



# EWING GREEN TEAM

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



SEPTEMBER 23, 2020 MINUTES

VIRTUAL MEETING

## IN ATTENDANCE

Evan Crumiller\*

Pete Boughton

Lisa Feldman\*

Jennifer Keyes-Maloney\* Town Council Liaison

Mark Wetherbee\*

Heidi Furman\*

Donna Morgan\*

Garry Keel\*

Priya Vimalassery

Co-Chair Evan Crumiller began the meeting a few minutes after 7:00 pm. The meeting will include a webinar about 50 minutes long on climate change focusing on how New Jersey is being affected.

## TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATES

### REPORT FROM COUNCILWOMAN JENNIFER KEYES-MALONEY ON COUNCIL MATTERS

#### EWING TWP. PLASTIC ORDINANCE

Jennifer Keyes-Maloney gave an update on several issues of interest to the Green Team – the new Plastics Ordinance being discussed for Ewing and where the Tree Ordinance stands with the Town Council.

The Plastics Ordinance is being moved to December's agenda. We'll see how the statewide bill in the NJ Assembly has done. This will also give us more time to see how the pandemic is affecting the use of plastics.

#### STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE

Stormwater Management Ordinance has been returned to the Planning Board. This ordinance needs to be passed by March of 2021 (not sure if there is any penalty if Ewing misses this deadline).

#### TREE AND LANDSCAPE ORDINANCES

The Tree and Landscape Ordinances have also been sent back to Planning Board.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### THE ARTS COMMITTEE

Lisa Feldman reported on the one big activity that can go forward during the pandemic – **the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual All Around Town Scarecrow Scavenger Hunt**. The Committee continues its work on creating clues for each of our Scarecrows. We currently have 49 Scarecrows which we're very happy to see this year. It's been well-received.

This year residents will participate as hosts in addition to the businesses, organizations and schools. We are hearing about excitement in the community about this event.



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Thanks to those who pledged money to help make this event possible.

Thanks to your support we will be offer more cash prizes this year. The Township paid for one ad in August and negotiated an ad for September at no charge. The Committee is funding the October ad.

This year we've added a new 'green' prize that we will ask members of the Green Team to judge. We're giving a \$100 prize to the Scarecrow that best utilizes recycled materials in their creation. We will share photos of all the Scarecrows so that the GT members can look at all of them. GT members are welcome to participate in the 'hunting'; they just can't enter a ballot to win any of the prizes.

We will have a \$200 cash grand prize and a 2<sup>nd</sup> prize depending on how much we collect. We will also have \$100 people's choice awards for both categories **Residents** and **Businesses/Organizations**.

## WEBINAR PRESENTATION

In June, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection released their **2020 New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change**. On August 6<sup>th</sup>, ANJEC, the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, hosted a Climate Change Resiliency Webinar that discussed the conclusions that were arrived at in the DEP report. It was recorded and this was the featured presentation for our September meeting.

### BACKGROUND (MUCH OF THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS BEING QUOTED FROM THE NJ DEP'S WEBSITE)

"By issuing Executive Order 89 (EO 89) on October 29, 2019, Governor Murphy made clear that climate change resilience is a high priority for the State of New Jersey. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is pleased to present the *New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change*."

The Executive Order recognizes the scientific community's consensus that climate change is occurring globally and nationally and that New Jersey, as a coastal state, is particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts. EO 89 sets forth the Governor's vision and direction for state government agencies to work together to protect public health and safety, and to maintain the physical, economic and social vitality and resilience of New Jersey's communities under the current and anticipated impacts of climate change.

In Executive Order 89, Governor Murphy directed all state agencies to take action to address the urgent need to coordinate and integrate climate change considerations into planning and decision-making at all levels of government. EO 89 established the Interagency Council on Climate Change and direct state agencies, under the leadership of the state's Chief Resilience Officer and with support from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), to develop a Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy by September 1, 2020.

