

2021
Annual Report

Franklin Township
Environmental
Commission

*Prepared by the Franklin Township Environmental
Commission
May 31, 2022*





ESTABLISHMENT, MEMBERSHIP, AND MEETINGS

How does the Franklin Township Environmental Commission function?



Establishment of the Franklin Township Environmental Commission



- ◊ The State of New Jersey passed legislation in 1968 that governed the establishment, powers, and responsibilities of Environmental Commissions (NJSA 40:56A)
- ◊ In August 1974, Ordinance #676 was adopted by the Franklin Township Council
- ◊ This Ordinance established the Township's Environmental Commission and outlined its powers and responsibilities:
 - ◊ Inform residents on environmental matters and ways to protect the environment
 - ◊ Interact with neighboring Commissions and other organizations concerning regional and State environmental issues
 - ◊ Develop and maintain an inventory of environmental resources and land use constraints of the Township
- ◊ The Commission used the contents of this Ordinance, as well as guidance from the State's legislation, to create a Mission Statement and a specific set of charges to guide their work

- *Sketch Credit: Barbara Pretz
ANJEC's Environmental Commissioners Handbook*



Mission and Charge



The mission of the Franklin Township Environmental Commission is:

“Working to preserve and protect our precious natural resources and quality of life in all parts of the Township”

The charge of the Environmental Commission includes:

◊ Advise/Inform/Educate

◊ Township Council, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, other Township Committees, and residents about environmental policies, legislation, health impacts, conservation strategies, and sustainability

◊ Advocate

◊ Open space planning and preservation
◊ Projects and programs that encourage and advance sustainability

◊ Act

◊ Maintain Sustainable Jersey Certification
◊ Perform stream cleanups, hold educational programs, and other host other activities that promote environmental health

Charge of the Franklin Township EC (continued)



◊ Create

- ◊ Environmental Resources Inventory and update it accordingly
- ◊ Workshops and public meetings to discuss important environmental legislation, policies, and more
- ◊ Educational information regarding current projects and problems and post regularly on the Township's website and social media outlets

◊ Participate

- ◊ In Franklin Days and local community events to promote the mission of the Environmental Commission
- ◊ As requested by Township committees and boards to promote environmental health and justice, as well as conservation of natural resources

◊ Review, Inspect and Research

- ◊ Proposed development before the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment with feedback related to tree replacement, EV Charging Stations, green infrastructure to mitigate increased stormwater runoff, bicycle access and other transportation alternatives, and more
- ◊ Grant opportunities to implement environmental and sustainability projects

Meetings Throughout 2021



- ◊ Meetings are typically held on the first and third Mondays of each month at 7:00pm
- ◊ Due to restrictions still in place for the Covid-19 pandemic, **ALL** meetings had to be held virtually using the Township's WebEx platform
 - ◊ Meetings were advertised on the Township's website showing WebEx information and links (<https://www.franklintwpnj.org/committees-commissions/environmental-commission/board-meetings/-toggle-allpast>)
 - ◊ Meetings were recorded and made available on the Township's website and YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/TownshipofFranklin>)
 - ◊ Site Plans were reviewed online – the Township began posting all site plans, applications, and application materials on the Planning Board website (<https://www.franklintwpnj.org/committees-commissions/planning-board/application-materials>) and the Zoning Board of Adjustment website (<https://www.franklintwpnj.org/committees-commissions/zoning-board-of-adjustment/application-materials>)
- ◊ The Environmental Commission met **22** times (virtually) in 2021

DATE	LINK TO MEETING	DATE	LINK TO MEETING
January 11, 2021	https://youtu.be/Ec1Epuc2YXI	July 19, 2021	https://youtu.be/uko7vO7-gKg
February 1, 2021	https://youtu.be/fifZrZzDrzQ	August 2, 2021	https://youtu.be/J7yBUMxVoll
February 15, 2021	https://youtu.be/UDP_zoN8d2o	August 16, 2021	https://youtu.be/-RUTjuZgQSQ
March 1, 2021	https://youtu.be/RGoeJ66-DLo	August 30, 2021	https://youtu.be/439AnZQoPWs
March 15, 2021	https://youtu.be/-QyJ_vggq8s	September 20, 2021	https://youtu.be/8TtGTjllmGQ
April 5, 2021	https://youtu.be/EHbHAXpLABM	October 4, 2021	https://youtu.be/59k2RYi_uyg
April 19, 2021	https://youtu.be/gKNYZYPUiBs	October 18, 2021	https://youtu.be/dnkRiXdaBEI
May 3, 2021	https://youtu.be/1nxctAeygtY	November 1, 2021	https://youtu.be/r2RPUYXB5_k
May 17, 2021	https://youtu.be/5tPGaeJqnmq	November 15, 2021	https://youtu.be/wJS9Ph1WjPY
June 7, 2021	https://youtu.be/Xr2dWWuTXH4	December 6, 2021	https://youtu.be/Q1Rpo4GW5Mk
June 21, 2021	https://youtu.be/-jyNPLyFK7g	December 20, 2021	https://youtu.be/S2Obg6V2EsY



