



# EWING GREEN TEAM

*Promoting People, the Planet, and Prosperity in Ewing*

## ANNUAL RETREAT MINUTES

JANUARY 14, 2017

LOCATION: ESCC

## PRESENT

Ewing Green Team members marked with an asterisk \*

Malissa Arnold

Pete Boughton

Anne Cheslock

Evan Crumiller\*

Lisa Feldman\*

John Hoegl\*

Joe Mirabella\*

Joanne Mallowney\*

Michael Nordquist\*

Caroline Steward\*

Cait Versella

Mark Wetherbee\*

## INTRODUCTION

Michael and Joanne called the meeting to order at 9:15.

- The October 2016 minutes were approved.
- Introductions of current and prospective members

- **Election of Officers**

It was determined that a quorum was met and nominations for Officers began. Joanne and Michael were elected the 2017 Co-Chairs, Prospective member Malissa Arnold was elected Secretary, Caroline Steward and Evan Crumiller were elected to the Membership Committee, and Lisa Feldman and Evan Crumiller volunteered to serve on a new Technical and Marketing Subcommittee under Joanne's leadership. All were unanimously approved.

- **Announcements**

Michael has been made Executive Director of the **Center for Engaged Learning and Research** at TCNJ, Joanne will be working for Ewing on their Website, and Tom Elder resigned from the Green Team and is no longer acting as Recycling Coordinator for Ewing Township.

- **Members**

There are 12 current members and 3 open slots. Garry Keel's appointment has been approved by Administration and both Cait and Malissa would like to apply for appointment.

- The Environmental Commission may also have an opening.
- Meetings in 2017 are planned to make 2017 a "Learning Year" after 2016's Sustainable Jersey recertification efforts.



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- **Ideas for future meetings**

We should work with the Health Department on topics such as Lead, seniors and housing; Gardening on topics such as native gardens, cooking with foods from native gardeners, bee and environmentally friendly gardening, work with kids about where food comes from, environmentally friendly lawn care, mulching and volcanoing.

- **Funding**

We currently have no monies in any grant line to use towards our ongoing projects and will need to ask for Township funding for all of this year's anticipated projects. Michael informed us that we definitely are eligible to apply for a \$2k Sustainable Jersey capacity building grant despite the fact that we currently have a \$20k Emerald Ash Borer grant. The deadline for application is February 28<sup>th</sup>. Our needs include outreach materials such as tri-fold brochures, website renewals, a more professional logo for the Green Business Recognition program, prizes for the Scarecrow contest and more. If we intend to submit for the grant we need to (1) determine what exactly we are asking them to fund, and (2) come up with a budget. Because we have received numerous other grants thru this process, we are probably going to be held to a higher standard in order to justify giving us even more \$\$\$.

- **Sustainability Programs-Non-profit status**

The group followed up an Environmental Commission discussion on the possibility of forming a 501(c)3 non-profit in order to be eligible for additional grant funding for our projects. John Hoegl is trying to arrange a meeting with former Environmental Commission member Hal Moeller who is a lawyer to consult on establishing a 501(c)3. Questions were raised whether it would be a separate entity from the current Green Team, what approvals would be necessary if this was established, and what reporting and board structures would be required. Members discussed the financial implications of becoming a non-profit including money going directly toward a specific project instead of being reallocated, having our own bank account, credit cards, etc.

- **2016 Annual Report**

Our annual update to the Township is in process. Joanne and Michael will pass it around once they have completed it so that members can review it for completeness and accuracy. It will be submitted to the Township and posted on the Ewing Green Team's website. It was proposed that we present it formally at a Council meeting and highlight our actions more than in the past.

## 2016 PROJECTS

### THE ARTS (CREATIVE PLACEMAKING) – LISA

#### **Scarecrow Contest**

Lisa Feldman plans to continue this event as part of creative place making, but the event needs funds for prizes and supplies.

#### **Additional ideas**

Lisa also suggested the following ideas for creative place making activities. A contest at GM site



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Groundbreaking using recycled material, make it an event with music, food etc. We might look into funding from GM for this. She suggested a contest painting power boxes around town with a GM theme.

Lisa has also taken a grant writing course and she suggested that we apply for a grant to purchase recycling/trash stations in the town's public areas in an effort to bolster recycling at public events and public spaces.

## BIKE TOUR – GARRY ET AL

New Ewing Green Team appointee Garry Keel (not in attendance) has volunteered to chair the **3rd Annual Ewing Bike Tour**. It will be held in conjunction with Community Fest on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. We are looking for community involvement from businesses, etc. Under consideration is the idea of running the event with other communities in order to boost ridership and provide new places to explore during the ride. The next bike committee meeting will be held Monday, January 16th at 6:30 PM at Garry Keel's office. Former Ewing Green Team member Pete Boughton has volunteered to continue to work on this effort to promote a more bikeable Ewing.

## GREEN BUSINESS RECOGNITION PROGRAM- EVAN

Evan Crumiller volunteered to continue this program for the Ewing Green Team for the coming year. He asked Michael if it would be possible to secure college student volunteers for the outreach effort to more businesses in town. Michael said that it would not be a problem. We also discussed the need for an update of decals. Joanne suggested the possibility of using 48hourslogo.com for the redesign. Michael suggested seeing if a TCNJ art class could create a logo. We would like to establish this award on a biannual cycle and Earth Day/Week would be the appropriate time to recognize spring awardees.

