



2014 Annual Report Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission

The Commission met 19 times to review plans and conduct environmental business. Comments were submitted on 31 applications to the Board of Adjustment/Planning Board.

Volunteers for the Environmental Commission gave nearly 800 hours of their time for the tree survey, Peppertown Park and the Community Garden.

In 2014 the Environmental Commission also

1. Helped the High School Environmental Club organize a Styrofoam collection in January. The collection amounted to about six cubic yards, filling up and spilling out next to the large shed outside the Rec building. We also helped the High School Environmental Club purchase recycling bins for the school
2. Completed the tree survey with the tree team. More than 5,500 records of trees and “trees needed” along the right of way have been evaluated and recorded.
3. Applied for and received Sustainable Jersey Silver Certification, the highest level of certification. The certification is valid through 2017
4. Continued the community garden project. The project is now moving forward with more volunteers and grant applications.
5. Helped the Township decide the location and planting of 30 trees as part of the Greening Union County program.
6. Worked with Tom Bocko to revise the Community Forestry Management Plan. Certified Tree Expert Stephen Schuckman was hired through a grant to revise the plan. Our Community Forestry Management plan has been approved by the State and is valid through 2017.
7. Worked with the County to continue care at the walking path along the Passaic River Park. Volunteers relocated timbers that crossed a wet area at the entrance to the park.
8. Distributed some 200 saplings to all fourth graders in the Township in connection with Arbor Day.

9. Participated in the June street fair at which we promoted recycling and rain barrels. We also promoted the community garden and handed out leaflets about single-stream recycling.
10. Continued with volunteers to weed and then install and mulch mostly native plants in one half of the bed at the eastern end of Peppertown Park. Purchasing of the plants and materials came through the Peppertown Park Memorial fund.
11. Presented a resolution on Open Space Preservation to the Township Council. The resolution was passed at the April 9 meeting of the Council.
12. Supported efforts to work with the County and the State on desnagging the Passaic River

In addition:

1. Richard and Len attended the annual ANJEC meeting, which had all-day workshops.
2. Richard also attended a meetings on the Pilgrim Pipeline at which representatives of the Sierra Club and the EPA spoke.
3. Leonard Berkowitz continues to serve on the Board of ANJEC; he attended two regional and planning meetings organized by Sustainable Jersey.
4. Commission member Ron Loria continued to participate in the Downtown Development/Beautification Committee.

Estimated total volunteer hours were more than 900.
New grant funds received were: \$1500 from ExxonMobil.

Goals for 2014:

Plant trees to replace those lost from Hurricane Sandy
Revise Green Building Practices
Review tree ordinance
Prepare an impervious surface mitigation ordinance
Advise on Downtown beautification
Explore project on stream desnagging

Commission members were :

Richard Leister, Chairman
Leonard Berkowitz, Co-chairman
Kevin Hall, Planning Board Liaison
Robin Callaghan

Ron Loria
Ed Delia
Deborah Plotnik
Stephanie Zecca, Alternate
Helen Kirsch, BOE liaison
Jaime Salazar (joined the commission as an alternate at midyear).

Richard Leister, February 9, 2015