



Annual Report

Summary of Green Team
Accomplishments for 2017

Township of Ewing



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

EWING GREEN TEAM

June 3, 2018

Ewing Township, NJ
2 Jake Garzio Drive
Ewing, NJ 08628

MAYOR

Bert H. Steinmann

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Kevin Baxter
Jennifer Keyes-Maloney
David Schroth
Sarah Steward
Kathy Wollert

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY JOANNE MULLOWNEY FOR THE 2017 EWING GREEN
TEAM

Joanne Mallowney, Co-Chair; Michael Nordquist, Co-Chair, Malissa Arnold, Secretary; Evan
Crumiller and Caroline Steward, Membership

Valorie Caffee, Lisa Feldman, John Hoegl, Joseph Mirabella, Mark Wetherbee

Tom Elder, Staff Rep.; David Schroth, Council Rep.; James McManimon, Admin Rep.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following a year of singular accomplishments in 2016 when Ewing Township received its first Sustainable Jersey Silver Certification and recognition as a Sustainability Champion for medium-sized municipalities, 2017 was designated as a year of recovery and rebuilding for the Ewing Green Team by Team leadership. Sustainable Jersey recognition revolves around a 3 year cycle, and it was determined to take 2017 to reenergize the team with educational seminars during the monthly meetings, while maintaining our regular activities such as the Scarecrow Contest, Bike Ride, and Garden Tour (and Contest)...

The Ewing Green Team's Strategic Plan,¹ created during the 2014-2105 Community Visioning process, continues to guide the team in completing actions for our Sustainable Jersey certification. A new effort was undertaken by the Neighborhood Committee, that of the creation of a Ewing Township Welcome Booklet. The initiative, which fulfills one of the charges outlined in the Strategic Plan, is underway and expected to be completed by the middle of 2018. The team continued its efforts to promote a more bikeable community through the efforts of the Bike Committee with its **Annual Fall Spin**. Lisa Feldman continued her efforts to promote the Arts with the town's award-winning **Scarecrow Contest** which has been successfully married to the annual Trunk or Treat event held at the end of every October at the ESCC, and Joanne Mallowney worked on beautification efforts using the vehicle of the Garden Tour and Contest.

The Ewing EAB Partnership continued its Emerald Ash Borer remediation efforts and almost 100 trees were planted in town as a part of this grant. We hope to conclude the grant in early 2018.

The team continues its active participation in regional sustainability efforts through the [Mercer County Sustainability Coalition](#), the county-wide coalition which aims to address environmental concerns that span municipal borders. Ewing continues to be a central figure in the institutionalization of the organization.

We extend our thanks to Mayor Bert Steinmann and Township Business Administrator Jim McManimon who have been key partners in helping us attain our goals, Township Council for their support, and in particular, Recreation Department Director Ted Forst, who also worked with us to complete a number of important projects.

We also owe great thanks to numerous other boards, committees and organizations in town with whom we partnered to complete activities including, but not limited to, the Ewing Environmental Commission, the Arts Commission, the Planning Board, the Ewing Township Historic Preservation Society, the Girl Scouts, the TCNJ Bonner Community Scholars, Art Has No Boundaries and the West Trenton Garden Club.

In addition, we thank the following local businesses for their support with our various activities during the year: River Horse, Ewing Home Depot, Ocean Spray, and Sea Breeze for their support of the Rain

¹http://ewinggreenteam.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/strategic_plan_edited_final_with_visioning_summary.pdf

Barrel Workshop; Ewing ShopRite, the Trenton Farmer's Market and 31 & Main Farmer's Market for their support of the Ewing Better Bag Project; Minuteman Press for its continued donation of print materials for the Garden Tour; and Kales Nursery and Landscape Service, Ace Stone Supply, Jack's Nursery and Landscaping, Stony Brook Gardens, Bountiful Gardens, Mazur Nursery, Gino's Nursery, and Shady Brook Farm for their donation of prizes for the Garden Contest. We could not have accomplished as much without their generous support.

