



Sustainable Jersey Certification Report

This is the Sustainable Jersey Certification Report of Metuchen Boro, a Sustainable Jersey bronze certified applicant.

Certified bronze level December 17, 2014 with 195 points. Certified bronze level October 12, 2015 with 180 points. Certified bronze level October 11, 2016 with 275 points.

Contact Information

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Actions Implemented

Each approved action and supporting documentation for which Metuchen Boro was approved for in 2014 appears below. Note: Standards for the actions below may have changed and the documentation listed may no longer satisfy requirements for that action. Additionally, points associated with actions prior to 2013 certifications may not be accurate.

Community Partnership & Outreach

Green Team

10 Points

 Bronze Required

Program Summary: The Metuchen Green Team (September 2014) The Green Team was established by Resolution 2012-154, passed unanimously by the Borough Council June 18, 2012. A second resolution showing continued support, and expansion, of the Green Team is being approved on September 15, 2014. The Metuchen Green Team, led by the Environmental Commission, continues to serve as a forum to brainstorm potential environmental improvement

projects in the Borough. Team members participate in and disseminate information on local environmental concerns at the Borough's annual Fall Country Fair, Earth Day and Arbor Day events; interact with neighboring municipalities and environmental groups on issues of common interest. Members of the Metuchen Green Team Environmental Commission members: Mark Herzberg, Chair; Dorothy Rasmussen, Borough Council Member and Liaison; Dan Hirsch, Planning Board Liaison; Sharon Burke; Angela Dohl; Joe Schaffer, Beth Strom and Brian Weeks. In addition the Green Team is expanding through the addition of the following • Borough Administrator; • Representatives of the Shade Tree Commission; • Member of Bike-Walk Metuchen; and • Representative of Metuchen Farmers' Market Committee. The Metuchen Shade Tree Commission has been active on issues related to shade trees, especially addressing damage caused by severe storms over the past few years and planning to address an aging borough-wide shade tree canopy with limited funds for their maintenance and replacement. Bike-Walk Metuchen seeks to promote bicycling and walking in Metuchen, and improve bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the Borough. The Metuchen Farmers' Market Committee members are volunteers who manage the market, which has close to twenty vendors who attend weekly during the summer and early fall. For purposes of the Sustainable Jersey application, this brief discussion focuses on the activities of the Metuchen Environmental Commission, which has handled most of the activities discussed below. The Green Team has, and will continue to focus on issues such as: Shade Trees – The Environmental Commission is cooperating with the Shade Tree Commission on several tree-related issues in the Borough, including establishment of a Borough tree farm. Public Environmental Outreach and Education – outreach at Borough public events and working more with other Borough organizations. Middlesex Greenway extension – working with the Middlesex Greenway Coalition advocating for Middlesex County to extend the Middlesex Greenway – Metuchen's "High Line". Dismal Swamp Preservation – working with the Dismal Swamp Preservation Commission, Edison Wetlands Association and Middlesex County, advocating preservation of undeveloped parcels in the Dismal Swamp. Edgar Woods Ecosystem Restoration – planning an ecosystem restoration project and rain garden for the woods behind the Edgar Middle School. Review of Redevelopment Projects – reviewing and commenting on environmental issues presented by several major redevelopment projects and applications for Planning Board approval. Energy Efficiency – evaluate establishment of vehicle fleet efficiency inventory, and working with Bike-Walk Metuchen to improve Borough pedestrian and bicycle use. Forum for Environmental Ideas – serving as a forum for environmental improvement projects in the Borough.

PDF: [CREATE GREEN TEAM DOCUMENTATION](#)

PDF: [GREEN TEAM RESOLUTION](#)

Food

Farmers Markets

10 Points

Program Summary: Basic info about the Market: > 17 vendors; 15 of them from New Jersey including all 6 of our farmers (Von Thun's, Farmer Al's, Country Stand, Whistling Wolf, Cherry Grove, Stonybrook Meadows) > 2 of the vendors are based in Metuchen (Little Owl Soap, La Gateaux Bakery); another is a few blocks away in Edison (Raritan Bakery) > Every week we offer a free table to community groups, such as EMS, Friends of the Library, Garden Club, Bike | Walk Metuchen, Borough Improvement League, Metuchen-Edison Historical Society etc > Every week, farmers donate excess produce to two charitable organizations: The First Presbyterian Church Food Pantry, and Kiddie Keep Well Camp in Roosevelt Park. We hope to supplement that with individual donations from home gardens. > Market has been in operation in Metuchen since 1997.