Commissioners in 2021



- ◊ Walter Andrews, Chair
- ◊ Paul Walitsky, Vice-Chair
- ◊ Councilman Ted Chase, Liaison from Township Committee
- ◊ Arnold Schmidt
- ◊ Jessica Johnson
- ◊ Stanislav Jaracz
- ◊ Robin Suydam
- ◊ Maria Santiago-Valentin
- ◊ Cecile MacIvor (resigned mid-year)
- ◊ Diane Pydeski (resigned mid-year)
- ◊ Eusebio Pires (joined at the end of the year)
- ◊ Tara Kenyon, AICP/PP – Sustainability Coordinator (hired in July 2021)





ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

What did we achieve in 2021?

1. Development Review



- ◊ In 2021, the Franklin Township Environmental Commission reviewed 30 development applications before the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment
- ◊ Because of the virtual nature of meetings in 2021, the process for site plan review was performed as follows:
 - ◊ Chairman and Sustainability Coordinator divided the plans for the upcoming meeting and reviewed the site plans and application materials
 - ◊ Mapping analysis to identify natural resources and environmental constraints was completed using the New Jersey Conservation Foundation's Conservation Blueprint (<https://njmap2.com/>) and the Township's Spatial Data Logic platform (<https://www.sdlportal.com/towns/nj/somerset/franklintwp>)
 - ◊ Recommendations were developed and shared with the full Commission at a regularly scheduled EC meeting
 - ◊ Additional recommendations from the EC were added into a final draft
 - ◊ The final draft then conveyed into a Memorandum to the Secretary for the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment, and included in the application materials before the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment

What Were Some of the Recommendations Made by the EC in 2021?



EV Charging Stations

Anti-Idling Signage

Bicycle Racks and Bike Repair Stations

Pervious Pavement

Increased Onsite Tree Replacement

Native Species for Landscaping

Solar Panels

Green Roofs

Rain Gardens

New: Green Land Development Checklist



- ◊ To perform a more consistent and comprehensive review of development plans, the Franklin Township Environmental Commission created a Green Land Development Checklist in 2021
- ◊ The GLDC is a hybrid of model Green Land Development Checklists created by the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) and Sustainable Jersey
- ◊ The GLDC began being used for all reviews in September 2021. Its use has already provided the following benefits:
 - ◊ GLDC can be saved for future reference, and used in developing the Memorandum to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment
 - ◊ Because of the uniformity of the review, any Commissioner who wants to do the initial review will be guided through the same process
 - ◊ The GLDC looks at many natural resources and environmental constraints, as well as environmental justice
 - ◊ The development and use of the GLDC can be submitted for points towards Sustainable Jersey Recertification



New: Requirements for EV Charging Stations

- ◊ According to P.L. 2021, c.171 (“The Electric Vehicle Charging Station Act”), 15% of all new parking spaces must be “Make Ready” for multi-family developments, and 4% of all parking (existing and proposed) for commercial developments
- ◊ The corresponding electric vehicle charging stations must be installed over a six-year period:
 - ◊ 1/3 at time completion of construction
 - ◊ 1/3 within 3 years of completion of construction
 - ◊ Remaining 1/3 at within 6 years of completion of construction)
- ◊ The Environmental Commission verified the calculations submitted by developers for the required EV Charging Stations – if the calculation was incorrect or was not performed, this was noted in the Memorandum to the Secretary of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment



EV Charging Station at Municipal Building



2. Hiring of a Sustainability Coordinator

- ◊ Prior to 2021, Franklin Township Environmental Commission did not have a consistent Staff person to assist with the its charge and responsibilities
- ◊ In July 2021, the Township hired a Sustainability Coordinator (consultant) to provide 10 hours per month in staffing specifically for the Environmental Commission
- ◊ The duties of the Sustainability Coordinator include:
 - ◊ Drafting agendas for the Chairman's approval, sending agenda and meeting materials to the Commission, and posting the agenda and minutes on the Township's website
 - ◊ Attending and assisting with the facilitating of Environmental Commission meetings
 - ◊ Performing site plan review
 - ◊ Compiling and submitting the Sustainable Jersey Certification application
 - ◊ Assisting with the drafting of the Annual Report
 - ◊ Working on project-specific tasks (i.e., GLDC, Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study)
 - ◊ Identifying grant opportunities
 - ◊ Reviewing and briefing the Commission on pertinent legislation
 - ◊ Assisting with social media and website postings