STRATEGIC PLAN WORK CONTINUES

The [*Ewing Green Team Strategic Sustainability Plan*](#), the result of the Team's Community Visioning process in 2015, coupled with our mission of completing actions aimed at maintaining Ewing's Sustainable Jersey certification, continued to guide EGT activities in 2017.

EMERALD ASH BORER GRANT

Work continued on completing the goals of a \$20K PSE&G Foundation grant received thru the Sustainable Jersey grant program. A public meeting was held in February to inform residents about the threat posed by the Emerald Ash Borer and remediation efforts that they might undertake to reduce the threats on their properties. Information was presented by NJ State Certified Forester Bill Brash and Bob Wells of Princeton Nurseries. The turnout was strong and the informational session was well received by attendees.



We also contracted to plant approximately 80 trees with the funds provided by the grants in a number of locations around the Township, including the Ewing Senior and Community Center, the front of the Municipal Building, and Olden Ave. along the property owned by Incarnation Church. These were planted in late May. By fall, it became apparent that there were some losses due to the hot, dry summer season and the failure to become established due to the late planting. However, the contract had a one year guarantee and called for replacement of all lost trees. We contacted the contractor about replacement trees and all trees will be inspected in early spring and replacement trees will be planted. Bill Brash supervised the installation of the trees and dealt with the contractor during the installation. Green Team and Environmental Commission members Lee Farnham, Ann Farnham, Dan Burke and Joanne Mallowney all contributed to this effort.

MERCER GREEN FEST

For a 6th year of successful collaboration, the Ewing Green Team continued its participation in the *Mercer Green Fest*, the local area green fair run



each March at the Rider University Alumni Gymnasium. This partnership has solidified and is run under the auspices of the Mercer County Sustainability Coalition.

Three EGT members, Lisa Feldman, John Hoegl, and Joanne Mallowney, participate in the weekly planning meetings and the Ewing Green Team takes on leadership roles in the event. Attendance has leveled out at about 1100 attendees but is considered a strong turnout.

WASTE EDUCATION

The Ewing Green Team continues to help staff and promote the biannual Township Shred Days. These are an excellent opportunity to interact with the public and distribute informational materials on matters ranging from Grasscycling to Invasive Plants to Sustainable Landscaping tips. In addition, the EGT continues to maintain our independent website, [Ewing Recycles](#), to better inform residents about proper disposal of household materials.

The Green Team also worked with Eagle Scout candidate Patrick Otey on his **Ewing Better Bag Campaign** during the summer. This was an educational campaign aimed at reducing plastic bag usage and the amount of plastic in the waste stream. Patrick and fellow Scouts, aided by Green Team members Mark Wetherbee and Lisa Feldman interacted one-on-one with shoppers during three outreach events held at the Ewing ShopRite, the Trenton Farmers Market and the Farmers Market at 31 & Main at Campus Town at TCNJ in early July. They handed out educational literature that they created for the campaign and reusable bags that were donated by Ewing Township and Mercer County. They also conducted a survey about plastic bag usage by the consumers and solicited pledges from participants to remember to use their new reusable bags. They conducted a total of 240 surveys and received a total of 230 pledges. Additional information was collected from the surveys that the Ewing Green Team will be looking at in greater detail in the coming months. This was an important supplement to outreach we had conducted in the past, taking it to the source of the problem – the check-out counter.



FIGURE 1 - CAMPUS TOWN OUTREACH DAY

BEAUTIFY EWING CAMPAIGN

The EGT has continued its collaboration with local Girl Scout Troop #70138 and the West Trenton Garden Club to hold a **3rd Annual Through the Garden Gate Tour** of Ewing and **Garden Contest** on the weekend of September 16th and 17th. The tour was held to promote beautification, sustainability, and youth development. We believe that showcasing some of Ewing's noteworthy gardens is a great way to engage more people in beautifying Ewing. Communities like Buffalo, NY, with their Garden Walk, have used garden tours as engines of economic development and civic pride which we hope to emulate.

