

BORDENTOWN CITY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION



2024 Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The Bordentown City Environmental Commission (BCEC) had a very productive year in 2024. The following provides an overview of the BCEC's and Green Team's efforts to inform, educate and seek community participation in the "greening and sustainability" of the City.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE

In 2024, the BCEC consisted of 9 permanent members appointed by the mayor. Two alternate positions remain vacant. The members are:

- Joel Dowshen; Lauren Drumm; Michael MacEwan; Brooke McMinn; Dan Preston; B. Lynn Robinson, Planning Board Rep; Cathy Elliott-Shaw, Chair; Ralph Simon, Vice Chair; Ralph Tolomeo.
- In September 2023, longtime Chairperson Ralph Tolomeo stepped down and recommended the appointment of Cathy Elliott-Shaw to serve in his place. The BCEC is grateful for Ralph's many years of service, guidance, and friendship.
- We continued our membership in the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC).
- We conducted 10 regular commission meetings on the second Wednesday of each month via Zoom, and one meeting in person. The August meeting was canceled.
- We maintained and continuously updated content and photos on the BCEC website (bcec.cityofbordentown.com). The website contains BCEC newsletters, a link to the city's Environmental Resource Inventory and 2021 Invasive Species Survey, 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 (~800 members) on the website to receive notices of new information and upcoming events. The website had over 23,000 visitors during the year.

II. OUTREACH & EDUCATION

- We hosted three Earth Talks: "Native Plants Make Great Neighbors" by Brooke McMinn; "Backyard Beekeeping" by Yasmin Qazilbash; and "The Rising Cost of Noise Pollution" by Dan Aubrey.
- We hosted a garden workday for special needs students from Bordentown Regional High School.
- Brooke McMinn attended a conference hosted by the Native Plant Society of NJ
- The BCEC was instrumental in the formation of a new Trails Committee for the City.
- 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; and conducted free raffle.
- We communicated with residents via regular monthly BCEC meetings; email to over 800 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

III. PUBLIC EVENTS & PROGRAMS

The BCEC organized, promoted, facilitated and/or conducted the following events in 2024:

- A Water Quality Education Campaign.
 - We partnered with the Watershed Ambassadors Carly DiGloma and Jessie Listanti on August 4th and October 13th to present “Wonders of Watersheds”, and on November 24th “Creepy Crawlies of the Watershed”.
 - November 9th Watershed Wonders Nature Walk at Bordentown Bluffs.
 - Staffed a table at the Cranberry Festival October 5 and 6 with a focus on water quality education.
- Initiated an Invasive Species Task Force (Brooke McMinn, Dan Preston, Ralph Simon and Cathy Elliott-Shaw) to implement the recommendations made in the 2021 Invasive Species Report completed by Michael Van Clef, Program Director of the New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team. Monthly workdays, mostly held at Lime Kiln Alley Park, focused on English ivy, wisteria, multiflora rose, Japanese honeysuckle, autumn clematis, and mugwort. Volunteers also worked on knotweed at Ann Street and Oliver Street Parks.
- Continued to maintain the pollinator gardens by the BCEC in Lime Kiln Alley, Oliver Street, and Hilltop Parks with assistance of the City’s Department of Public Works.
- Conducted a rain barrel workshop in July with the assistance of Watershed Ambassador Carly DiGloma.
- We supported the Green Teams new, non-mandated recycling efforts:
 - Partnership with NexTrex for plastic bag recycling
 - Partnership with TerraCycle for cigarette waste recycling
- Participated in Burlington County’s Troll Trek by hosting “Edward” at Boyd’s Pharmacy front garden.
- Publicized the Bordentown City Farmers Market.
- 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 15th annual Green Fair in June.
- Supported Green Team members in the formation of a Toy Library, hosted by the First Presbyterian Church of Bordentown.
- Supported Green Team members with a Halloween Costume Swap -116 costumes re-used.
- 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 10,000 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 15th Annual Green Fair in June. Over 50 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 sponsored and promoted a “Table to Farm” events:
 - Collected used Halloween pumpkins that were collected by One Compost Can. 1,000 pounds of pumpkins did not go into a landfill!

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. The notable contributions in 2024 focused on sidewalks and the Waterfront Zone.

VI. PROPOSED 2025 PROJECTS

- Green Team’s continued facilitation of the City’s Sustainable NJ application/submission
- Continued Invasive Species removal and habitat restoration.
- Formation of a committee to explore noise pollution and how it can be mitigated.
- Initiate education and outreach to reduce light pollution.
- Earth Talk Speaker Series
- Tables at 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

- Rain Barrel Workshop
- Continued and additional opportunities for non-mandated recycling and materials reuse.
- 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 16th Annual Green Fair (June).
- Collaborate with City officials, City Planning Board and City residents on local codes that improve environmental quality and sustainability within the community.

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THANK YOU!

2024 marks the 22nd 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!

