



EWING GREEN TEAM

Working Towards Building a Sustainable Ewing

SEPTEMBER 25, 2013 MINUTES

LOCATION: EWING SENIOR AND COMMUNITY CENTER

PRESENT:

Green Team members denoted with an asterisk *

David Byers
Pete Boughton *
Valorie Caffee *
Don Cox
Lisa Feldman *
Max Graj (Bonner Rep)
John Hoegl *
Darlene Laarz
Emily LaRosa (Bonner Rep)

Mary Jane Leach *
Holly Loveday
Jenn Keyes-Maloney*
Carissa Mason (Bonner Rep)
Joe Mirabella *
Joanne Mullowney*
Michael Nordquist (TCNJ Bonner Advisor)
Mark Wetherbee *

INTRODUCTION

The September meeting of the Ewing Green Team was called to order by Joanne Mullowney at 7:07 pm. Green Team members were asked to approve the August minutes as posted on our website. Since there were no comments or corrections the August 28th minutes were unanimously approved.

There were a number of guests attending the meeting. They included Michael Nordquist, Max Graj, Emily LaRosa, Carissa Mason, Bonner Advisor and Scholars from TCNJ respectively, and Darlene Laarz, David Byers, Don Cox, and Holly Loveday, interested Ewing residents.

All attendees were asked to introduce themselves and to give their particular “green” interest. A clipboard was also sent around asking attendees to volunteer for shifts for CommFest on the first Saturday in October

TEAM LEADER REPORTS

BONNER REPORT

Max Graj reported that the Bonners had met with the Green Team leadership committee and it was decided that the Bonners would work on two projects this school year. The short term project would be the Community Gardens with Joanne and Mary Jane. The long term project selected was Ewing’s Community Mapping project.



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Michael Nordquist talked a bit about the Community Asset Mapping project. We would collect all valuables to the community – all info and data about Ewing. This encourages local economics. The Bonners have already done Community Asset Mapping with Trenton and so have some experience. Jenn reported that the town is very interested in the project. This project might also assist in further integration of students into the community.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Pete reported that the TCNJ college paper, the Signal, had a very nice article about Jenn Keyes-Maloney and that he also interviewed with them for an article about the Green Team and what we are doing.

GARDEN COMMITTEE REPORT BY MARY JANE LEACH

Mary Jane and Joanne spoke about the Clean-up Day at the gardens that was held on Saturday, September 21st from 9:30 – 4:30. There was a great turn out of TCNJ student volunteers and a sizeable turn out of the gardeners. Over 20 students attended and perhaps 8 or 9 of the gardeners. A number of projects were accomplished. A general site clean-up and weeding of the paths was undertaken. The path along the front garden fence was created and weeded and mulch was put down over newspaper and cardboard to suppress the weeds. The pile of wood chips at the back of the gardens was used almost entirely.



In addition, a number of composting stations were set up around the site in various plots. Students assisted in the creation of the compost structures and filling them with weeds and tree chips. Max and Carissa will be maintaining them over the coming year and learning the basics of composting.

Finally, more work was done on the Green Team demonstration garden. More mulch was put down and additional planting was done in the raised beds, led by MJ and assisted by the students. MJ also mentioned that the Township has agreed to put down a cover crop on the fallow fields to help increase the fertility for the next growing season when they will be available. They had been recently mown and are waiting sowing.

It was also noted that the gardeners have organized and an election to select representatives to a “Garden Council” was held. These representatives will work at establishing by-laws, suggest gardening rules and Ewinggreenteam.wordpress.com

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Monthly Meetings at Ewing Senior & Community Center, 999 Lower Ferry Rd, Ewing, NJ 08618, 4th Wed. of each month



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regulations to the Township, and prioritize a list of concerns that need to be communicated to the township. The newly elected officers are Michael Nordquist (chair), Pete Boughton and Joanne Mullowney (Green Team representatives), Terry Delahanty, April Sabo, Art Amaral and Stacy Svendor Papp.

ANTI-IDLING BY JOE MIRABELLA

Joe Mirabella reported that he and Pete had begun to reach out to Ewing businesses about our anti-idling initiative. He and Pete went to about 12 businesses on No. Olden Avenue. They had a very positive response from most and a lot of businesses were interested. In fact, the response was so positive that we may need to set up a waiting list. The Township has agreed to pay for the signage and install the signs. The next step is to get firm commitments from each because in the drop-bys the final decision maker was not necessarily the person to whom Pete and/or Joe spoke. Val suggested that we ask businesses if we could put our anti-idling flyers in the business windows until the signs are erected. Mark also has a number of contacts and asked for some posters so he could distribute them.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT BY JOHN HOEGL

John stated that the Ewing Environmental Commission contributed heavily to the application for Ewing's Sustainable Jersey certification. Pete and John, as well as other Ewing Environmental Commission members, were instrumental in the creation of the Green Team. He spoke a little bit about what the Ewing Environmental Commission does. They have a heavy emphasis on trees. Members of the Ewing Environmental Commission walked the Banchoff Park nature trail to see if it was in a state that was ready for a trail clean up. Jenn said that the Township thought that it needed heavy equipment first before it would be ready for just manual labor. But this would definitely be on our future agenda for a clean-up when we get more volunteers.

