



## Sustainable Jersey Certification Report

This is the Sustainable Jersey Certification Report of Franklin Twp, a Sustainable Jersey silver certified applicant.

Franklin Twp was certified on October 10, 2016 with 400 points. Listed below is information regarding Franklin Twp's Sustainable Jersey efforts and materials associated with the applicant's certified actions.

### Contact Information

The designated Sustainable Jersey contact for Franklin Twp is:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>TARA KENYON</b>
<b>Title/Position:</b>	<b>SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR / OPEN SPACE/SUSTAINABILITY</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>TOWNSHIP OF FRANKLIN 475 DEMOTT LANE SOMERSET, NJ 08873</b>
<b>Phone:</b>	<b>8482031857</b>

### Actions Implemented

Each approved action and supporting documentation for which Franklin Twp was approved for in 2016 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.

#### Animals in the Community

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##### **Pledge Supporting NJ Wildlife Action Plan \*Retired 12/31/22\***

**10 Points**

**Program Summary:** The Franklin Township Council passed the attached Pledge on March 22, 2016. It includes reference to township management of open space specifically for threatened grassland birds. Also attached is a memo sent by Township Manager Bob Vornlocker to all department heads (relevant or not), the Open Space Consultant who effectively manages township open space, and the chairs of the Environmental Commission, Open Space Committee and Planning Board.

PDF: [FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP'S PLEDGE SUPPORTING NJ WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN](#)

WORD: [MEMO FROM TOWNSHIP MANAGER VORNLOCKER TO DEPARTMENTS HEADS, ETC.](#)

WORD: [LIST OF DEPARTMENT HEADS ETC. RECEIVING MEMO](#)

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## Community Partnership & Outreach

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### Green Team

10 Points

 Bronze Required

**Program Summary:** The Franklin Township (Somerset Co.) Green Team was established in 2009, achieved Bronze certification in 2010, and recertification in January 2013. We have had great participation by municipal staff, which has led to emphasis on actions achieved by the municipality rather than by citizen volunteer action. The Green Team had a quiet year in 2015, with only two meetings. Actions we might complete were reviewed, and members promised to work on them, but with recertification more than a year away, there was little urgency. A note was published in the township newsletter. Activity quickened at the end of the year, when Justin Heyman, township Director of Information Technology, joined the team and immediately set to work on the new Public Information & Engagement actions, completing Municipal Communications Strategy before the end of the year. He has been asked to serve on Sustainable Jersey's Public Information & Engagement task force. The Team has been augmented and reappointed, has already met once in 2016, and is now working to complete actions for recertification, hopefully at the Silver level. Its reappointment was featured by the township on-line newspaper, Franklin Reporter.

PDF: [GREEN TEAM APPOINTED 2016](#)

PDF: [FRANKLIN REPORTER - COUNCIL REKINDLES GREEN TEAM](#)

WORD: [NEWSLETTER SUSTAINABLE JERSEY NOTICE](#)

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## Community Education & Outreach

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The Environmental Commission generally sponsors two public seminars each year. It sponsored the following seminars in 2014, 2015 and 2016: Bee-keeping (by the New Jersey State Apiarist), March 17, 2014; Invasive Species (by Susan Brookman, Executive Director, NJ Invasive Species Strike Team), May 4, 2015; Advancing the Green Initiative (jointly with Alpha Phi Alpha service fraternity; various speakers), May 16, 2015; Back-Up Batteries for Solar Cells (A.J. Mensah), Oct. 19, 2015, and Fight the Bite on mosquito- and tick-borne diseases and how to avoid them (Michèle Samarya-Timm, Somerset County Health Dept.), May 17, 2016. A planned seminar on composting in October 2014 was canceled for lack of interest. A seminar on deer in the community (NJ Div. of Fish & Wildlife personnel) is planned for the fall. These seminars are generally broadcast on the township cable channel, and the Fight the Bite presentation is available through the township web site. In addition, the Commission sponsors a stream clean-up in April of each year, which is outreach as much as clean-up, and rain barrel workshops (May 3, 2014, April 25, 2015, May 16, 2016). The Shade Tree Commission also reaches out to the

community. Notes were published in the Township newsletter on tree care advice, best species to plant, mulching advice, etc. A yearly tree sale was held using seedlings grown to 6-8 ft trees ordered from a commercial nursery, with profits funding the Commission's work. An annual Arbor Day planting, observance and proclamation were carried out. The Commission maintains a web-site with tree-related topics and advice, an email link for resident's questions, agendas and minutes of meetings, etc.