In 2010, there were only three vendors. > Between 800-1000 shoppers visit the Market every Saturday > This year we are piloting a program to distribute coupons that encourage Market shoppers to continue shopping in downtown Metuchen > The Market is run by a team of about 30 volunteers > The Market runs from mid-July to mid-November, 9am-2pm on Saturday. 2013 we extended the season from mid-October due to popular demand by shoppers and vendors alike

PDF: [FARMERS MARKETS DOCUMENTATION](#)

Buy Fresh Buy Local Programs

10 Points

Program Summary: The Borough has a very active Farmers Market, including four local farmers that offer fresh produce, two local farms that raise and sell meats and eggs, as well as several other local vendors that make their own foods and wares. This is detailed in our Farmers Market submission. The Borough has two traditional CSA fixed share delivery programs, one through Starbrite Farm with approximately 50 families participating (<http://www.metuchencsa.com/>) and a second through Honey Brook Organic Farm (<http://www.honeybrookorganicfarm.com/boxed-shares>). A third CSA, through Whistling Wolf Farms (<http://www.whistlingwolffarm.com/market-csa-membership.html>) allows the shareholder to pick up items of their own choosing at the farmer's market. Novita Bistro runs a "Meatless Monday" event, featuring fresh produce from the adjoining Farmers Market. A copy of their promotional material is attached. Marafiki, which features fair trade items, sells locally roasted coffee.

: [BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL PROGRAMS DOCUMENTATION](#)

Health & Wellness

Building Healthier Communities

20 Points

Program Summary: 1) LIVESTRONG AT THE YMCA OF METUCHEN: This is an ongoing 12-week program with includes water exercise and a support group, with Livestrong and the Y joined together to create a physical activity and well being program designed to help adult cancer survivors reclaim their total health. This program is free to cancer survivors and includes a 12-week Full Facility membership in the YMCA. 2) The Metuchen YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program is an ongoing evidenced based lifestyle change program designed to help overweight adults who are prediabetic or at risk of developing type 2 diabetes to reduce their body weight by 7% and increase physical activity. 3) The Metuchen Senior Center provides the following health services: on-going exercise classes with paid instructors, podiatrist visits every other month, flu shots, Middlesex County Senior Health & Fitness Walk, monthly Parkinson's support group, various 1 day health information programs. 4)The insurance company for the municipal employees provides diabetes screening and management for affected employees. Documents attached below. 5) The Borough purchased new garbage and recycling trucks with automated loader arms to reduce DPW employee back injuries from repetitive heavy lifting. 6) The Borough Recreation Dept. has a very active youth sports program. In collaboration with the YMCA, Board of Education and others, we offer baseball, girls' softball, soccer, flag football and basketball. Hundreds of

Metuchen children participate in each of these sports and dozens of parents coach them.
<http://www.metuchennj.org/recreation.html> 7) The Borough has a system of "Walk Metuchen" Healthy Communities walking routes, with street markers and maps.
http://www.metuchennj.org/walking_map.pdf 8) The Borough continues to actively support the Middlesex Greenway, which connects us to Edison and Woodbridge. It is very popular residents who walk, bike and run on it in every season.
<http://www.co.middlesex.nj.us/parksrecreation/greenway.asp>

PDF: [BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES DOCUMENTATION](#)

PDF: [BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES DOCUMENTATION](#)

