

- Participated in Bordentown City 325th Anniversary Parade in September.
- Organized a litter cleanup of neighborhood parking areas between Second Street and Farnsworth Avenue.
- Organized a recycling presentation at Bordentown High School. Liaised with teachers regarding effort to increase school recycling rates across the district.
- Installed bicycle parking rack at corner of Walnut Street and Farnsworth Avenue.
- Installed 30 additional storm drain markers around the City, covering approximately 80% of existing inlets.
- Conducted stream monitoring of local waterways, including Blacks Creek, Thorntown Creek, Mile Hollow Run and Love Bridge Run. Testing included pH, electrical conductance, dissolved oxygen, phosphates, and nitrates/nitrites. Part of an ongoing monitoring effort, with results shared with regional environmental agencies. (*see Appendix*)
- Liaised with the following local and regional organizations on behalf of issues relating to Bordentown City: Bordentown Historical Society, Bordentown City Shade Tree Committee, Downtown Bordentown Association, Bordentown City Cats, Bordentown City Gardens, Bordentown Township Environmental Commission, Bordentown Library, Burlington County Rt. 206 Corridor Study, Burlington County Office of Land Use Planning, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Delaware & Raritan Greenway, NJDEP, NJDOT, Burlington County Soil Conservation District, and the Divine Word Missionaries.



Open Space Ramblers along Thorntown Creek in October



Volunteers cleaned up Bordentown Beach and the RiverLINE parking lot on Earth Day

III - Site Plan Review

- Reviewed numerous development proposals and offered comments to Planning Board at regular meetings.
- Requested review of Storage Depot's soil erosion control measures and retention basin construction by Burlington County Soil Conservation District and Remington & Vernick.

IV - Land Use Planning

- Participated in ongoing Bordentown City Master Plan review process. Offered input regarding environmental issues. Researched environmental zoning ordinances.
- Provided extensive and detailed input into the creation of the Conservation Element. Conducted residents survey and organized public information session for residents.
- Provided extensive and detailed input into the Zoning Ordinance review process. Created a new "Visual Design Code" for the City, comprised of over 100 images of Bordentown City residential and business district streetscapes that will serve as templates for future development.
- Assisted Delaware & Raritan Greenway with open space acquisitions on Lime Kiln Alley.
- Convened several open space planning meetings with representatives from D&R Greenway, Burlington County and other regional organizations
- Initiated a traffic calming proposal for two speed tables on West Burlington Street.
- Initiated a proposal for traffic calming treatments on Crosswicks Street by Carslake Community Center as part of the Commerce Bank development proposal.

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V - Infrastructure

Infrastructure purchases included:

- 1 DogiBag station (Bordentown Library)
- 2 hoop-style bicycle parking racks
- 1 Outdoor Explorers Kit for Bordentown Library
- 40 storm drain markers



New bicycle parking rack at corner of Walnut and Farnsworth

VI - Grants/Funding

- Received \$9,270 NJDEP Recreational Trails grant for trail development along Thorntown Creek between Gilder Field and Elizabeth Street. Grant will fund trail building, interpretive signage, benches, and security fencing. City match is in-kind services. Grant work is to be completed by 2009.
- Received a \$5,000 unrestricted bequest from Anonymous (Henry Tutek, Esq. Donor Advisor) for local environmental projects.
- Initiated application for annual "NJ Green Town" award by NJ Environmental Lobby. Bordentown City will receive the award in early 2008.
- Provided input to NJDOT Safe Routes to Transit grant that was received for funding of the Railroad Avenue Promenade. Also provided input on Promenade design.
- Applied for 2008 NJDEP Recreational Trails Program grant program, for \$14,440 in improvements to Blacks Creek Greenway Corridor, including Bordentown Beach, Lime Kiln Alley and Oliver Street Park project areas.
- Applied for 2008 NJ DEP/Rutgers Water Conservation Project, which would provide free evaluation of water use issues and create a water conservation program for town, schools and residents.

VII-Proposed 2008 Projects

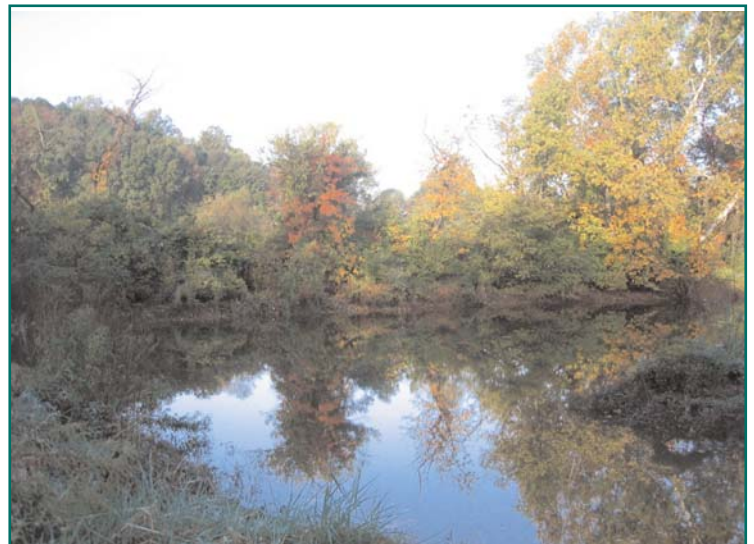
- 1- *Earth Talk* Speakers Series (8 programs)
- 2- Tables at Street Fair and Cranberry Festival
- 3- Eco-Tours of proposed open space and trails (Blacks Creek, Thorntown Creek, D&R Canal Towpath)
- 4- Installation of storm drain markers and bicycle racks
- 5- Thorntown Greenway/Lime Kiln Alley trails development
- 6- Earth Day Cleanup
- 7- Native Plant Garden at Bordentown Library
- 8- Purchase of recycling containers for business district
- 9- Community Wildlife Habitat education/development project

Appendices

- 1- Press clippings
- 2- 2007 BCEC quarterly newsletters
- 3- Photo gallery
- 4- Stream monitoring report

Many thanks to Mayor Collom, Commissioner Wehrman, Commissioner Lynch, Sam Surtees, Bob Erickson and the Public Works Department, Pat McGowan, Leslie Nealon and Jennifer Ficarrotta for their support and assistance. Thanks also to the hundreds of residents and visitors who came out and visited our exhibits, attended our *Earth Talks*, hiked around town on our rambles, cleaned up Bordentown Beach on Earth Day, and helped clear the first section of trail along Thorntown Creek Greenway!

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Fall foliage on Blacks Creek at Lime Kiln Alley