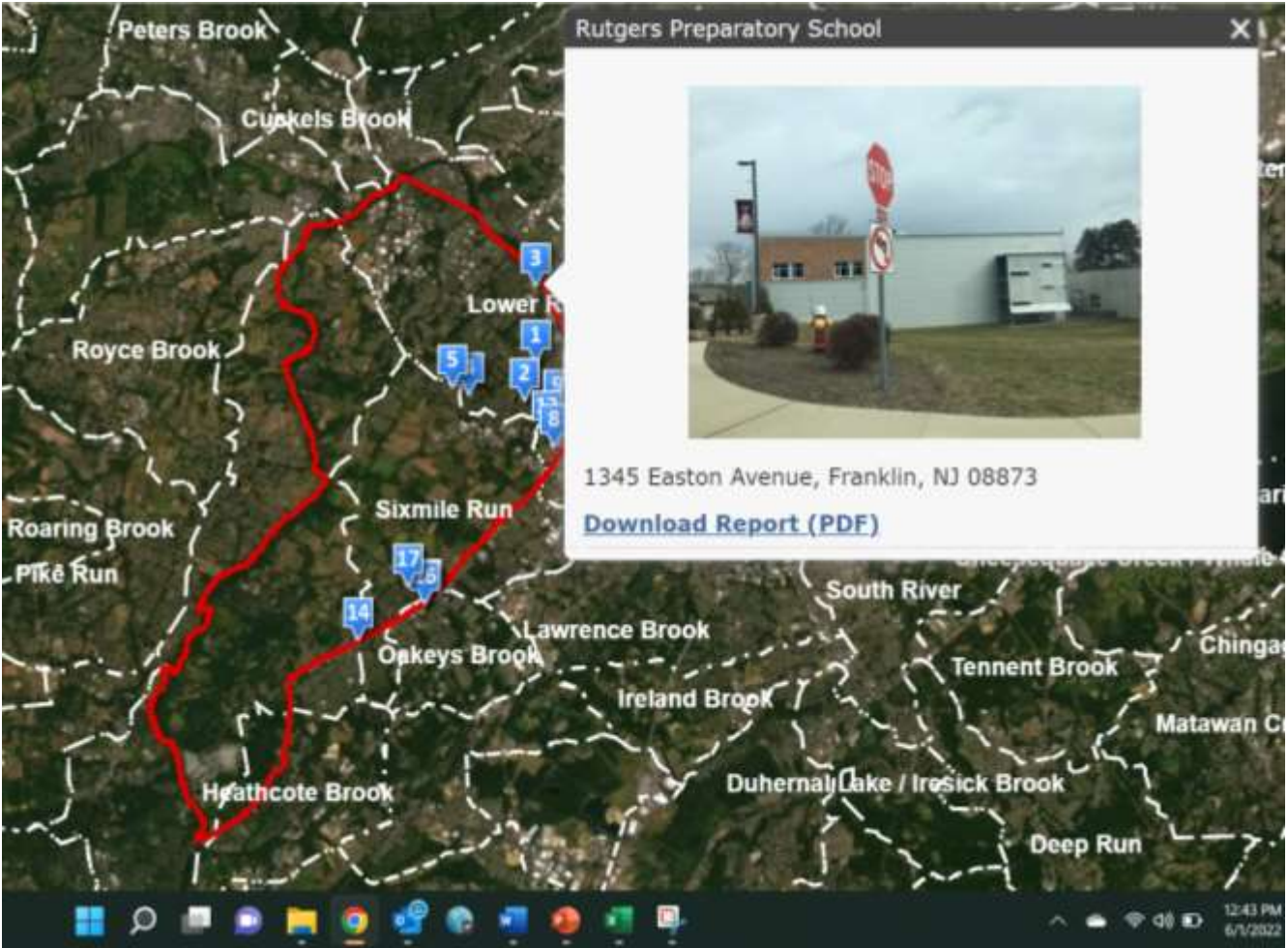
3. Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study

