



## **2021 MANTOLOKING ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION YEAR END REPORT**

The Environmental Commission had an extremely busy year and in spite of the continuing pandemic were able to meet our 2021 objectives with little exception. As part of our overall objective to increase resident communication, meeting agendas are now posted on the Borough website and distributed via Mantoloking Ready therefore encouraging resident participation. MEC Meetings are also posted as Events on our Facebook webpage.

Following encapsulates our work during 2021:

### **Finalization of 2020 Initiatives**

#### **The Roots for Rivers Reforestation Grant**

Official notification was received in January that our Final Report was accepted by Sustainable Jersey for a grant amount of \$1,028.13 leaving us with a surplus of \$69.70. These surplus dollars were finally returned in September.

Members continue to monitor the bunny guards for those plants that appear to have outgrown these plastic structures. Generally speaking, guards remain in place until they are large enough to fend for themselves which is typically 2 to 3 years.

#### **Sustainable Jersey**

A plaque commemorating Mantoloking's Bronze certification with Sustainable Jersey through 12/31/2023 was hung in the hallway outside the Steve Gillingham Meeting Room.

### **Progress as Measured Against 2021 Goals**

#### **Beach Clean-ups**

Two beach clean-ups occurred this year on April 17<sup>th</sup> and Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Working in conjunction with Clean Ocean Action, Barbara Benz took on the role of Beach Captain; Beach Captain training took place on 3/23 and 10/12 respectively. Participants were scheduled in two waves (9 am and 10:30 am) at the Lyman Beach Street Entrance where they were given overall directions and suggestions as to where to direct their efforts. As a result, clean-up in both instances covered nearly 100% of our 2.3 miles of beach in addition to many beach access paths.

On 4/17, 33 volunteers including 8 cub scouts collected over 12 bags of garbage. On 10/23, 17 volunteers including a group of Vanguard employees (part of their Technology Leadership Program), collected an alarming amount of small plastic debris.

Both events were advertised locally via the Ocean Star and Facebook. Emails also went out using Mantoloking Ready and the Mantoloking Reporter.

#### **Reusable Straws and MEC Table at the July 4<sup>th</sup> Townwide Celebration**

On Nov. 4, 2020, the Plastic Bag Law was enacted which among other things as of 11/4/21 prohibits the distribution of plastic straws unless specifically requested by patrons. Using Clean



Communities Grant money, the MEC therefore purchased MEC labeled reusable straws with the intent of distributing them during the July 4<sup>th</sup> Townwide Event.

A table was setup in the MYC driveway from which both these straws and MEC labeled reusable bags (left over from last year) were distributed. Also available from this table was information on the Environmental Commission, upcoming events, and maps for the Self-Guided Native Garden Tour (*more information on this below*). John Mooney, Haley Kardek, Jan O'Malley, Barbara Turro, and Barbara Benz staffed the table from 11:30 – 1:30 during the open grill and answered questions as residents walked by.

### **Native Garden Walking Tour**

Advertised on the MEC Facebook page prior to the July 4<sup>th</sup> Townwide Celebration, self-guided tours of two MEC members' native gardens (Barbara Turro and Beth Nelson) took place during the event from 11:30 – 4 pm. Maps were made available from the MEC Table and residents were encouraged to walk through each of these local gardens during the event. Approximately 10 – 12 people participated.

MEC yard signs along with the plant markings were left in place for about two months afterwards in the hopes that people crossing from Barnegat Lane to the Ocean (adjacent to Barbara Turro's home) would stop and take a look at the native plantings.

### **Climate Change Educational Event**

As part of our overall goal to educate residents as to climate change, the MEC engaged C-Change Conversations, a Princeton nonprofit. On 7/8, Dallas Hetherington, presented their hour-long non-partisan, science-based C-Change Primer presentation at the Mantoloking Yacht Club (MYC). Our thanks to the MYC for the use of their facilities. The event was a raving success with 41 people in attendance.

Advertising included the Ocean Star, Facebook, engagement with other EC orgs in the area (including Bay Head), the Bay Head Mantoloking Gazette, MYC Email updates, posters placed at the Beach Badge Shack on Downer, the PO, & the Firehouse Announcement Board, and overall word of mouth.

### **MEC/Green Team Newsletter**

Given the goal of improving communication with our residents, the MEC decided we would produce spring and fall editions of a newsletter. Barbara B. used Canva to produce both editions.

The Spring Edition was published on the Borough website and distributed via Mantoloking Ready and the Mantoloking Reporter on 6/29 and 6/30 respectively and covered the following topics:

- Upcoming Events
- Recycling News and Tips
- Using Recycle Coach
- Keeping Trash Out of our Waterways
- Mantoloking Back Door Pick-up
- Beach Water Quality Testing: DEP water sampling in Mantoloking
- Protecting Our Waterways: Stormwater runoff issues, Native Plants, NJ Fertilizer Laws, etc.