Eighteen gardens were showcased during the weekend. In addition, a garden contest was held to encourage more gardeners to show off their gardens. Numerous local nurseries generously donated prizes for contest participants.



We were delighted with the turn out and the number of gardeners that participated in both the tour and the contest. We hope that this will be the beginning of successful collaborations in the future to engage gardeners in beautification while promoting sustainable landscaping practices.

EWING COMMUNITY GARDENS

The Green Team continues to work with plot holders at the Ewing Community Gardens through the Garden Council organized by the EGT in 2013 to promote the interests of the gardeners. Cleanups, as well as social and educational gatherings, are organized as needed. 2017 Garden Council leaders were Karen Serach, Christine Petty, and Shelby Roberts, who did an outstanding job maintaining lines of communication between all gardeners and Township officials, as well as overseeing the management of the gardens. They developed a series of informational meetings and clean-up events at the gardens. The gardens were again fully subscribed in 2017.

RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Joanne partnered with Andrew Garcia, the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador for the year to run a rain barrel workshop on June 3rd, which had been requested by a number of residents. Andrew collected 31 barrels during his term from River Horse, Ocean Spray and Sea Breeze that we refitted as rain barrels during the event. The Ewing Home Depot generously donated about \$250 in materials so that we could offer the event



for the low cost of only \$10 apiece. Andrew also created and gave an excellent presentation about the importance of saving water to the local watershed. We had takers for all of our barrels and also managed to save a couple to give away as prizes for the Garden Contest.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

Attendees at the 2014/15 visioning meetings described Ewing as a community of neighborhoods. During the meeting, as people learned about activities going on in the different neighborhoods, it became clear that all Ewing residents would benefit from an organized way to share information. In 2016 the Green team invited interested members from the community to help us identify neighborhoods within Ewing Township. The information gathered was ultimately used to develop an asset map which began to describe neighborhood boundaries and highlight community resources such as parks, schools, churches, and municipal services.

Since the ultimate goal of asset mapping is to increase awareness of the diverse amenities that are available within the borders of Ewing; in 2017 the Green Team's neighborhood committee under the direction of Caroline Steward began work on the creation of a Ewing Welcome Booklet. It is our hope that it will build community connections and better inform current and future Ewing residents of the richness of resources available to our community and highlight the reasons why we all choose to live in town. This brochure will be available in predominately electronic format, but we are planning to also provide a condensed printed version.

3RD ANNUAL EWING FALL SPIN

The EGT's third bike tour of Ewing was held on Saturday, September 23rd in conjunction with Ewing's 2017 Community Fest. This effort was spearheaded by Garry Keel and members of the Bike Advocacy Committee, Pete Boughton, Bob Kirby, Steve Czelusniak, Patrice Coleman-Boatwright and run in cooperation with Ted Forst and the Ewing Recreation Department.



Nearly 50 riders, including a team from the Ewing Police Department, participated in the bike event that began and ended at Campus Town. Mayor Bert Steinmann kicked off the ride at the college's Campus Town. Bikers had the option of a short 8-mile tour of Ewing neighborhoods, or a longer, 18-mile tour. Upon completion of the ride, bikers were invited over to Community Fest to join in with the fun and festivities that were already underway.



The theme for this year's ride, "Bike Riding for a Healthier You" was organized in part, to highlight September as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, and all proceeds from the event were donated to the American Cancer Society's Run for Dad event in support of prostate cancer awareness and research.

Event goals included raising the awareness of public officials for the need for a more bikeable community and promoting healthy lifestyles.

4TH ANNUAL SCARECROW CONTEST AND AUTUMN FESTIVAL

The 4th Annual Scarecrow Contest, the award-winning action spearheaded by EGT member Lisa Feldman, was held on October 29th at the *Ewing Community Fall Festival* which featured the popular annual *Trunk or Treat* Halloween celebration and pumpkin painting, build-your-own scarecrow crafting with music and refreshments at the ESCC.