Innovative Projects

Innovative Community Project 3

10 Points

Program Summary: Pedestrian Crosswalk Safety Flags In compact communities, walking should be recognized as the transportation mode of choice. When replacing automobile trips, walking trips require no fossil fuels and promote a more active lifestyle. A walking community develops as community culture shifts from automotive to foot traffic. From a planning perspective, people in walkable cities are healthier and use less fossil fuel per capita. Pedestrian crosswalk safety has been a focus of several groups in the Borough, including the police department, Transportation Committee, and Bike-Walk Metuchen. In 2012, a pedestrian flag program was suggested by residents to the Borough Transportation Committee. Working with Keep Middlesex Moving and the Metuchen Police Chief, the program was developed. In February 2013, the Borough Council passed a resolution to begin test trials for the Pedestrian Flags. Crosswalk flags are stored in a quiver mounted to a dedicated signpost and instructional signage. The bright orange flags are used by pedestrians to signal clear immediate intent to cross with a high visibility signal. The program is used in other communities such as Seattle WA, Arlington MA, and Salt Lake City UT; Metuchen appears to be uniquely the first municipality in New Jersey to have implemented and maintained such a program. The crossing flag program has since been expanded to cover several key locations on local, County, and State roads in the Borough.

PDF: [RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING FIRST CROSSING](#)

WORD: [NJ.COM ARTICLE ON PILOT PROGRAM](#)

IMAGE: [FLYER ADVERTISING KICKOFF MEETING](#)

WORD: [INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY PROJECT 3 DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [MARCH 2014 SENTINEL ARTICLE](#)

Innovative Community Project 2

10 Points

Program Summary: In an effort to provide healthy recreational opportunities for residents and a chance to experience and appreciate nature close to home, there have been recent coordinated

efforts to expand access to the Borough's section of the Dismal Swamp by foot and by boat. The Environmental Commission assisted a Metuchen Boy Scout over the past year to develop his Eagle Scout project, which he completed in Summer 2014. He and other Scouts cleared a pedestrian trail on the Borough-owned former railroad embankment. The Opalanie Trail runs through the Metuchen portion of the Swamp from a parking lot adjacent to the Greenway, crossing the Dismal Brook, to the intersection of Durham Avenue. The Metuchen Department of Public Works assisted by delivering a pile of wood chips to the west end of the trail and removing debris after the project. Debris removed included bags of litter, large pieces of dead trees, old tires, and recyclable metal such as an abandoned trailer. A walk along the Opalanie Trail is now featured stop on the EcoTours of Edison! Environmental Commission members and other local environmentalists, residents and Boy Scouts have continued to venture into the Dismal Swamp on the Dismal Brook with kayaks and tools, clearing a water trail to allow public access on land and water from Metuchen toward the Edison Wetlands Association's Triple C ranch site in Edison. These adventures have been twice a year, in the spring and in the fall. Environmental Commission members met with John Krantz, Executive Director of the Middlesex County Mosquito Commission on February 25, 2014, about technical assistance improving drainage along the Bound Brook in the Dismal Swamp and along the Middlesex Greenway and its proposed extension route. Mr. Krantz offered to meet again to discuss possible assistance with specific drainage improvements.

IMAGE: [PHOTO OF DISMAL SWAMP WATER TRAIL](#)

PDF: [ECOTOURS OF EDISON FLYER](#)

PDF: [OPALANIEDISMALSWAMPTRAILBOYSCOUTREPORT](#)

Land Use & Transportation

Sustainable Land Use Pledge

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority

Program Summary: Metuchen is a walkable, compact borough, surrounded by the sprawling Township of Edison, traversed by the Northeast Corridor train line, and home to one of the line's busiest stations. The borough historically has had a lively mixed use downtown, which in the last 25 years has been enriched with upper floor apartments and lofts with ground floor retail. There is a wide range of housing stock, including two large garden apartment complexes and other affordable housing. In 1984 the Borough Master Plan recognized that industrial uses were waning and that those closest to town needed to be redeveloped. Acres have had been successfully redeveloped, and decades of planning are now leading to finalization of plans to change downtown flat lots into mixed use development, including a Whole Foods supermarket, restaurant, flexible live/work units and a town square public space for cultural events, farmers market and other recreational activities. Metuchen, bordered by hundreds of acres of largely undeveloped wetlands, is represented on the Dismal Swamp Preservation Commission, a regional land use board. Metuchen has also played a central role in establishment of the bicycle/pedestrian Middlesex Greenway along the former Lehigh rail line. The Borough has practiced sound, smart growth, forward-thinking planning for many years. Specific achievements include:

- Designated as a Town Center in the State Plan in 1997.
- Received Transit Village Designation in 2003; one of only 28 in the state.
- A thorough and farsighted Complete Streets resolution was passed in 2013.
- The Borough has received planning awards from the American Planning Association NJ Chapter and NJ Future.
- Recent Master Plan amendments and design standards have halved the required amount of parking for new Main Street developments. Individual parking requirements have transferred a shared parking concept. Regulations have been streamlined to permit wide range of

uses. A Sustainable Land Use resolution was adopted by the Borough and distributed to the relevant boards and commissions. Zoning Board Chair - Patricia Lagay Borough Planner - James Constantine Borough Engineer - Thomas Herits Planning Board Chair - Erick Erickson (see attached emails)

PDF: [SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PLEDGE RESOLUTION](#)

WORD: [SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PLEDGE DOCUMENTATION](#)

Natural Resources

Environmental Commission

10 Points

Program Summary: Our Environmental Commission was established in 1973. It is a vibrant and active commission. The establishing ordinance and the 2014 Annual Report of Accomplishments are attached.

WORD: [ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION DOCUMENTATION](#)

Tree Protection Ordinance *Retires 12/31/25*

10 Points

Program Summary: Metuchen's tree protection ordinance provides legal protection of borough trees against unnecessary pruning and removal and requires guards around trees during construction. This policy is in conjunction with Metuchen's land use regulations and our Community Forestry Plan. There is also a separate ordinance requiring location of all trees of six inches DBH and greater, and for replacement of those trees to be removed as part of any Site Plan or Subdivision development. The replacement quantities are compensatory in accordance with the size and condition of the trees being removed on private property. The document listed below has been uploaded. Chapter 110-180.: Tree Removal and Replacement requirements Major and Minor Subdivisions and Site Plans.

WORD: [TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE DOCUMENTATION](#)

Community Forestry Management Plan & NJUCF Accreditation

20 Points

Program Summary: We implemented our first CFMP in 2008 and are now in the process of updating it with the help of a certified consultant. The Shade tree commission received a Green Communities grant in 2014 to pay for the consultant. We have toured the town with the

consultant looking at what needs to be addressed and will include that in our updated plan. One particular area in town, a cul-de-sac street, has a problem with up-heaved sidewalks due to presence of Zelkova trees. That will be our demonstration project to improve that area by suggesting to residents to remove sidewalks and plant grass instead. This will go a long way in improving the walkability of that street. The sidewalks as they are pose a great safety hazard. We are also looking at diversity as we go forward with new plantings. There are too many oaks, maples and sycamore/london planes. Our tree selection list will be updated to reflect this change in species selection. We are also submitting our 2014 end of year report to NJDEP and will upload that once we receive it back approved in January 2015. Metuchen completed earning approved status by sending to members to the Shade Tree Federation meeting on October 2014.

PDF: [COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLAN AND TREE COVER GOAL DOCUMENTATION](#)

PDF: [COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLAN AND TREE COVER GOAL DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLAN AND TREE COVER GOAL DOCUMENTATION](#)

PDF: [COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN](#)

Tree Planting Programs

10 Points

Program Summary: We have 2 planting seasons, spring and fall and have documentation with invoices to verify. We also have a "Tree of Life" program, where residents can commemorate an event like birth, death, wedding or anything they desire for \$300 (cost of tree and labor to plant it). We also had a tree give away through the state Superstorm Sandy tree give away. In one day almost 300 trees were distributed to borough residents. We had another giveaway at our Farmer's Market and distributed about 75 trees. The remaining of the 500 original trees will become our tree farm.

WORD: [TREE PLANTING PROGRAMS DOCUMENTATION](#)

IMAGE: [TREE PLANTING PROGRAMS DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [TREE PLANTING PROGRAMS DOCUMENTATION](#)

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Tree Hazard Inventory

10 Points

Program Summary: We can enumerate our hazard trees by accessing the tree inventory. There are reports that can be compiled to get a listing of hazard trees by what is wrong with the tree. We can use the matrix report function to list two attributes we want compiled in the report. Public works can then prioritize their tree work based on the degree of hazard. We have uploaded a budget document from Public Works with line items for equipment, wages and forestry supplies expended for maintenance and related tree expenses. During Shade Tree Commission walks around the borough we can find tree hazards that may go unnoticed by public works, who primarily drive around town in the performance of their duties. We then notify them so they can come out and make a proper evaluation prioritizing its maintenance remedy.