The Fall Edition was published in November and was distributed in the same manner as the spring edition. It included:

- Upcoming Events
- Document Flooding in Mantoloking (using MyCoast app)
- Don't Contaminate Recyclables
- Using Recycle Coach
- Issues with Recycling Plastic: Legislative outreach in support of the Recycled Content Bill then in the NJ Assembly
- Global Warming and Sea Level Rise in Mantoloking inclusive of Green Infrastructure ideas for the home: pervious paving systems, rain gardens, rain barrels, and green roofs.
- Skipping use of plastic straws; new law in place as of 11/4
- Reminder that OC has new more inclusive recycling rules

### **Recycling Communication and New Recycling Guide**

One of the MEC's goals for 2021 was the creation of a pictorial, easy to use Recycling Guide that would be easy to follow. Mid-year, Ocean County announced that it now has state of the art recycling facilities and as a result, Mantoloking's recycling rules changed dramatically; many new items could now be recycled.

As a stop-gap measure in communicating this information quickly to our residents, a Recycling Update was put together and distributed on 7/25 via Mantoloking Ready and the Mantoloking Reporter as well as being posted to the MEC Borough Website. The 2021 Garbage and Recycling Flyer therefore also needed to be updated. This was done by Barbara Benz and reposted on the Garbage and Recycling portion of the Borough website.

Working with All Points Printing & Graphics in Point Pleasant, the new Ocean County rules for recycling were laid out in an 8.5" x 11" two-sided folded pictorially based handout. As was the plan in order to keep costs down, it was then mailed out along with the CRS mailing to residents on 8/1.

### **Resident Pamphlet: Environmental Advice for Landscaping/Construction**

This particular initiative was conceived of as part of our objective to educate residents as to the benefits of native plantings, environmentally sensitive lawns, pool drainage tips, etc. Due to lack of resources, this pamphlet never came to be in 2021. However, it is targeted for completion and will be part of a grant application in 2022.

### **Ongoing MEC Facebook Postings**

MEC's Facebook page activity has increased dramatically this year in line with our objective to communicate more frequently to our residents. Over 80 posts took place that covered a wide range of topics included but not limited to:

- All MEC Events
- Mosquito Control
- 2021 OC Shredding and Hazardous Waste Program
- Pollinators in gardens/native gardens
- Adopt a local storm drain
- NJ Back Bay Risk Management Study
- Christmas Tree Disposal



- New OC Recycling Rules
- Use of MyCoast App in reporting local flooding
- Recycled Content Bill call to actions
- Dune Grass Disbursement
- Plastic Bag Law calls to action/Choose to Reuse/Bag Up NJ Campaigns
- Information on Large-Scale Offshore Wind Projects
- Proper Disposal of American Flags
- Keep Off the Seabeach Amaranth on our beaches
- Wildlife postings including sightings of Piping Plovers, Least Turns, and Eastern Box Turtles; Cygnet rescue; Osprey migration
- Basket Stations for Beach Clean-up at Beach Entrances
- Composting/Recycling Food Scraps
- Earth Day Events

### **Other 2021 Accomplishments**

#### **Removal of Dead/Dying Black Pines and Crepe Myrtle Maintenance**

John Wesson has continued to put in many hours of his time in cutting down and removing dead pine trees on the Ocean Ave. right-of-way and adjacent to the power station on the south end of town. In May, adjacent to this land including Mr. Wesson's property, 25 stumps were ground out by All Jersey Shore Tree Removal.

During Aug., John noted that about 30 Crepe Myrtles located along Ocean Ave. between Bay Head and Herbert St. needed trimming at their bases. He then proceeded to trim all of these trees filling the back of his pick-up truck several times over. Work concluded by Oct.

#### **Sustainable Jersey Grant**

The MEC applied for a grant from PSE&G Sustainable Jersey on 4/9/21. Work took place in lumping a number of different initiatives together under the guise of, "Environmental and Recycling Community Outreach". Initiatives included were the "Environmental Advice for Landscaping/Construction", Recycling Mailer, A-Frame signs, and MEC/Green Team shirts. Word was received in June that we were unfortunately not awarded the \$2,000 grant but were encouraged to reapply during the next cycle in early 2022. Planning has already begun for this next cycle.

#### **DEP/Planning Board**

The owner of 915 Barnegat Lane submitted a Freshwater Wetlands Permit #6 request to the DEP which the MEC became aware of in September. A letter of opposition was therefore drafted and sent to the responsible NJDEP project managers on Oct.4<sup>th</sup>. The MEC is adamant in its position that if the marshy area of this lot is filled, there would be habitat loss and further aggravate stormwater drainage problems in this area of town.