- ◊ Through a \$20,000 grant awarded by Sustainable Jersey in 2020, the Franklin Township Environmental Commission continued its work with the Rutgers University Water Resources Program to develop a Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study
 - ◊ This Study includes 3 reports:
 - ◊ *Impervious Coverage Assessment* (updated from 2015)
 - ◊ *Remediation Action Plan* (updated from 2015)
 - ◊ *Green Infrastructure Action Plan* (anticipated completion is early 2022)
- <http://water.rutgers.edu/Projects/FranklinTwp-SomersetCo/FranklinTwp.html>
- ◊ The first two reports were completed in 2021, and updated existing data
 - ◊ An interactive web map was developed, allowing the user to look at 17 recommended projects across the Township on public and private lands
 - ◊ The *Green Infrastructure Action Plan* will include conceptual designs for one project, along with cost estimates and runoff/pollutant loading calculations
 - ◊ The full Study can be submitted for 25 points towards Sustainable Jersey Certification

3. Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study



Subwatershed	Total Runoff Volume for the 1.25" NJ Water Quality Storm (MGal)	Total Runoff Volume for the NJ Annual Rainfall of 44" (MGal)	Total Runoff Volume for the 2-Year Design Storm (3.3") (MGal)	Total Runoff Volume for the 10-Year Design Storm (4.9") (MGal)	Total Runoff Volume for the 100-Year Design Storm (7.8") (MGal)
Heathcote Brook	2.2	76.8	5.6	8.2	13.2
Mile Run	20.0	705.7	51.6	75.4	121.6
Millstone River	38.2	1,344.5	98.4	143.6	231.6
Oakeys Brook	0.8	28.7	2.1	3.1	4.9
Raritan River (Lower)	91.4	3,215.8	235.3	343.5	554.0
Royce Brook	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Six-Mile Run	35.8	1,258.5	92.1	134.4	216.8
Total	188.4	6,630.0	485.2	708.2	1,142.2
Total Change from 2015 ICA	Up 144.0	Up 5,070.2	Up 380.3	Up 576.2	Up 944.9



Stormwater Runoff Volumes from Impervious Surfaces
 Source: 2021 Impervious Coverage Assessment for Franklin Township

Interactive Web Map (screenshot)
 Source: http://water.rutgers.edu/Projects/FranklinTwp-SomersetCo/Franklin_Somerset/index.html

4. Stream Cleanup



- The Franklin Township Environmental Commission partnered with the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership and The Watershed Institute to perform a much-needed stream cleanup at Naaman Williams Park (42 Matilda Avenue) on April 17, 2021
- Event was advertised on the Township’s website and social media in English and Spanish, as well as on the LRWP and TWI websites
- Approximately 2,000 pounds of trash was collected by 70+ volunteers





Expenditures

Costs incurred during 2021

Expenditures in 2021



- ◊ The Franklin Township Environmental Commission has a budget within the Planning Board’s budget
- ◊ The EC historically incurs expenses for ANJEC membership and the costs of plaques for recipients of the Environmental Stewardship Award
- ◊ In 2021, costs incurred by the EC substantially increased from years past due to the hiring of the Sustainability Coordinator

Expense	Date Expense Incurred	Total Cost (2021)
ANJEC Annual Membership	April 13, 2021	\$375.00
Plaques for Environmental Stewardship Award Winners (2)	October 21, 2021	\$150.00
Sustainability Coordinator	August 4, 2021 – December 14, 2021	\$10,000.00 (full contract billed)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES (2021)		\$10,525.00



Vision for 2022

What is the Franklin EC planning to work on next year?



Projects for 2022



- ◊ **Completion of the Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study and construction of one project**
 - ◊ The final document of the Study (*Green Infrastructure Action Plan*) is anticipated for early 2023
 - ◊ The GIAP will include conceptual designs for one of the recommended projects – Franklin EC will work with Rutgers and the Township DPW to construct this project on municipal property
- ◊ **Participation in the Adopt-A-Drain Program**
 - ◊ Franklin EC will work with Hamline University to implement the voluntary Adopt-A-Drain Program in Franklin Township
 - ◊ This program will have a substantial impact on stormwater drain management and flooding prevention
- ◊ **Assist with the submission of the Sustainable Jersey Recertification**
 - ◊ The Recertification application is due in August 2022 – the Franklin EC will assist with the compilation of project narratives and documentation



**ADOPT
A STORM
DRAIN**





For More Information:

Website: <https://Franklintwpnj.org/environmental>

Email: Environmental.Commission@franklinnj.gov

Facebook: [@TownshipofFranklin](#)

