

Sustainability Hero



August 2023



Sangeeta Doshi

Councilwoman, Cherry Hill Township

**Co-Chair, Green Team and Human Relations Advisory Council
(Camden County)**

Cherry Hill Township Councilwoman Sangeeta Doshi is the co-chair of the [Cherry Hill Green Team](#), with Councilwoman Jennifer Apell, and she is also co-chair of the [Cherry Hill Human Relations Advisory Council](#). In 2022, she helped lead a collaborative effort with the Cherry Hill [Township Council](#), [Community Development Department](#) and [Environmental Board](#) to pass a comprehensive tree ordinance and has supported and expanded the deployment of hybrid vehicles in the township.

Appointed by New Jersey Governor Murphy, Sangeeta is a member of the NJ TRANSIT [Board of Directors](#) where she chairs the Energy and Sustainability Policy Committee. As one of the Board's fiercest advocates for sustainability, she helped bring NJ TRANSIT's first solar-powered bus shelter to Cherry Hill and supported the agency's first electric bus charging infrastructure to the Newton Avenue Bus Garage in Camden. Sangeeta was selected by the Camden County Commissioners to serve on the new Air Quality Committee and she leads regional collaboration efforts as a member of the [Tri-County Sustainability \(TCS\)](#), the sustainability hub for Burlington, Camden and Gloucester counties.

With a population of over 74,000, [Cherry Hill Township](#) and its green team can have a big impact on sustainability issues. Compelled to run for office after the 2016 election, Sangeeta was elected in 2017 and is now in her sixth year as a councilperson. Outgoing and tenacious, she does not shy away from controversial issues and will not stop working and collaborating until she gets to "yes." Sangeeta explained, "Sustainability does not have to be adversarial. It should not be guided by politics. We are all on the same team hoping to leave the Earth a better place for the next generation. As a mother of three sons, I feel the urgency and know the importance of the work we are doing to advance sustainability."

Sangeeta said she gets inspiration and a strong moral code from her parents who are her role models. She was born in Jabalpur, M.P., India and immigrated to the United States with her family when she was two years old. Her parents modeled the importance of public service, ethics and hard work. Her mother was the first woman to graduate from the medical school she attended in India and her father, also a physician, was the first in his family to attend college.



Sangeeta is an active member of the Indian Cultural Center and Indian Temple Association. She served on the District IV Legal Ethics Committee, serves the Camden Air Quality Committee and on the advisory boards of [Inspiring South Asian American Women](#), the [New Jersey Leadership Program](#), the [Asian American Alliance in South Jersey](#) and the [North South Foundation](#). She has been a member of the Domestic Violence Response Team, the [Cherry Hill Planning Board](#) and the [Cherry Hill Zoning Board of Adjustment](#). She has volunteered with Cherry Hill Atlantic Little League and Moms Demand Action. In 2021, she received a Moms Demand Action Gun Sense Candidate distinction.

Cherry Hill Township-Sustainable Jersey Silver Certified Community:

Cherry Hill has long been a leader in municipal sustainability in New Jersey. Cherry Hill achieved Sustainable Jersey certification at the silver-level in 2014, 2017 and 2021. Cherry Hill was among the first towns in the state to adopt its own municipal sustainability plan--the [Roadmap to Our Future](#) in May 2016. Ari Messinger, the Cherry Hill Township Operations and Risk Manager, has led the application submissions over the years and worked hard to place solar panels on township buildings. As the Cherry Hill Green Team Co-Chair, Sangeeta played a pivotal role in reviving the green team and helping the township achieve silver-level certification in 2021. For an overview of the sustainability program, visit the [Cherry Hill Township sustainability page](#) and read the [2021 Sustainable Jersey Certification Report of Cherry Hill Township](#).



Cherry Hill Township Tree Ordinance: Recognizing that trees provide aesthetic, economic, ecological, environmental and health benefits to the municipality and its inhabitants, Cherry Hill Township passed the most comprehensive tree ordinance in New Jersey on June 15, 2022. Sangeeta along with Council President David Fleisher, Councilwoman Jennifer Apell, Community Development Director Cosmas Dimantis, Ari Messinger, the Cherry Hill Green Team and the Environmental Board led the development and passing of the tree ordinance ([Cherry Hill Ordinance Regulating Tree Preservation, Removal, And Replanting](#)) that now serves as a model for all South Jersey towns.

