

# BORDENTOWN CITY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION



## 2021 Annual Report (A Covid Year)

### I. INTRODUCTION

The year (2021) and the year prior (2020) were unprecedented for reasons of which we are all aware. The pandemic and ensuing mandates and guidelines prevented many BCEC activities that usually constitute a substantial part of the BCEC actions and initiatives.

The following provides an entrée to the BCEC and the City's efforts to inform, educate and seek community participation in the "greening and sustainability" of the City during these difficult times.

### II. ADMINISTRATIVE

In 2021, the BCEC consisted of 9 permanent members and 2 alternates, a total of 11 City residents appointed by the mayor. The members are:

- Sruti Desai; Joel Dowshen, Vice Chairman; Lauren Drumm; Michael MacEwan; Dan Preston; B. Lynn Robinson, Planning Board Rep; Katherine Sereduk; Cathy Elliot-Shaw; Ralph Simon; Ralph Tolomeo, Chairman (there is one vacancy on the commission)
- We continued our membership in the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC).
- We conducted 12 regular commission meetings on the second Wednesday of each month via Zoom from January to October. November and December meetings were in person at Carslake Community Center and available on Zoom.

### II. OUTREACH & EDUCATION

- We received input from, and addressed concerns of, Bordentown City residents during our regular monthly meetings.
- We communicated with residents via regular monthly BCEC meetings; email to over 700 subscribers; mail alerts to BCEC resident data base; articles and notices of events to the editor of local media regarding pertinent local issues and public meetings.
- We published an edition of the BCEC newsletter containing articles and information designed to inform and educate City and area residents about local environmental issues. The newsletter was distributed to local businesses and via email to residents and (over 700) subscribers to the BCEC email list.
- We staffed exhibit tables at the Green Fair and Cranberry Festival where we distributed environmental education materials and created and presented educational exhibits regarding local environmental issues; gathered names/email addresses for a data base of volunteers; conducted free raffle of eco-friendly rain barrel and composter; also distributed information about rain barrel workshops and a lecture on composting.
- We maintained and continuously updated content and photos on the BCEC website ([bcec.cityofbordentown.com](http://bcec.cityofbordentown.com)). The website contains BCEC newsletters, links to environmentally oriented organizations, calendar and events pages, a community asset map, pages for the

Green Team and Green Fair, photos and videos, and the City's social media Policy. The website helps keep City residents informed and reduces printing and mailing costs. Residents can register for the BCEC mail list on the website to receive notices of new information and upcoming events. The website had over 23,000 visitors during the year.

- We distributed "Top 10 Ways to Keep Bordentown City Green" T-shirts and brochures of interest throughout the City.
- We maintained 10 pet waste bag dispensers at various locations throughout the City.
- We continued to promote the drug drop-off site at the City Police Station.

### III. PUBLIC EVENTS & PROGRAMS

The BCEC organized, promoted, facilitated and/or conducted the following events in 2021:

- Arbor Day Tree Planting: Assisted the Shade Tree Commission and Public Works with the promotion of event and recruitment of volunteers.
- Lime Kiln Alley Butterfly Garden and area maintenance/cleanup was organized. Volunteers were recruited to cut back and thin the garden area with assistance of the City's Department of Public Works.



- The City also worked with Public Works in building and placing a puncheon

(boardwalk) through the wet area on the Lime Kiln Alley trail to allow all weather access.



- Worked with City Commissioners to organize and publicize the Bordentown City Farm Market.
- Continued to improve and promote the City's Community Garden. Over 30 residents have garden plots.



- Co-hosted two Paper Shredding Events for local residents with Bordentown Township.
- Continued promoting awareness of "Single Stream Recycling" to City residents.
- Ongoing maintenance and care of the Native Plant Garden on the grounds of the Bordentown City library.



- Coordinated with the Green Team and City on the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Green Fair in June.
- Continued relationships with local and regional organizations regarding issues relating to Bordentown City. These organizations are Bordentown City Historical Society, Bordentown City Shade Tree Committee, Bordentown City Economic Development Advisory Committee, Downtown Bordentown Association, Bordentown City Cats, Bordentown Township Environmental Commission, Bordentown Public Library, Friends of the Abbott Marshlands, D & R Greenway Land Trust, NJDEP and NJDOT.
- The BCEC and the Bordentown Township Environmental Commission (BTEC) co-hosted two paper shredder events in May and October. Over 5,000 pounds of paper were shredded.
- The BCEC hosted a city “Public Works Pizza Party” in May to recognize the valuable services the City’s Public Works Department provides.
- The BCEC and BTEC co-hosted and promoted the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Green Fair in June. 46 vendors participated. Food, music and entertainment were also provided. Over 700 area residents attended.
- The BCEC sponsored and promoted the annual City wide yard sale.



- The BCEC and the City co-hosted an Earth Talk in July via Zoom and in person. The topic: Spotted Lantern Fly - How to Identify and Destroy. Over 50 residents attended.
- The BCEC and the City sponsored and promoted two “Table to Farm” events:
  - Provided a drop off receptacle for empty pizza boxes that were then delivered to local farms to be used to combat weeds and ultimately turned into mulch. Over 7,000 pizza boxes did not go into the landfill!
  - Collected used Halloween pumpkins and delivered them to local farms to be used for compost. Over 8,000 pounds of pumpkins did not go into a landfill!
- Hilltop Park area planting improvement with the help of nearby residents and other volunteers. Invasive species plants were removed and replaced with native plantings. Over 20 volunteers participated.





#### IV. SITE PLAN REVIEW

- Reviewed development proposals and offered comments to Planning Board through our BCEC representative at regular Planning Board Meetings.

#### V. LAND USE PLANNING

- Participated in ongoing Bordentown City Master Plan Review Process. Provided input regarding environmental issues and researched environmental zoning ordinances.

#### VI. PROPOSED 2022 PROJECTS

- Green Team's continued facilitation of the City's Sustainable NJ application/submission
- Continuation of Hilltop Park planting improvement project.
- Community Garden spring opening
- Earth Talk Speaker Series
- Tables at Street Fair (May), Green Fair (June) and Cranberry Festival (October).
- Eco-Walks and Rambles of open space and trails
- Lime Kiln Alley Preserve/Oliver Street Trail and area development and maintenance
- Earth Day project—Rain Barrel Workshop
- Additional Plantings at native plant garden at rear of Bordentown Library.

- Coordination of ongoing initiatives with the City, to include recycling, dog waste bags, electronic equipment, tree planting, drug disposal, reusable shopping bags and food containers in lieu of paper and plastic, sustainable energy uses (EV charging station), and native plant species benefits.



- Collaborate with the Green Team and City on the 13th Annual Green Fair (June).
- Collaborate with City officials, City Planning Board and City residents in review and revision of the City Master Plan including completion of the Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI).

#### THANK YOU!

2022 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the Bordentown City Environmental Commission. Thanks go to all who have gone before from the City Commissioners past and present, City Hall's administrative staff, and the cooperation of the City's Public Works & Public Safety Departments. None of this would have been possible without a dedicated group of City residents who have and continue to volunteer their time, energy, and expertise to improve the quality of life and the City's historic and beautiful environment. Thank you all!

