

BORDENTOWN CITY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

2009 ANNUAL REPORT



Volunteers helped build a trail at Oliver Street Park in April

In accordance with the provisions establishing an Environmental Commission for the City of Bordentown, the Bordentown City Environmental Commission is pleased to submit this annual report for calendar year 2009 to the City Commissioners. The organization, responsibilities, powers and activities of the Commission adhere to the State legislation (NJSA 40:56A) passed in 1968, governing the establishment of environmental commissions.

I - Administrative

● 2009 BCEC Regular members: Joel Dowshen, Mike Hunninghake (Chair), Dan Kennedy, Mak Kieffer, Leona Lee, Mike Neuhaus, Andy Richardson, Pat Skelly, and Ralph Tolomeo (Vice-Chair).

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

● Conducted twelve regular monthly meetings at Carlslake Community Center.

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 two 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 and Bordentown Farmers' Market. Distributed environmental education material. Created and presented educational exhibit regarding local environmental issues, including the Land Development Ordinance, Conservation Element of the Master Plan, Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan, Open Space Plan, and other local issues. Gathered names/email addresses for database of volunteers. Conducted free raffle of eco-friendly gift bags and distributed 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. Website helps inform residents and reduce printing and mailing costs.

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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 six pet waste bag dispensers at various locations throughout the City.
- Publicized new D&R Canal Towpath that will extend from Bordentown City to Trenton (*new bridge over canal scheduled due date: September 2010*)



Wayne DeFeo of the US Green Building Council-NJ Chapter spoke about energy-efficiency measures for older houses after a screening of the film "The Greening of Southie"

Public Events and Programs

The Environmental Commission organized, promoted and/or conducted the following programs in 2009:

- "Salmonpeople" (*January*): Coordinated, with D&R Greenway and Passage Theatre, to bring a performance of "Salmonpeople", a one-man environmental awareness theatrical performance, to Bordentown City.
- **Earth Day/Oliver Street Trailbuilding** (*April*): with D&R Greenway, organized and directed volunteers to lay down donated mulch on trail and remove invasive plant species.
- **Arbor Day Tree Planting** (*April*): assisted Shade Tree Committee with promotion of event and recruitment of vol-

unteers.

- **Lime Kiln Alley Trailbuilding Day** (*July*): organized and directed volunteers to lay down wood chips and remove invasive plant species.
- **Oliver Street Park Native Planting and Trailbuilding** (*October*): with D&R Greenway, organized and directed volunteers who helped plant native plants, improved the loop trail with wood chips, and constructed a section of split rail fence.
- **D&R Canal Path Walk** (*October*): led a nature walk along this new towpath trail through the Hamilton-Trenton-Bordentown Marsh.
- **Lime Kiln Alley Park Native Planting and Trailbuilding** (*November*): with D&R Greenway, organized and directed volunteers who planted native shrubs and wildflowers, cleaned up trash on the site, and improved walking trail with wood chips.
- **Sponsored five Earth Talks**, held the fourth Tuesday of the month, with over 200 people attending. The 2009 *Earth Talks* featured documentary films including:
 - Garbage* film/talk (February)
 - Where Do the Children Play?* film/talk (March)
 - The Greening of Southie* film/talk (April)
 - A Sense of Wonder* film/talk (October)
 - Food, Inc.* film/talk (November)

Additional outreach:

- Staffed outreach table at Bordentown City Farmers' Market;
- Presented "Save the Planet, Save Some Cash" educational program at Bordentown Public Library;
- Co-sponsored guided Archaeology Walk at Pointe Breeze (with Friends for the Marsh and D&R Greenway);
- Made presentations to Hightstown and Medford Environmental Commissions on "How To be An Effective Environmental Commission" in response to requests from EC Chairs.