GRANT REQUESTS BY MJ LEACH

The Green Team has applied for and received a \$2000 capacity building grant. We will use it to purchase a projector, screen, easel, website upgrades, an image subscription and more. We will also begin work to submit for a larger grant that Sustainable Jersey is going to announce at the end of September in cooperation with the township's grant writer.

FALL EVENTS

COMMFEST



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Ewing's annual Community Festival will be on Saturday, Oct 5th and the Green Team will once again have a table. A solicitation for manning the tables was sent around with the sign-up sheet and members were encouraged to sign up to help out. Lisa Feldman and John Hoegl chaired the event.

SHRED 3

Lisa Feldman reported that this event will be held on November 30th at the municipal building. Since the last shred event was so successful she will also attempt to have Goodwill on site again for donations. However, she has not heard back yet. Again, members are asked to sign up to help.

Mark suggested using Cintas as the company which does the shredding since the company that the Township used at the last event was so far away and when the truck reached capacity early in the event it took so long to return it to site and empty it and then return. A sign-up sheet will go around.

RAIN GARDEN CLEAN-UP BY JOHN HOEGL

After some discussion it was determined that a cleanup of the rain garden at the municipal building will be held on November 2nd or 3rd from 9 -12. We have several groups of student volunteers from TCNJ who were looking for volunteer activities. We will reach out to them to see if the date suits.

OTHER BUSINESS

Val reported that TCNJ fraternity Alpha Phi Omega is hosting the 5th Annual Feed Our Friends 5K Run and Fun Walk to benefit the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen on Sunday, October 13th. Registration begins at 8:30, the Fun Walk begins at 9 and the 5K begins at 10 a.m. from The College of New Jersey Student Center. She asked that we publicize for them. We decided to notify our contact list in Gmail and promote on our website/Facebook page.

Mark suggested that the Kiwanis would be delighted to have Green Team representatives as guest speakers at one of their meetings to inform them about what we do.

VISIONING AND ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING BY MJ LEACH

Mary Jane continued the work of building the capacity of our Green Team members leading a discussion on how we can be most effective. She talked about the Sphere of Influence – who you can affect and what you can affect. Inside the sphere is what can we control and change. Outside the sphere is what we cannot control and change. There are externalities that we cannot control – federal policies, people's perceptions, weather and the past. These are beyond our reach organizationally. So how do we extend our reach?

Food for thought: Einstein said "The significant problems we face cannot be solved with the same level of thinking that created them."



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We need new thinking. We need to extend our reach. We need to identify possible partners. Who might they be? Local groups in town – the Masons, Elks, Lions, Kiwanis, other Green Team groups from surrounding towns, local government and other community groups. This might also include neighborhood associations, PTOs and more. We need to keep trying to expand our sphere of influence and educate them by example. We need to find people and groups who might align with our mission.

She asked: What happens if we don't read the feedback? Or, if we do; but don't change our actions? It is time to reenergize and form new groups.

Sustainable Jersey Actions are an appropriate sphere of influence for GTs. These are all laid out for us on the Sustainable Jersey site. It includes: who should lead and be involved in this action, timeframe, costs and resource needs, why is it important? what to do and how to do it?, what to submit to get credit/points, spotlight-what NJ towns are doing, and additional resources.

How do we extend our reach? Step 1. Create a plan of action and measurable goals. Grow our organization, committees and leadership-be an advocate for Green Team. Work smart - value everyone's time - maximize our time and people resources - extremely important.

BREAK OUT SESSIONS

The group then broke out into Study Groups for their areas of interest. Their tasks were to define the "current state" of their areas and then to determine their ultimate visions for their area. They should look for places where this is being done. Find examples. Think about goals that would need to be set for the next 1-2 years to work toward that vision.

ABOUT GOALS

Measurable goals are best because they help provide focus and attract resources. You need to know what you need, how much it costs and then ask for it through grants, donations, labor, time, expertise, municipal support. And finally, celebrate publicly when you receive or achieve. The following are examples of measurable goals.

- Double the size of the community garden (#spaces)
- Install a fence around the community garden
- Create a community garden council made up of 5-7 members
- Increase the number of participants at Shred Day #2
- Install a white roof at town hall to decrease energy consumption in the summer by ____%

HOMEWORK

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Study groups should meet independently to continue the work of their areas of interest and report back at the next monthly meeting.

The close of the meeting was announced at 9:00 p.m. by Green Team Communications/IT Officer, Joanne Mullowney.

Respectfully Submitted

Joanne Mullowney, Communications/IT Officer