## Education

- Sustainable Jersey Webinars:
  - 2021 Sustainable Jersey Grant Cycle Funded by the PSEG Foundation, 3/16, attended by Barbara B.
  - NJ Sustainability Virtual Summit – May 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>. Sessions attended:
    - 5/17, A Look At Where We Are and the Road Ahead (Barbara B.)
    - 5/18, Enhance Community Water Resources Through Water Gold (Barbara B.)
    - 5/18, Education for Climate Change: A Nonpartisan Primer (John M.)
    - 5/19, Climate Interpreter: Best Practices for Talking About Climate Change (John M.)
    - 5/20, Show Me the Data! (John M.)
  - Make Your Town EV Friendly: New Statewide Model EV Ordinance; 12/7 1 – 2 pm, attended by Barbara B.
  - 2022 Sustainable Jersey Grants Cycle Program; 12/13 1 – 2 pm, attended by Barbara B.
- ANJEC Webinars:
  - Environmental Commission Fundamentals four part Webinar, on Saturdays at 9:30 AM (2/27, 3/6, 3/13, 3/20), attended by Haley and on Tuesdays at 7 PM (3/2, 3/9, 3/16, 3/23) attended by John M.
  - Social Media Engagement for Environmental Commissions Webinar, 4/8, attended by Barbara T. and Barbara B.
  - ANJEC Clean Energy Update, 5/19, 7 pm, attended by Barbara B and John M.
  - Advancing Stormwater Management, 6/16, 7-8 pm; attended by Barbara B. and Barbara T.
  - Rolling Out the New Plastic Pollution Reduction Law, 6/22, 12 noon – 1 pm; attended by Barbara B.
  - ANJEC Environmental Congress:
    - 10/20, Stormwater Management: Challenges and Solutions, attended by Barbara B and John M.
    - 10/21, Tools for Climate Action attended by Barbara B and John M.
    - 10/22, Social Media Tools for Environmental Commissions, attended by Barbara B.
  - ANJEC Stormwater Focus Group; 11/10 6 – 8 pm; attended by Barbara B.
- US Army Corps of Engineers:
  - In partnership with NJDEP, NJ Back Bays Coastal Storm Risk Management Study, 5/18, 11am – 12noon for OC; attended by Barbara B. and Barbara T.
  - US Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District & Marine Design Center: NJ Back Bays Coastal Storm Risk Management Study Webinar, 9/21, 1-2:30 pm; attended by Barbara B.
- Rutgers educational events:
  - Marine Extension Program Seminar Series, Horseshoe Crabs in NJ: An Ancient Spies in Modern Times, 3/29, attended by Jan O'Malley.
  - Marine Extension Program Seminar Series, Striped Bass Management: Hooked on Science, 4/26, attended by Jan O'Malley.
  - Marine Extension Program Seminar Series through Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Hurricanes and the Mid Atlantic Cold Pool: How our regional ocean can protect coastal communities, 5/24, 6:30 – 8 pm, attended by Jan O.
  - Rutgers, NJ Climate Change Resource Center: Harmful Algal Blooms, 6/16, 12 noon – 1:30 pm; attended by Barbara B.



- NJ Climate Change Resource Center at Rutgers: The Cost of Climate Change, 6/24, attended by John M.
- Marine Extension Program Seminar Series (MEPSS) through Rutgers Cooperative Extension: Rising Seas on New Jersey’s Coasts, 8/30, 6:30 - 8:00 PM; attended by Jan & John M.
- Marine Extension Program Seminar Series (MEPSS) through Rutgers Cooperative Extension – Status and Future of NJ Tidal Marshes in the Face of Sea Level Rise; 11/29 6:30-8 pm; attended by John Mooney.
- Jersey Friendly Yards:
  - Designing Gardens to Support the Native Web of Life, 7/13, 7 – 8 pm; attended by Barbara T.
  - Soil, Water and Light – Tips for a Successful Garden Design, 9/14, 7 – 8 pm; attended by Barbara T.
- Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Rain Garden Webinar, 3/18, attended by Barbara T.
- Clean Ocean Action: Beach Captain Training Webinar, 3/23, attended by Barbara B.
- Save Barnegat Bay: The Story of Plastic Webinar, 4/7, attended by John Mooney.
- Annual National Land Conservation Conference of the Land Trust Alliance recorded presentation: Storms and Floods: Talking with Conservatives about Water and Climate, a joint presentation of the Watershed Institute and C-Change Conversations, viewed by John M on the C-Change Conversations website during Oct.
- BHEC special presentation on Residential Flooding, 11/9, attended by Barbara T. virtually and John W. in person.

**2021 Membership**

The Mantoloking Environmental Commission had several changes made to our membership in 2021. John Mooney was appointed in January and Haley Kardek resigned in Oct. due to her relocation to the West coast for Law School where she plans on majoring in Environmental Law; we are so proud of her!

According to the Green Team Ordinance #729, all Environmental Commission members are also Green Team Members. However, with the recent modification of this ordinance that allows “participants from the community at large”, we officially welcomed both Jan O’Malley and Peter Andruss in Dec. although Jan O’Malley has been participating as a Green Team Member since her resignation as Chair effective 12/31/19.

<b>MEC Team Members</b>	
Barbara Hood Benz, Chair	Chair
Denise Boughton	
John Mooney	
Beth Nelson	Planning Board Liaison
Barbara Turro	
John Wesson	Planning Board Liaison
<b>Green Team Members</b>	
Peter Andruss	
Jan O’Malley	

**2021 MEC/Green Team Meeting Schedule**

- Zoom Meetings: Jan. 26, Feb. 23, Mar. 23, Apr. 27, May 26, Jun. 22, July 27, Aug. 24, Sept. 28, Dec. 28
- Meetings at Borough Hall in conjunction with teleconference: Oct. 26, Nov. 30