**WORD:** [FLYER BATTERY BACK-UP SEMINAR](#)

**WORD:** [ADVANCING THE GREEN INITIATIVE](#)

**WORD:** [RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP PUBLICITY \(POSTED ON TOWNSHIP WEB SITE\)](#)

**PDF:** [FIGHT THE BITE SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENT FROM TOWNSHIP WEB SITE](#)

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## Energy

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### Buy Electricity From A Renewable Source

10 Points

**Program Summary:** Franklin Township Council resolved to buy from NJ SEM on 7/14/09; the earliest recorded purchase was on 4/5/2011. We currently purchase electricity from them with 20% renewable content (see attached letter from Gabel Associates). The attached letter from Jason Thorpe ("PSE&G Switch Notices") and list of Franklin Township accounts should indicate that Franklin Township is currently covered by NJ SEM power supply contracts (see especially the green banner in the letter from Jason Thorpe).

**PDF:** [NJ SEM ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE JERSEY ACTION](#)

**WORD:** [GABEL ASSOCIATES LETTER CERTIFYING NJ SEM RENEWABLE ENERGY CONTENT](#)

**PDF:** [RESOLUTION JOINING NJ SEM](#)

**PDF:** [PSE&G SWITCH NOTICES](#)

**EXCEL:** [FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP NJ SEM ACCOUNTS](#)

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### Municipal Onsite Solar System

20 Points

**Program Summary:** Solar Cells were put in service on roof of the township Municipal Building in July 2011. In 2015 they provided 21.3% of the electricity used by the municipal building (from a low of 7.3% in January to a high of 34.1% in May. See bills attached, showing monthly usage. ). The owner is Somerset Solar I (a subsidiary of the Somerset County Improvement Authority, which financed the project; see below for details) and the installer and biller is Vanguard Energy Partners. The payment rate is \$0.05245/kWh. For technical data concerning the system see the attached NJ Clean Energy Program technical worksheet (original signed by Craig Novick, township manager at the time). Further explanation of the ownership and financing, from notes I took at a meeting in 2009: Somerset County has embarked on a program, whereby the Somerset County Improvement Authority will sell bonds to construct solar cells on municipal roofs, a company [eventually Vanguard] will erect them and sell us the electricity, at 10.6¢/kw-hr vs 15-16¢/kw-hr on the market [we're doing better than that!]. All we have to do is allow access to our roofs and

agree to buy the electricity. This works because of all the subsidies: while the county will actually own the cells, it will lease them to the constructor/operator, who will get the federal tax credit for them (money right away, not even waiting till their tax return), will get accelerated depreciation benefits, and will be able to sell certificates of renewable energy production (SRECs) through the ten-state renewable energy program, as well as selling the electricity to us. With all this money he can pay off the county's bonds and still make a profit. The county's bonds of course sell for lower interest than if the constructor had to borrow money himself. Theodore Chase Jr township Councilman and Green Team leader

PDF: [MUNICIPAL BUILDING SOLAR SYSTEM BILLS - USAGE](#)

PDF: [NJ CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM TECHNICAL WORKSHEET](#)

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## Wind Ordinance

10 Points

**Program Summary:** Our wind ordinance has been approved by NJ Clean Energy; the formal letter of approval is now attached. A new article in the township newsletter, and letter to township staff, are attached to update to current requirements.

PDF: [3843 - SMALL WIND ENERGY SYSTE](#)

PDF: [NEWSLETTER ARTICLE RE WIND ENE](#)

WORD: [LETTER OF AWARD FROM NJ CLEAN](#)

WORD: [NEWSLETTER ARTICLE 2016](#)

WORD: [LETTER TO TOWNSHIP STAFF RE WIND ORDINANCE](#)

## Food

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### Farmland Preservation Plans