## ENERGY – JOHN, MARK, PETE

### Direct Install

The Energy subcommittee, John Hoegl, Mark Wetherbee and Pete Boughton will work on the Direct Install program once again now that funding has been restored to the program. The committee will work on outreach with Sandra Torres about promoting to businesses in town once again. It was suggested that we approach the Care One facility. John also suggested that the green business recognition could tie into the Direct Install project. Additionally, Garry Keel, who is in the process of working with the program for his own small business, would be willing to serve as a model/spokesperson for the program's success in our outreach once his own project is complete.

### Energy Tracking and Management

The Energy subcommittee would also like the Township to initiate energy tracking and management for all township facilities, a Sustainable Jersey priority action. There are difficulties doing this as there are 42 different PSE&G energy accounts that are difficult to consolidate. PSE&G has said they could



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combine the accounts, but it would compromise the 3<sup>rd</sup> party tie in. The Ewing Green Team recommends that the Township enroll in the NJ Clean Energy program which offers a free benchmarking service that will track and score energy usage and provide detailed reports of the same.

## **Home Energy Audit program for residents**

This program was not approved by the Township. It is speculated that it is to avoid endorsing one company over another. The process does include an RFP for auditing companies. It was proposed that we discuss this with other townships to see what they did. Perhaps we could discuss with our Council representative to see why it was rejected specifically. We also can have companies present at Green Fair or Community Fest regardless.

## **NEIGHBORHOODS – CAROLINE**

The plan for this subcommittee is to develop leadership in the communities by:

1. Holding meetings on specific topics, starting with inviting neighborhood leaders to our meetings, and then as it becomes more cohesive, letting the neighborhoods develop their own.
2. Working with the Health department on topic development such as vaccines, healthy chemicals for household use, and other areas where health intersects with the green team.
3. We also discussed how we “find” one another- the Online “NextDoor” was discussed, creating a spreadsheet that neighborhoods could share with one another, and going door to door to get information, and sharing it through email. Also it was suggest that we make an effort to measure our efforts, when it can be difficult to measure the impact of actions

## **EAB GRANT – JOANNE**

We are half way through the \$20,000 EAB grant that we received in March 2016. We had a stakeholder meeting in November with representatives from Rutgers, PSE&G, Mercer County, the DEP, etc. to develop partnerships to deal with the EAB problem in Ewing. Bill Brash has developed an app to assist with data collection for each ash tree. The next phase, planting of approximately 100 bare root saplings, will begin this spring. The Township planner, Chuck Latini Jr. volunteered to contribute an additional \$3,000 in funds towards the purchase of more trees. The plan is to plant here (at the ESCC) and at the retention basin at the municipal building. Additional tree plantings will be done later in the year from the No Net Loss tree reimbursement from the Scudder Falls bridge project.

## **BEAUTIFICATION – JOANNE**

Joanne and Environmental Commission member Dan Burke are working with Recreation Director Ted Forst on plans for a new contemplation garden in front of the ESCC this spring. It will be primarily composed of native plants and serve as a model for naturalist plantings and planting for wildlife. Joanne plans to work again with the West Trenton Garden Club and Girl Scouts plan to run the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Ewing Garden Tour.



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## COMMUNITY GARDENS – MARY

Mary Corrigan (not in attendance) served as the Ewing Green Team liaison to the Ewing Community Gardens last year and it is our hope that she will continue to serve in this role. The Ewing Community Gardens Association established by the Green Team a number of years ago and chaired last year by Shelby Roberts, Christine Perkins, and Karen Serach, has taken over the management of the gardens and has been very successful. With the help of TCNJ student volunteers a couple of times a year, the garden maintenance has been much improved.

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH - JOANNE AND JOE AND MICHAEL

### Environmental Insights

Joanne, Michael and Joe Mirabella will continue the Ewing Green Team's focus on community education and outreach thru the Environmental Insights programs this year. As noted above, the Ewing Green Team meetings will primarily focus on education. The planned schedule for the first half of the year is as follows:

- Sustainable State of the Schools – Dennis Nettleton (Jan)
- EAB meeting for homeowners – Bill Brash et al (Feb)
- Environmental Justice – Michael (Mar)
- Film – Michael (Apr)
- Intro to Ecology – Joe (May)
- Water topics – Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Assn. (Jun)

### Website

Joanne submitted her usual plea for articles for the website. We need articles every month on what we are doing, and perhaps might include a monthly focus on Green Team members to show that non-scientists can make a difference. Some article ideas included addressing community complaints such as the environmental damage from excessive salting during winter will be addressed by Mark Wetherbee and John Hoegl.

## NEW PROJECTS FOR 2017

- Creating an Open Space Plan
- Creating a Bike and Pedestrian Plan
- Joanne and Michael were informed in their meeting with Jim McManimon that the Township planner, Chuck Latini Jr. has already begun reviewing all Township lands pursuant to such a project. We would hope to work with the D&R Greenway Land Trust to find avenues to conserve and connect. A suggestion was made that Environmental Commission, the Recreation Department and the Ewing Green Team should all work together on the plan. We need to have Open Space and Bike/Ped plans in place before we can pursue grant funding for projects.



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- Discussion on working with additional Township departments such as the Department of Public Works on sustainability issues, like green fertilizers, and to consider greener vehicles when current ones are replaced.

## UPCOMING EWING GREEN TEAM EVENTS

- Shred Days – don't know the dates yet – there should be one in April
- Mercer Green Fest – Saturday, March 18 - need volunteers Suggestion about building birdhouses. Anne Cheslock passed around some examples of easy-to-do artwork that she was considering as the youth art activity at the Green Fest.
- Arbor Day Celebration Arbor Day is April 28<sup>th</sup>, we are planning for a celebration including tree plantings at ESCC site in conjunction with the Environmental Commission.

## CONCLUSION

The meeting adjourned at noon. The next Ewing Green Team meeting will be Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,

*Malissa Arnold*