NJ’s First Solar-powered Bus Shelter: Sangeeta was instrumental in bringing NJ TRANSIT’s first solar-powered bus shelter to Cherry Hill. “We’re happy to partner with NJ TRANSIT to further support our shared dedication to supporting sustainability and smart renewable energy solutions,” Sangeeta said. The shelter, located in front of Garden State Pavilions on Route 70, provides NJ TRANSIT riders on the 406 bus line with bright LED lighting for visibility and safety, a two-port USB charging outlet and a motion sensor that conserves the battery and will automatically turn on/off depending on motion inside.



NJ TRANSIT Battery Electric Buses and Electric Bus Charging Infrastructure: Sangeeta worked with NJ TRANSIT and local, state and national partners to support bringing the agency’s first electric bus charging



infrastructure to the Newton Avenue Bus Garage in Camden. Eight new charging stations were unveiled in March 2022. The Camden project was a first of its kind initiative for NJ TRANSIT, that allows the agency to operate and test eight 40-foot battery electric buses in real world conditions on NJ TRANSIT routes. The initiative provides data and information on the effects of weather, passenger volume, road conditions and other factors on electric bus performance, including travel distance available between recharging. Sangeeta said, “I’m proud that the transition to zero-emission buses began in South Jersey. This is a reminder that clean air in our cities is a top priority as we continue to make strides in reducing transportation emissions in New Jersey.” This project supports NJ TRANSIT’s transition to a [100% zero-emission bus fleet](#), aligned with Governor Murphy’s [Energy Master Plan](#). As a participant of Tri-County Sustainability (TCS), Sangeeta made sure the NJ TRANSIT electric bus was on display at the TCS Electric Vehicle showcase in October 2023.

Cherry Hill Dog Park at Croft Farm: One of Sangeeta’s first successful projects was the Cherry Hill Dog Park. With her husky Nala by her side, she and her colleagues led efforts to add a 29,000 square foot dog park next to Croft Farm’s large gravel parking lot. She said, “I’ve learned that you need to ask for things that are important. The Township Council worked with the Cherry Hill Public Works Department and the Recreation Department to find the location and make this project possible.” The project reclaimed an existing public works storage yard and converted it into a dog park while tying into the existing Camden County trails system. The park was designed to ensure easy access and provide adequate space for both large and small dogs.



Electric Vehicle Fleet Analysis and Strategy: In 2019, Cherry Hill participated in a pilot program with Sustainable Jersey to conduct an Electric Vehicle Fleet Analysis. Municipalities manage a fleet of equipment and vehicles that allows employees to provide municipal services. Fleets generate greenhouse gases as well as other pollutants that harm air quality, water quality and public health. For the pilot, six months of vehicle telematics data was analyzed by Sawatch Labs, which specializes in analyzing fleets for opportunities for adoption of electric vehicles. Through this project, Cherry Hill was provided data-driven fleet electrification plans, which helped Cherry Hill put electric vehicles into the best applications to optimize the economic and environmental savings.



A sample of 18 vehicles were reviewed under the pilot and 11 of the 18 were recommended for electric vehicle replacement. In 2019, the Cherry Hill Police Department decided to conduct its own pilot program to replace their patrol vehicles with the Ford Hybrid Police Interceptors. Because police vehicles have long idle times, the transition to hybrids saves money and decreases emissions. In 2019 the Department procured eight Hybrid Interceptors as part of the pilot. Cherry Hill Township received 30 Sustainable Jersey certification points after completing the actions: [Innovative Community Project](#), [Purchase Alternative Fuel Vehicles](#) and [Fleet Inventory](#).

More About Sangeeta: Sangeeta and her husband have lived in Cherry Hill, NJ since 1996. They have three sons, aged 25, 23 and 17. Sangeeta is a telecommunications executive and small business owner with an Electrical Engineering degree from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and an MBA from Babson College. She enjoys hiking, reading, yoga, travel and watching her children play sports.