

2017 Oakland Environmental Commission Accomplishments

The Oakland Environmental Commission had a busy year. Projects like the FLOW Green Film Festival, the EC table at the town carnival, and town Team Up to Clean Up took months of planning. We met every month this past year with a quorum except December.

FLOW Film Festival

EC members met and coordinated a series of 4 environmental movies with speaker panels for the month of March. This event was coordinated by the FLOW towns of Franklin Lakes, Oakland and Wyckoff environmental commissions. An Oakland EC member designed the main flyer plus an individual flyer for each film. We posted them weekly on the town website and Facebook page. Three events were held at the Wyckoff Public Library and one at Ramapo High School. In a change from previous years, we concentrated on shorter films followed by more diverse speakers. Last year Tesla brought an autopilot electric vehicle for attendees to see up close to one event. Another film we had a speaker from the NJ Highland Coalition and the Director of Ridgewood Water. We had 35 to 55 people in attendance each film. This year's films have already been picked and will be shown March 1, 8, 15, and 22.

Team Up to Clean Up Event

The Oakland Environmental Commission invited all residents and groups to join them at the 2nd annual "Team Up to Clean Up" Oakland's Parks event on Saturday, April 22, 2017. Approximately 100 volunteers assembled at Valley Middle School in the cafeteria beginning at 9:00am for breakfast. From there, we teamed up into five groups, each directed to one of Oakland's parks. At noon, we finished with a picnic lunch at Great Oak park. We designed our own adhesive cell phone pocket to give out to volunteers as a thank you. This event was sponsored by the Oakland Public Events Committee and a grant from the NJ Clean Communities Council. The DPW helped with the supplies and collected all the garbage bags after the event.

We are already planning this year's cleanup for April 21.

Stewart Woods Park

In addition to the Team Up to Clean Up event, we periodically walk and cleanup the park to beautify and provide momentum to encourage users to enjoy the park in a responsible manner.

In April the EC applied for a grant to make a guided nature trail pamphlet, but we were not awarded.

In December we completed our own first draft of the pamphlet. We plan to reapply for grant award this year, but in the meantime, our pamphlet is ready to be put in the kiosks.

Project Advisor on Eagle Scout Projects

Two projects that we were advising were completed this year.

- 1 Boy Scout, Riley Beach of Troop 49 completed the kiosk along Ramapo Valley Road in December. His project also installed numbered posts to go with the guided nature trail the EC is developing.
- 2 Boy Scout, Evan Pappas, also of Troop 49, completed his project in the Potash Lake Recreation Area. His project included installing benches, birdhouses and trail markers, and trail improvements.

Great Oak Park

EC member participated in routine meetings of the Park Committee to review and discuss potential uses of the park. An event was planned for cleaning the stream but was canceled due to inclement weather.

Town Carnival Booth

An informational table was set up at the annual Town Carnival 6/14-6/17

Our focus this year was on recycling education; helping the residents understand our current recycling rules. We had a lot of free educational handouts as well. We also had a display on protecting our ground water resources and energy conservation.

Website

An EC member maintains the EC and Green team section of the borough website. This was a useful resource for updated information and initiatives.

ANJEC Annual Meeting

In September, EC members attended the annual meeting for ANJEC. This is an inspirational meeting that helps us learn what other Environmental Commissions are doing throughout the state as well as a source of resources that are available for our town to better its stewardship of the environment.

Sandy Beach Property

The EC brought the Sandy Beach Property to the attention of the Mayor and Council as a recommended potential acquisition to our open space. Because of the short notice, in an effort to save the town money, the EC completed the initial Bergen County Open Space Grant application.

Open Space and Recreation Plan

The EC was closely involved with the renewal of the OSRP being completed by the Land Conservancy of NJ. We attended all planning meetings and site visits. The final draft was accepted in December by the Planning Board.

Shade Tree Commission

An EC member is a member of and liaison to the Shade Tree Commission, which results in beneficial sharing of information and efficient coordination of efforts and roles.

Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund

An EC member is a member of the Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund, which provides regional perspective and direction to our local EC.

Green Team

EC was again instrumental in the Green Team's effort to recertify with Sustainable Jersey. We provided leadership and key efforts to successfully recertified at the Bronze level this past November.

Planning Board

One of our members is a planning board liaison. We also review plans at meetings and write up comments to the planning and zoning board.

Respectfully submitted by, Nancy Krause
Oakland Environmental Commission Chairperson