

CHERRY HILL ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD
MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
December 18th, 2023

In Attendance On-line: Lew Gorman, Jeanne Barnum, Nancy Brown, Abe Ferdas, Mary Ellen Lane, Jim Rosenthal, Megan Brown, Councilwoman Sangeeta Doshi

Absent: Jay Jones, Barbara Patrizzi, Chris Shull

Guests: None

I. WELCOME

There were no guests.

II. UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENT

A. Meeting Minutes from the Last Meeting

Minutes for the November meeting have been issued.

B. Council Liaison (Councilwomen Jennifer Apell and Sangeeta Doshi)

Jennifer Apell stated that the hired consultant took longer to develop the *Community Energy Plan* that will help Cherry Hill Township meet the requirements of the *Sustainable Jersey Gold Star in Energy*. The Plan will be introduced to Council and the public at the January 22nd Council meeting. Then we will be able to apply for Community Energy Plan Grants and implement the activities to qualify for the Gold Star. We have already received a \$3,000 grant to prepare the Plan. Nothing else is happening until the new mayor is sworn in on January 2nd at 5 pm. A new Council president and vice president will also be sworn in. Abe Ferdas will attend.

C. CHEB Liaison Update (Megan Brown)

Megan Brown submitted paperwork for the ANJEC annual membership for CHEB. ANJEC does not make the award two years in a row so we probably will not submit an application in 2024.

D. Sustainability (Abe Ferdas)

The first meeting of the Township Schools Green Team was held. Attendees were Dr. Albert Morales, Assistant Principal at Rosa International Middle School, the Biology teacher at Cherry Hill West, and an individual from Sustainable South Jersey, plus Lew Gorman and Abe Ferdas who were invited to join the committee. As CHEB's Sustainability Coordinator, Abe will represent CHEB at these meetings.

CHEB offered suggestions about implementing the \$250,000 Sustainable New Jersey grant funded by the New Jersey Forest Service that the School District received to plant trees. The person handling the program side is the School District's former grounds supervisor, Jeff Schofield, who took down all the trees. He is now in charge of District facilities. (Jeff's replacement is Tim Kerper).

CHEB would like to weigh in on the trees being planted to prevent invasive trees from being planted. We don't know if the School District is close to implementing the grant. The next meeting of the Green Team is January 4th at 3:45 pm at the Lewis administration building. Dr. Morales would like the tree planting program to comply with the Cherry Hill Tree Ordinance.

Abe reports the next meeting of the Township Green Team will be December 21st at 9:00 am.

E. Natural Resource Management

1. NJ Community Forest Management Plan: [Nothing to report.]
2. Pollinator Program: Mary Ellen has created a list of all the pollinator garden locations and a list of suggested pollinator-friendly plants for homeowners, including when to plant and their heights. It will be typed in a table suitable for posting on the Township website. Abe suggested sending this to the School District.

Dr. Morales has plans to put in a pollinator garden at Rosa International Middle School and has requested CHEB's support.

Lew mentioned that the tree list on the website needs to be changed significantly. Jim Rosenthal mentioned that we need to consider global warming in our tree list.

F. Grants

1. ANJEC
The ANJEC grant is moving along. A few items need to be finished by May 2024.

G. Outreach

1. Volunteer Management: [Nothing to report.]
2. HEC & HWTa Partnership for Evans Pond Trail: Recently, the Haddonfield Water Trail Association and Lew walked the trail on the Haddonfield side and completed the loop through Croft Farm trails. It is passable, with some wet spots, along the whole length from Evans Pond dam to Ellis Street. There is no official signage but it is marked with pin flags and nylon strips. Lew & Andy Johnson, leader of the Haddonfield Water Trail Association, have requested additional support materials from Camden County Parks Department to make the wet area passable.
3. Rotary Club: The Rotary Club will donate approximately \$4,500 to CHEB for nature educational panels on the Cherry Hill trails. The panels can be installed at environmentally significant sites along the trails, such as two at the Fishing Pier at Croft Farm. We may be able to purchase 4-5 or more panels. Public Works will install the panels in key locations. Other good locations include pollinator gardens. CHEB will evaluate other locations and decide on appropriate nature topics.
4. Martin Luther King Day of Service: MLK Day of Service is scheduled on January 14th from 1-4 pm, starting at Croft Farm. Advance signups help Lew line up projects with leaders. Thanks to Ericha Farrington, Special Events Coordinator, for implementing this process for MLK Day and other CHEB-led events.

III. CHERRY HILL OPEN SPACE ACTIVITIES

A. Trails

1. Trail Crew: [From Jay Jones' e-mail: The December trail crew session built a small bridge at Old Orchard's Red Trail over drainage from the Beck Middle School athletic field. Also removed a downed tree, cut back vegetation, and corrected a wet area on the Red Trail.]

Lew reported an encroachment at Old Orchard with a zip line onto Cherry Hill property, a campfire circle, and a path created. An inspector from the Township should review this and contact the land owner. Lew will forward some photos to Megan Brown and she will forward the report to the proper Township officials.

2. Trail Improvements/Repairs:

- a. Barclay Farmstead: Red Trail ADA section – Raised footpath basic construction completed (135' long) with a layer of crushed stone; it needs stone dust to finish. Red Trail down from the pond is full of roots and will be improved. Bridge replacement on the Nature Trail is planned for the Spring.
- b. Cherry Valley Trails: Wood chipping Red & Green Trails is continuing.
- c. Old Orchard: The raised bridge over Red Trail drainage was completed. Green & White Trail wood chipping has been implemented recently and more wood chipping is planned.
- d. Erlton North: No information about the Eagle Scout kiosk project
- e. Bunker Hill: Work on removing a wasp nest is continuing.
- f. Jeanne Barnum suggested that a local Girl Scout troop might be eager to work on projects for Girl Scouts to achieve the Gold Award, which is equivalent to the Boy Scouts Eagle Scout recognition. She will follow up by sending contact information to Lew.

B. Open Space Natural Lands Signs

No progress to report.

IV. OTHER ISSUES

CHEB got a lot of projects accomplished in 2023.

V. IMPORTANT DATES

1. January 8 – Next CHEB Board Meeting via Zoom (7-9 pm) [**Note change in usual 1st Monday date for CHEB meetings**]
2. January 14 – MLK Day of Service (1-4 pm)
3. February 5 – Following CHEB Board Meeting date.

Submitted on 12/26/23 by:

Jim Rosenthal
Secretary, CHEB