Initiatives

- **Sustainable Jersey**: Organized and assembled Sustainable Jersey Green Team. Attended training sessions and seminars. Liaised with Sustainable Jersey staff.
- **Farmers' Market**: Worked with City Commissioners to organize, publicize and implement inaugural Bordentown

- **Recycling:** Investigated Bordentown Regional School District recycling policy. Met with Bordentown Regional School District officials to discuss current state of recycling program, and to explore switching to Burlington County program, thereby lowering cost to City residents.
- **Native Plant Garden:** Installed additional plants and maintained brochure box at native plant garden at Bordentown Library.
- **Noise:** Investigated impending paving of local section of I-295. Encouraged City to request sound-reduction measures (diamond-grinding of bridge deck over Crosswicks Creek and rubberized 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. Two bus shelters installed in April 2009.
- **Traffic Calming/Speed Humps:** Proposed installation of speed humps for Willow/Prince Alley as pilot project for alley traffic-calming. Received in January and installed in April.
- **Parking:** Submitted parking analysis of existing parking infrastructure, including potential for shared use parking arrangements at RiverLINE lot and other public and quasi-public sites, to City Commissioners.
- **Open Space:**
 - Researched and made recommendations for removal of

- house on Lime Kiln Alley that is contaminated by asbestos;
- Advised local Eagle Scout on Lime Kiln Trail local project;
- Assisted with cleanup of tires and trash on Ottavi property.

Additional training undertaken by BCEC members:

- Attendance at ANJEC Congress and ANJEC training sessions;
- Attendance at Recycling Coordinators meetings and conference;
- Attendance at League of Municipalities Conference, including training networking, exhibits.

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

III - Site Plan Review

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

IV - Land Use Planning

- Participated in ongoing Bordentown City Master Plan review process. Offered input regarding environmental issues. Researched environmental zoning ordinances.
- Provided input on Planning Board's Community Facilities Element (in process with Burlington County staff).
- Participated in Northern Burlington County Growth and Preservation Plan meetings and submitted comments on draft plan. Organized presentation by County staff for City Commissioners.
- 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.



BCEC table and exhibit at the Cranberry Festival

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V - Infrastructure

Infrastructure purchases include:

- Exhibit tent
- DOGIPOT Pet Waste Bags
- 50 Cloth reusable shopping bags
- Assorted landscaping materials for Lime Kiln Trail
- 200 Native Plants Garden brochures
- Assorted plant materials for Native Plant Garden

NJ Recreational Trails Grant purchases:

- (5) Benches
- (2) Picnic Tables
- (3) Bike racks
- (4) Message Boards
- (2) DOGIPOT bag dispensers
- (4) Trail Markers
- (4) Wayfinding decals
- (3) Trash receptacles

VI - Grants/Funding

- Investigated financial and planning assistance for potential Sustainability Element for Bordentown City Master Plan
- Coordinated City resolution supporting application for state and federal funding of Delaware River Heritage Trail.

VII - Proposed 2010 Projects

- 1- *Earth Talk* Speaker/Film Series (6 programs)
- 2- Tables at Street Fair, Cranberry Festival, Farmers' Market
- 3- Eco-Tours of proposed open space and trails (Blacks Creek, Thorntown Creek, D&R Canal Towpath)
- 4- Blacks Creek Greenway/Lime Kiln Alley parks and trails development
- 5- Annual Earth Day project
- 6- Additional plantings at Native Plant Garden at Bordentown Library
- 7- Purchase of recycling containers for business district
- 8- Coordination of ongoing Sustainable Jersey initiative.

Appendices

- 1- Press Clippings/Correspondence
- 2- 2009 BCEC Newsletters
- 3- Photo Gallery

Many thanks to Mayor Collom, Commissioner Wehrman, Mayor Lynch, Commissioner Cheesman, Commissioner Targonski, Sam Surtees, Bob Erickson and the Public Works Department, Pat McGowan, Jennifer Ficarrotta and Pat Ryan for their support and assistance. Special thanks to Diana Raichel, Conservation Biologist with the D&R Greenway, D&R Greenway intern Josh Crossley, and City resident/volunteer Christine Wilson for their tremendous efforts on the Oliver Street and Lime Kiln Alley open space projects. Thanks to Don Stein for the donations of wood chips throughout the year. And many thanks 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 plant natives and improve trails in 2009!

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New message board and dog waste bag dispenser at Lime Kiln Alley Park, funded by NJ Recreational Trails grant