The event has grown bigger and better each year since its inception. In 2017 we had an excellent turnout with 27 scarecrow submissions by individuals, school teams, Girl Scouts, Boys Scouts and seniors.

Judging for the Scarecrow contest was graciously done by members of Council and the local Arts community. Monetary prizes in the amount of \$100, \$50 and \$25 were awarded to the top three submissions.



MERCER COUNTY SUSTAINABILITY COALITION

The EGT also continues to build partnerships within Mercer County by its participation in the Mercer County Sustainability Coalition, the coalition of green teams and sustainability organizations in Mercer County. The MCSC is one of a number of “hubs” existing in the state and works regionally to promote sustainability initiatives.



Ewing Green Team members, John Hoegl, Lisa Feldman and Joanne Mullaney represent Ewing at the monthly meetings. Joanne administers the group’s websites, mercersustainabilitycoalition.org and mercergreenfest.org, as well as administering the group’s Facebook page. The primary effort of the group each year is the Mercer Green Fest.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Community education and outreach remains a significant focus of Green Team efforts and resources. The team maintains a regular presence at local community events including **National Night Out** in August, **Community Fest** in September, and the **Mercer Green Fest** in March.

In addition, the Team has continued its Environmental Insights Series, a series of lectures, films and discussions, since 2014. The aim of this series is to start a public conversation in town about critical environmental issues. Current Environmental Commission Chair and Green Team member Joe Mirabella is heavily invested in this outreach, contributing regularly since the series inception. 2017 offerings included:



- **The Sustainable State of Ewing Township Schools**, presented by Dennis Nettleton on January 25th.
- **An Emerald Ash Borer Information Session** presented by Bill Brash and Bob Wells on February 22nd.
- **Environmental Justice** presented by Michael Nordquist on March 22nd.
- **Be Water Smart: Learn Strategies for Water Efficient Living** presented by Ed DiFiglia and Brittany Musolino of the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association on June 28th. For additional information about the series see <https://ewinggreenteam.org/environmental-insights/>.

- **Introduction to the Principles of Ecology** was presented by Joe Mirabella on September 27th. The goal of this program was to make the subject of ecology easy to understand for the non-scientist.
- A program entitled **Sustainable Fall Landscaping Tips** was presented by Joanne Mullowney on October 25th. The goal was to educate attendees about the biodiversity crisis and steps that homeowners can take/habits that they can break in their own backyards to create habitat for wildlife and help to alleviate this crisis.

The Green Team also partnered with the Environmental Commission to create a series of sustainable landscaping pamphlets for public distribution. These include:

- [Sustainable Fall Landscaping Tips](#)
- [The Dirty Dozen of Invasive Species in NJ \(sold commercially\)](#)
- [Emerald Ash Borer handout](#)

ELECTRONIC OUTREACH – THE EGT WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Electronic outreach via Facebook and the web is conducted through regular and frequent updates for our constituency. We have maintained an Internet presence at ewinggreenteam.org since the fall of 2012, as well as the [Ewing Recycles](#) website and are increasing our Facebook audience. In addition, we communicate regularly during the year with an e-newsletter. In 2017 we sent out six newsletters with 1596 unique openings, 33 website posts and over 11,754 website views.



CONCLUSION AND LOOKING FORWARD

This report summarizes the highlights of EGT activities during 2017. As we move into 2018, we plan to overview our existing Sustainable Jersey certification report and take stock of the points that will still be valid and programs that we can readily continue for the next certification effort in 2019. We will also determine which new actions we can initiate to move Ewing still forward in its quest to become a more sustainable community.

We will also continue to follow the blueprint provided by our Strategic Plan for additional activities to advance sustainability in Ewing. It is our hope to revisit the plan with another Community Visioning once the next round of certification has been completed.

We look forward to continuing to grow our relationships with local and regional partners and to involve more individuals, businesses and community organizations in our sincere efforts to shape a more sustainable future for Ewing, New Jersey.