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The township completed a Farmland Preservation Plan in 2007, and added it to the township Master Plan. This plan was submitted to the SADC at that time. After repeated requests for action they ultimately did not approve it; it is currently being revised for resubmission (by September 2016). However, I am informed that SADC approval is not required by Sustainable Jersey. It is available at <http://franklintwpnj.org/home/showdocument?id=8774>. The Agricultural Advisory Committee 2009 report describes the formation and general efforts of the Agricultural Advisory Committee, and preservation actions up to that time. A current (July 2016) report is also attached, in response to a reviewer's question. Also attached is a table of preserved farms as of December 2012. It shows all preserved farms in the township, including four preserved by direct state action (the first three and the Griggstown Quail Farm), for which no dollar amounts are given. Development rights were generally bought with a combination of state (Planning Incentive Grants = "PIG"), county and township money; the highest-ranking contributor of money then monitors the continued farming use of the property.

PDF: [FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN](#)

PDF: [AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE](#)

PDF: [PRESERVED FARMS AS OF DECEMBER 2012](#)

WORD: [AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT 2015](#)

WORD: [AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT JULY 2016](#)

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## Community Gardens

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The Franklin Township Environmental Commission sponsored and developed a community garden in Naaman Williams Park, in a low-income census tract of the township. The garden is 170' x 100', surrounded by a chain link fence, with 35 individual plots defined by rough-cut wooden frames which support the raised beds. It was funded by a \$5000 Community Development Block Grant; principal expenses were \$3400 for the fencing and \$1300 for the wood frames; remaining money was used for other expenses, e.g. for locks, keys and chains. The soil is supplemented with composted leaves from the Public Works Dept. It was tested for lead content - found only at background level. Since 2012 all plots have been used, except for four plots reserved by the Recreation Dept. for a summer program for children. A second \$5000 CDBG grant to the Environmental Commission was used to establish a second community garden at the Pine Grove Manor School, also a low income area. The garden was established in 2011, and well used; it has taken the name Common Ground. A third CDBG grant was used to run a water line to the Naaman Williams Park garden. A fourth grant has been used in 2016 to enlarge this garden and erect sheds for tool storage in both gardens. Raised beds for the physically handicapped are to be constructed. A Community Garden Committee has been formed, to share information between the established gardens and spur the formation of more gardens. A volunteer Master Gardener consults with the managers of the gardens. Attached are a newspaper article about the garden, the award letter for our latest Community Development Block Grant award, the 2016 flyer for Common Ground, 2016 photos of the gardens, and a Qualitative Assessment which describes developments since 2012 in more detail.

PDF: [COURIER-NEWS ARTICLE 2013](#)

WORD: [QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT MAY 2016](#)

IMAGE: [NEW \(2016\) SHED, COMMON GROUND](#)

PDF: [NAAMAN WILLIAMS PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN \(NEW ADDITION AT RIGHT\)](#)

WORD: [CDBG GRANT NOTIFICATION 2015](#)

WORD: [COMMON GROUND COMMUNITY GARDEN FLYER 2016](#)

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## Buy Fresh Buy Local Programs

10 Points

**Program Summary:** We have (just - 6/2/2016) established a directory of farms in the township which sell to the public and posted it on the township web site (<http://franklintwpnj.org/government/boards-committees/agriculture-farmland/agricultural-directory>). The attached pdf shows only half the farms, and does not show the filter which allows searching for farms selling a particular kind of product, but clicking on Previous shows the full directory as it appears on the web site. A notice has been posted on the News part of the township home page.

EXCEL: [SPREADSHEET OF TOWNSHIP FARMS SELLING TO PUBLIC](#)

PDF: [DIRECTORY OF FARMS SELLING TO PUBLIC](#)

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

## Green Design

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### Upgrade/Retrofit-Light Pollution

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The attached ordinance, which represents ongoing township practice but is based on the Eatontown ordinance, has been approved by several township committees. It is scheduled to be introduced in Council 6/14/16 and passed 6/28/2016.

PDF: [LIGHT POLLUTION ORDINANCE, ADOPTED JUNE 28](#)

## Health & Wellness

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### Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Public Places

10 Points

**Program Summary:** As shown in the No Smoking ordinance attached, on April 25, 2016 the Franklin Township Council passed an ordinance banning smoking on all township property. Posting of signs has been delayed by a state requirement that the signs be in Spanish as well as English. The appropriate sign and the purchase order are attached.