Recognizing that the first step to building resilience is to understand what we are up against, Executive Order 89 further directs the Chief Resilience Officer and the DEP to provide the scientific foundation for the Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy, by presenting an initial assessment to the Interagency Council at its first meeting and developing a more detailed Scientific Report on Climate Change within 180 days (by June 1, 2020).

DEP already has taken the first step to provide the scientific information needed to plan for climate change resilience, by commissioning Rutgers University to reconvene a Science and Technical Advisory Panel to provide an updated report on the latest science regarding current and anticipated future sea level rise and storm impacts along New Jersey's coast. The panel is a group of scientists and practitioners that was first brought together by Rutgers in 2015 to evaluate the most current science on sea level rise projections and changing coastal storms.

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**Contact us: [ewinggreenteam@gmail.com](mailto:ewinggreenteam@gmail.com)**

**Meetings: 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays, 7 p.m. Ewing Senior and Community Center, 999 Lower Ferry Rd., Ewing**



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"Since taking office, it has been a top priority of my Administration to reestablish New Jersey's role as a leader in the fight against climate change and resume many of the climate change initiatives that were dismantled by the Christie Administration," **said Governor Murphy**. "New Jersey is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of sea-level rise and global warming, and today's Executive Order outlines a bold and comprehensive set of actions to ensure that our communities and infrastructure are more resilient against future storms."

"Factoring climate change into housing rehabilitation efforts in New Jersey is critical because natural disasters are inevitable and unavoidable," **said Lt. Governor Oliver, who serves as Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs**. "What we can control is how we prepare and plan for the future by rebuilding homes and businesses that are less prone to flood damage and more resilient."

"As a coastal state, New Jersey is on the front lines of climate change. The impacts of climate change are far-ranging and already touch on everyone's life in one way or another," **said Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe**. "The DEP is grateful for Governor Murphy's leadership and support as we continue to promote climate resilience throughout the state. In the coming months, DEP will expand this work in collaboration with our sister agencies and, within the next year, deliver the Coastal Resilience Plan as part of Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy."

"We face many challenges from increasing temperature and sea-level rise," **said Chief Resilience Officer and Department of Environmental Protection Assistant Commissioner David Rosenblatt**. "To meet those challenges, we need to fully engage the public and stakeholders and provide a clear picture of what the impacts will be, including physical changes to our coastline, and the steps that have to be taken to adapt and become more resilient."

Among the directives to improve New Jersey's climate resilience efforts, Governor Murphy's Executive Order established:

- **State of New Jersey Chief Resilience Officer** – The Chief Resilience Officer of the State of New Jersey will lead the Climate and Flood Resilience Program and work with the Interagency Council on Climate Resilience to develop a Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy.
- **Climate and Flood Resilience Program** – The Climate and Flood Resilience Program will be established within the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The Climate and Flood Resilience Program, under the direction of the Chief Resilience Officer, will develop a scientific report on climate change regarding the current and anticipated effects of climate change in New Jersey, including but not limited to increased temperatures, sea level rise, increased frequency or severity of rainfall, storms, and flooding, at least through 2050. This report will be delivered to the Governor within 180 days and updated at least every two years.
- **Interagency Council on Climate Resilience** – The Interagency Council on Climate Resilience will be established and comprised of representatives of 16 state agencies to develop short- and long-term action plans to develop a Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy that will promote the long-term mitigation, adaptation, and resilience of New Jersey's economy, communities, infrastructure, and natural resources.
- **Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy** – By September 1, 2020, the Chief Resilience Officer, with the support of the Interagency Council on Climate Resilience, will deliver to the Governor a Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy to promote the long-term mitigation, adaptation, and resilience of New

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Jersey's economy, communities, infrastructure, and natural resources throughout the State in a manner consistent with the Scientific Report on Climate Change. The strategy will include recommendations for actions the State should take to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, including but not limited to the following measures:

- Identify methods that can be used to strengthen resilience;
- Provide guidance and strategies for State agencies, municipalities, and regional planning agencies to implement resiliency measures;
- Promote long-term water and energy resource security;
- Reduce the risk of wildfires in State forests;
- Reduce the risks to the health of New Jersey residents that accompany climate change, such as increased vulnerability to extreme temperatures;
- Support sustainable and resilient economic development;
- Identify funding mechanisms, strategies, and opportunities for coordination; and
- Any other measures necessary to prepare for, mitigate, and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The strategy shall also include a Coastal Resilience Plan that recommends a specific long-term strategy for climate change resilience and adaptation in the coastal areas of the state.