WORD: [TREE HAZARD INVENTORY DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [TREE HAZARD INVENTORY DOCUMENTATION](#)

PDF: [TREE HAZARD INVENTORY DOCUMENTATION](#)

Tree Maintenance Programs

10 Points

Program Summary: Most of the tree maintenance - including pruning, elevation, etc. is done by the forestry department of Public Works. The Shade Tree Commission also goes on town "walkabouts" performing small maintenance tasks like removing suckers or removing tree stakes no longer needed as we walk around the town inspecting trees. Materials removed are left for Public Works to pick up as we notify them of the locations. This small maintenance activity by the Shade Tree Commission also allows up close tree inspection to observe any trees that may have become a hazard since the official inventory by the certified tree experts from Davey. Approximately 41 trees were pruned and 55 trees removed. The first attached document is an excerpt from our inventory of entries made by Public Works with regard to tree pruning. It lists type of tree, maintenance recommended etc. and when it was completed or if it is still pending.

WORD: [TREE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS DOCUMENTATION](#)

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WORD: [TREE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS DOCUMENTATION](#)

Waste Management

Recycling Depot

10 Points

Program Summary: Recycling Depot In order to reduce waste flow to landfill sites, as well as the costs of landfill tipping fees and associated taxes, Metuchen enforces a strong Solid Waste Disposal and Mandatory Recycling program. Recyclable items include newspapers, mixed paper and corrugated cardboard, cans, plastic, glass, metal, electronics, tires, grass, leaves, brush and tree parts, and Christmas trees. To advance these purposes, Metuchen operates a Recycling Center, conveniently located on Jersey Avenue, which is open six days a week for a total of 37.5 hours. The recycling depot's hours and acceptable items are posted on the Borough website and in recycling calendars mailed to residents.

PDF: [RECYCLING CALENDAR](#)

Community Paper Shredding Day

5 Points

Program Summary: On April 12, 2014, Metuchen provided free document shredding to residents at an easily accessible school parking lot. This event enabled residents to reduce solid

waste materials to landfills and lower their risk of identity theft. Metuchen plans to continue to provide this service at least one day each year.

PDF: [COMMUNITY PAPER SHREDDING DAY DOCUMENTATION](#)

PDF: [COMMUNITY PAPER SHREDDING DAY DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [COMMUNITY PAPER SHREDDING DAY DOCUMENTATION](#)

Prescription Drug Safety & Disposal

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority

Program Summary: To combat prescription drug abuse, the Metuchen Municipal Alliance, in conjunction with the Metuchen Police Department, organizes two days each year where residents can safely dispose of expired or unwanted medication. The attached flier indicates the outreach, The initiative asks residents to follow the five steps outlined in the American Medicine Chest Challenge: Take inventory of prescription and over-the-counter medicine; lock medicine chest; dispose of unused, unwanted and expired medicine at the Metuchen Police Station; take medicine exactly as prescribed; and talk to your children about prescription drug abuse. Our municipality is working with the county through Charoulla Castanos-Beaton, Middlesex County Alliance Coordinator. She has also recommended us to work with Angela Conover at Partnership for Drug Free NJ. We participated in the Great American Medicine Chest Challenge at her suggestion. I have also included a collection box from our local pharmacy, Boyt Drugs, which accepts non-controlled substance medication and used needles.

PDF: [PRESCRIPTION DRUG SAFETY AND DISPOSAL DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [PRESCRIPTION DRUG SAFETY AND DISPOSAL DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [PRESCRIPTION DRUG SAFETY AND DISPOSAL DOCUMENTATION](#)

: [PRESCRIPTION DRUG SAFETY AND DISPOSAL DOCUMENTATION](#)

IMAGE: [PRESCRIPTION DRUG SAFETY AND DISPOSAL DOCUMENTATION](#)

WORD: [PRESCRIPTION DRUG SAFETY AND DISPOSAL DOCUMENTATION](#)