

BORDENTOWN CITY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



Volunteers helped build a trail and clean up trash along Thorntown Creek Greenway in December

I - Administrative

- 2008 BCEC Regular members: Mike Hunninghake (Chair), Dan Kennedy, Mak Kieffer, Leona Lee, Mike Neuhaus, Pat Skelly, and Ralph Tolomeo (Vice-Chair).

- Continued BCEC membership in the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC).

- Conducted eleven regular monthly meetings at Carlslake Community Center (*August canceled*).

II - Outreach & Education

- Received input from, and addressed concerns of, Bordentown City residents at regular monthly meetings.

- Communicated with residents via regular monthly BCEC meetings; email inquiries to BCEC; email alerts to BCEC resident database; and articles and letters to the editor in the Register-News regarding pertinent local issues and public meetings. (*see Appendix*)

- Published 4 editions of BCEC newsletter, containing articles and information designed to inform and educate City and area residents about local environmental issues. Distributed newsletters at annual Street Fair and Cranberry Festival, posted on City Hall bulletin board, and distributed to local businesses. Newsletters were also distributed via e-mail to BCEC mailing list. (*See Appendix*)

- Staffed exhibit table at the Bordentown Street Fair & Cranberry Festival. Distributed environmental education material. Created and presented educational exhibit regarding local environmental issues, including the Land Use Zoning Ordinances, Conservation Element of the Master Plan, Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan, Open Space Plan, and other local issues. Gathered names/addresses for database of volunteers. Conducted free raffle of two compost bins and distributed composting information at both events.

- Maintained BCEC website. Increased the content on Local Info and Maps sections. The web site contains BCEC newsletters, links to local organizations, and photos of BCEC events and topics of local interest. Visitor traffic includes over 14,000 hits in 5 years, and approximately 150 hits per month. Website helps inform residents and reduce printing and mailing costs.

- Participated in ongoing Crosswicks Creek/Doctor's Creek Greenway regional study. This project includes five municipalities in our region, including Hamilton, Allentown, North Hanover, Plumsted and Chesterfield. Provided information and evidence as to importance of inclusion of Bordentown City in this process.

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- Responded to residents' inquiries regarding various issues and concerns.
- Distributed "Top Ten Ways to Keep Bordentown City Green" T-shirts and copies of "Special Places of Bordentown City" brochure.
- Participated in ongoing State Plan Cross-Acceptance process via Burlington County oversight.
- Maintained 6 pet waste bag dispensers at various locations throughout the City.
- Publicized new D&R Canal Towpath that will extend from Bordentown City to Trenton



Volunteers Rich Shaw, Jim Dougherty and Joe DuPree building the Thorntown Creek Trail in December

Public Events and Programs

The Environmental Commission organized, promoted and/or conducted the following programs in 2008:

- **Winter Wander (February):** organized and led a walk along City's open space areas.
- **6th Annual Earth Day Cleanup/Water Monitoring (April):** organized and directed volunteer cleanup along Thorntown Creek and water monitoring with Watershed Ambassador.
- **Lime Kiln Alley Trailbuilding/Tree Planting from NJ Tree Foundation (May):** organized and directed volunteers to lay down donated mulch on trail, remove invasive plant species, and plant free tree seedlings.
- **Lime Kiln Alley Trailbuilding Day (July):** organized and directed volunteers to lay down mulch and remove invasive plant species.

- **Fourth Annual Open Space Ramble (October),** highlighting several recent and proposed open space acquisitions, including Lime Kiln Alley/PSEG property, Railroad Avenue Promenade, and proposed Thorntown Creek Greenway. Distributed *Open Space and Trails Update* brochure/map to attendees.
- **Thorntown Creek Trailbuilding Day (December):** 15 volunteers created an 1/8 mile trail of wood chips, and removed trash along the trail.
- **Blacks Creek Greenway Open Space Open House (December):** hosted presentations by Delaware Valley College students on concept proposals for local open space.
- **Project Porchlight CFL Distribution (December):** In concert with Project Porchlight, organized more than 25 volunteers to distribute more than 1,500 energy-saving CFL bulbs to nearly every City household.
- Sponsored 6 *Earth Talks*, held the fourth Tuesday of the month, with over 250 people attending. 2008 *Earth Talks* featured films and guest speakers on topics including:
 - “Rivers and Tides” film (January)
 - The Environment in Taiwan, Rep. of China talk (February)
 - Connecting the Farm and the City talk (March)
 - Birding in Your Backyard talk (April)
 - “Crash: A Tale of Two Species” film/talk (October)
 - “King Corn” film/talk (November)

Additional outreach:

- Publicized and provided technical assistance for May Zoning ordinance public meeting.
- Organized Princeton University students for invasive plant removal on Lime Kiln Park Trail.
- Co-sponsored D&R Canal Walk from I-295 Scenic Overpass (with Friends for the Marsh and DR Greenway)

Initiatives

- Continued outreach regarding NJ Clean Power Choice and Change A Bulb Campaigns in Bordentown City. Goals are to have 2% of Bordentown City households (35) choose clean energy, and have 200 residents switch 5 incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).
- Continued creation of walking trail at Lime Kiln Park, including trail alignment and vegetation removal, and creation of woodchip-surfaced trail with weed matting and landscape tie edging.

Recycling: Investigated Bordentown Regional School District recycling policy. Initiated contacts with Bordentown Regional School District to provide recycling through Burlington County program, thereby lowering cost to City residents.