- **State Development and Redevelopment Plan** – The State Planning Commission, based upon the Scientific Report on Climate Change and the Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy, will incorporate climate change considerations, such as increasing temperatures, rising sea levels, increased flooding, and increased vulnerability to droughts and forest fires, as a mandatory requirement for State Development and Redevelopment Plan endorsement of the development and redevelopment plans of local units of government. The Order will take effect immediately. For a copy of Executive Order No. 89, click [here](#).

## WEBINAR SUMMARY

- **Warming**, caused largely by human activities, is leading to significant changes in climate patterns around the world. This report is the first comprehensive effort to assemble the latest and most reliable scientific information on the current and predicted future impacts of climate change that are specific to New Jersey's natural and built environments. This report will be updated every 2 years.
- NJ's recorded heat temperatures have risen disproportionately since 1895; it's gone up 3.5°. By 2050 it is expected to increase from 1-6° warmer. This is truly alarming since NJ's staple crops like blueberries and cranberries require colder growing periods.
- **Precipitation** has also seen significant increases. Annual precipitation is expected to increase 4-11% by 2050. Frequency and intensity of heavy rains are longer and more persistent. Noticeable increased intensity and number of tropical and extratropical storms are occurring.
- **Water resources** – have seen significant changes. Anticipate 5-10% increase in annual precipitation in spring from 2040-2070. In warmer climate evaporation transpiration is expected to increase and soil moisture will decrease.
- **Stormwater management** will require greater financial investment in infrastructure due to the increased and will need to find additional solutions to help handle the increase.
- **Climate Science Fact:** sea levels are rising at a greater rate in NJ than any other part of the world!! This is due to NJ's unique geology.



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- **NJ's coastal wetlands** may not survive sea level rise. Consequences such as 29% of birds will be affected. Cold water fish like trout will lose habitat. Increasing acidification of oceans will also have alarming results – such as how it affects shellfish development; they depend on calcium to develop their shells.
- To help address NJ's climate resiliency strategy 17 NJ agencies have joined forces and formed the new **Interagency Council on Climate Resilience**. Everyone recognizes the multitude of significant challenges facing the need to develop a climate change strategy for NJ.

What can state government do to move in the right direction – to seek to address the many impacts and vulnerabilities? Developed 5 guiding principles to move forward:

1. Be Proactive
2. Informed Residents
3. How to lessen exposure to damage
4. Healthy and diverse ecosystems
5. Strong and stable economy with good social systems in place

On May 9, 2020, the NJ DEP posted an online survey to be able to see concerns and impacts on NJ. See <http://www.Nj.gov/dep/climatechange/survey>. The state of NJ has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number of FEMA claims due to various impacts of climate change!

There are 6 strategies of CORE: Council on Resilience:

Support and share the science; look at gap in public health  
Build healthy and resilient communities  
Strengthen the resilience of NJ's ecosystems

Promote coordinating governance  
Expand resilience funding and financing  
Coastal Resilience Plan

We need a long-term strategy for coastal management. There are 239 coastal municipalities with 17 counties from NY border down to Cape May. These communities see more flooding.

With Executive Order #100, the Director of NJDEP Commissioner Catherine McCabe has started the DEP moving forward with regulatory changes. See #NJ Pact for changes in land use rule.

- For questions about the webinar contact Nick Procopio to ask any questions on climate [resilience@dep.nj.gov](mailto:resilience@dep.nj.gov)
- Sign up for email updates and announcements: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/resilience-signup.html>.
- How can small communities help have impact?

## NEXT MONTH

The Green Team October 28th Meeting will include a presentation by the Delaware Riverkeeper, Maya van Rossum.

The meeting ended at 8:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted.

*Lisa Feldman*

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