

A SUSTAINABLE BERKELEY HEIGHTS

The Environmental Commission of Berkeley Heights, with the support of the Township Council, organized a sustainability effort starting in the fall of 2008. This effort was undertaken due to both public and private concern about consumption and future availability of fossil fuels and other resources and concern with an increase in global warming due to mankind's activities. The State of New Jersey has a Global Warming Response Act and an Energy Master Plan in place. Many municipalities are now developing action plans to address these issues at a local level. Seven sustainability teams were formed, consisting of over forty volunteers, and their draft action plans are attached

The sustainability teams addressed Energy Conservation, Green Building Practices, Transportation, Water Usage, Solid Waste and Recycling, Tree Canopy and Open Space and Green Purchasing. The effort was supervised by a steering committee consisting of four members of the Environmental Commission, the Township Administrator, a member of the Planning Board, a representative of the Chamber of Commerce, the president of the League of Women Voters and the business manager of the Board of Education. A list of involved people is attached.

The seven action plans list Objectives, Targets, Short Range (1 year) and Long Range (5year) action steps. Each team has also identified one priority short range action which is shown in boldface type. The teams are ready and anxious to continue their work toward implementation of the plans. We can't do it without the aid and support of the governing body. A list of specific areas where near term help is needed is included in this document.

We present these draft action plans to the governing body on June 10 for your advice and consent. We also expect to review the drafts with other key stakeholders: Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, Board of Education and other civic, government, and business groups. After reviews are completed and suggestions incorporated, a final sustainability program plan will be presented to the governing body in the fall of 2009.

We hope you will read these plans in advance. We won't review action steps in detail on June 10 in the interests of time but will welcome feedback on any item.

LB. 6/4/09

Volunteers Helping With Action Plans

Green Building Practices

Deborah Plotnik (Leader)*
Mary MacEachern
Anna Hickman
Glen Hickman
William Kaufman
Charles Santore

Green Purchases

Robin Callaghan (Leader)*
Amy Ghelli
Stephanie Zecca

Solid Waste & Recycling

Marlene Sincaglia (Leader)*
Hilary Jersey
Lakshmi Khemani
Drew Needham
Norm Sobin*
Nicole Sponheimer
Danielle Weiner

Transportation

Len Berkowitz (Leader)*
Alexandra Chirinos
Ron Hoke
Susan O'Donnell
Amer Tadmori

Tree Canopy and Open Space

Richard Leister (Leader)
Karen Anzalone
Lawrence Burns
Nick Burns
MaryAnn Daly
Ed Delia
Katie Weiss

Energy Usage Reduction

Michael D'Aquila (Leader)*
Tony DePaola
John Hufnagel
Kelly Hufnagel
George F. Kraemer
Roman Kramarchuk
Denis Smalley

Water Usage

Kim Diamond (Leader)
Jen Brookes
John Brookes
Geri DeSapio
Lori Varty

Steering Committee Members

*Above with asterisks

Jack Conway
Donna Felezzola
Kevin Hall

Near Term Help Needed From Governing Body

- 1) Support to continue sustainability activity with volunteer teams as subcommittees of the Environmental Commission
- 2) Suggestions as to other stakeholders with whom to review the plans and assistance as needed to set up meetings with those stakeholders
- 3) Assistance in placing "No Idling" signs near the railroad station and on public roads near the schools like Columbia and Mountain Park
- 4) Continue the experiment to encourage car-pooling to the railroad station by offering a discounted permit rate.
- 5) Help with influencing the County
 - a) To install a rain garden at Stanford Drive
 - b) To extend the walking path along the Passaic River
- 6) Set a good example for the town by conducting and publicizing an energy audit of municipal buildings
- 7) Help us set up a visible energy meter display which can show residents how much overall electricity is being consumed by the town
- 8) Install recycling receptacles by all trash containers on Township property
- 9) Support for requiring applicants to Planning Board and Board of Adjustment to fill out a "Green Building Checklist" so that they are at least considering environmentally friendly options
- 10) Identify and encourage appropriate people within the Township with whom to discuss green purchasing
- 11) Supply contact(s) on the Council who we can work with as we develop suggested new ordinances. For example, the Sustainable New Jersey program is giving priority to an ordinance to encourage water conservation.