Native Plant Garden: Designed and created Native Plant Demonstration Garden at Bordentown Library. Purchased and installed plants; designed, printed and distributed native plant educational brochure. Grant-funded at no cost to City.

Pesticide Reduction: Submitted draft resolution to City Commissioners required “no pesticides in parks”.

Noise: Investigated impending paving of local section of I-295. Encouraged City to request sound-reduction measures (diamond-grinding and rubber asphalt) from NJDOT. Submitted BCEC request for same to NJDOT.

Bus Shelters: Continued liaison with State and County regarding installation of bus shelters on Park Street. Expected completion date: Spring 2009.

Speed Humps: Proposed installation of speed humps for Willow/Price Alley as pilot project for alley traffic-calming. Received in January 2009.

Open Space:

-Initiated free assessment of Open Space Planning for Blacks Creek Greenway with Environmental Design Class at Delaware Valley College. Coordinated site visits, presen-



BCEC member Leona Lee planting the new Native Plant Garden

tations and information gathering. Resulted in visioning documents, technical assistance and public outreach program.

-Met with Christ Episcopal Church regarding donation of open space for Lime Kiln Alley/Blacks Creek Greenway.

-Researched and made recommendations for removal of house on Lime Kiln Alley that is contaminated by asbestos.

-Advised three local Eagle Scouts on various local projects

- Assisted with cleanup of tires and trash on Ottavi property

- Initiated installation of **bicycle parking rack** at Carlslake Community Center.

- Continued **stream monitoring of local waterways**, including Blacks Creek, Thorntown Creek, Mile Hollow Run and Love Bridge Run.

- **Liaised with the following local and regional organizations on behalf of issues relating to Bordentown City:** Bordentown Historical Society, Bordentown City Shade Tree Committee, Downtown Bordentown Association, Bordentown City Cats, Bordentown City Gardens, Bordentown Regional School District, Bordentown Township Environmental Commission, Bordentown Library, Burlington County Rt. 206 Corridor Study, Burlington County Office of Land Use Planning, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, D&R Greenway, NJDEP, NJDOT, and Divine Word Missionaries.

III - Site Plan Review

- Reviewed development proposals and offered comments to Planning Board at regular meetings.

- Attended site meeting regarding Bordentown Township residential/retail development plan for Newbold Island area.

IV - Land Use Planning

- Participated in ongoing Bordentown City Master Plan review process. Offered input regarding environmental issues. Researched environmental zoning ordinances.

- Assisted Delaware & Raritan Greenway with open space acquisitions on Lime Kiln Alley and Oliver Street.

- Convened several open space planning meetings with representatives from D&R Greenway, Burlington County and other regional organizations

- Initiated a traffic calming proposal for two speed bumps on alley between Willow and Prince Streets.

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V - Infrastructure

Infrastructure purchases included:

- Split the cost of two cans/bottles recycling containers for Farnsworth Avenue
- 4 cases of DogiPot Pet Waste bags
- 2 Compost Bins
- 55 BCEC *Top 10 Keep Borden town Green* t-shirts
- 100 *Special Places of Bordentown City* brochures
- 100 *Bordentown City Native Plant Garden* brochures
- Outdoor Explorer Kit, consisting of guides and equipment for children, to be available at Bordentown Library for residents to check out for their children.
- 2 Kill A Watt Energy Meters, to be available at Bordentown Library for residents to check out.

VI - Grants/Funding/Awards

- Assisted D&R Greenway with grant application for \$30,000 to survey Lime Kiln Alley, remove invasive plants, create riparian buffer and provide public access to area. Grant received in January 2009.
- Provided letter of support and technical assistance for \$3,000 grant application by D&R Greenway to Conservation resources inc. for soft costs of Blacks Creek restoration project. Grant received October 2008.
- Applied for grant from NJ Water Conservation Project, for funding of a concerted water conservation outreach program in Bordentown City.
- Coordinated application and announcement of annual "NJ Green Town" award by NJ Environmental Lobby. Award received in December 2008.
- Provided input on grant-funded Railroad Avenue Promenade design.

VII-Proposed 2009 Projects

- 1- *Earth Talk* Speaker/Film Series (6 programs)

- 2- Tables at Street Fair and Cranberry Festival
- 3- Eco-Tours of proposed open space and trails (Blacks Creek, Thorntown Creek, D&R Canal Towpath)
- 4- Thorntown Greenway/Lime Kiln Alley trails development
- 5- Earth Day Cleanup
- 6- Additional plantings at Native Plant Garden at Bordentown Library
- 7- Purchase of recycling containers for business district
- 8- Community Wildlife Habitat education/development project

Appendices

- 1- Press clippings/correspondence
- 2- 2008 BCEC quarterly newsletters
- 3- Photo gallery

Many thanks to Mayor Collom, Commissioner Wehrman, Commissioner Lynch, Sam Surtees, Bob Erickson and the Public Works Department, Pat McGowan, and Jennifer Ficarrota for their support and assistance. Thanks also to the hundreds of residents and visitors who came out to our exhibits, attended our *Earth Talks*, hiked around town on our rambles, cleaned up Bordentown City, and helped clear the trails along Blacks Creek and Thorntown Creek Greenways!

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Bordentown City Mayor Bill Collom accepting 2008 "Green Town" award from Anne Poole and Brenda Holzinger of the NJ Environmental Lobby