PDF: [NO SMOKING ORDINANCE](#)

WORD: [FRANKLIN REPORTER ARTICLE ON NO SMOKING ORDINANCE](#)

PDF: [NEW JERSEY NO SMOKING SIGN](#)

PDF: [PURCHASE ORDER FOR SIGNS](#)

## Land Use & Transportation

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### Sustainable Land Use Pledge

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority

**Program Summary:** The Sustainable Land Use Pledge was prepared by a subcommittee of the

Planning Board, and submitted to the Green Team, Environmental Commission and Board of Zoning Adjustment before passage by the Council. It has now been distributed to the Planning Board, Board of Zoning Adjustment, Environmental Commission, Open Space Advisory Committee, Trails Advisory Committee, Agricultural Advisory Committee, and appropriate township staff (see file 2 below). (The Council of course received it for passage.) In 2014 the Council reaffirmed this pledge (see resolution) and it was redistributed to all departments.

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

**WORD: [SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PLEDGE DI](#)**

**PDF: [RESOLUTION- INTENT TO MAKE FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY](#)**

**PDF: [DISTRIBUTION 2014](#)**

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## Effective Parking Management

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The Township has evaluated the parking requirements of its traditional “downtown” area, the Hamilton Street Business District (HBD), aiming at creating an attractive, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use “main street” type environment. Consistent with this objective, parking standards unique to the HBD can be found in Section 112-105 (<http://ecode360.com/6275306>). These standards: • Have reduced parking standards for commercial uses (§112-105.A(1)) • Prohibits over-parking (§112-105.A(3)) • Allows various means of addressing commercial parking requirements including waiving the improvement of all commercial spaces on-site via a payment-in-lieu for the purpose of funding improvement of public parking by the Township (§112-105.B(2)). • Revisions over the last decade have offered additional opportunities for reduced/ more flexible parking. Most recently (2015), approving boards may reduce the parking requirements for residential uses below that required by RSIS if applicant proves that a lower parking ratio is warranted based upon expected occupancy or other relevant factors (§112-105.A(2)) • Recent zoning changes in the HBD encourage mixed use, already resulting in three approved proposals. These provide necessary parking for residents, but few for shoppers (see §112-105.B(2) above; we will provide public parking when on-street parking becomes insufficient.) Other effective parking management initiatives include: • The Master Plan recommended significant reductions in parking requirements for warehouses and industrial establishments and allowing reserve or “landbanking” of parking of up to 50% for all non-residential uses. These recommendations were adopted via Ordinance 3708. • Ordinance 3844 significantly reduced parking requirements for shopping centers and commercial/ personal service establishments (20% and 25%, respectively). • The Township has also employed Sections 112-96, Joint Parking Facilities, and 112-98, Shared of Parking Facilities, permit the use of joint parking arrangements and shared parking, respectively. Several dozen warehouse, light industrial and commercial developments have been constructed over the last decade employing the initiatives described above, eliminating construction of hundreds of unnecessary spaces throughout the Township.

**WORD: [PARKING IN HAMILTON ST. BUSINESS DISTRICT](#)**

**PDF: [PARKING REQUIREMENTS, AMENDED BY ORDINANCES 3708 AND 3844](#)**

**WORD: [JOINT AND SHARED PARKING, 112-96 AND 98](#)**

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## Natural Resources

## Natural Resource Inventory

20 Points

🏅 Bronze Priority 🏅 Silver Priority

**Program Summary:** For our Environmental Resource Inventory, see <http://www.franklintwpnj.org/home/showdocument?id=3967> (About 50 Mb, which is why it is not uploaded below. Listing the link was approved by Medea Villaré.) It was adopted by the Planning Board as a Master Plan element on July 9, 2008 (see file attached), and therefore is considered in revising zoning and reviewing site plans. The Environmental Commission had expected to update the ERI in connection with a Master Plan update in 2011, but the Legislature increased the period between Master Plan revisions from 6 to 10 years. The Master Plan was re-examined last year, and a full revision will take place during the next year. The revised ERI is in final stages of approval, and will presumably appear at the same link.

**PDF:** [PLANNING BOARD RESOLUTION](#)

**WORD:** [UPDATE RESOLUTION](#)

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## Environmental Commission

10 Points

**Program Summary:** Franklin Township has had an Environmental Commission since 1974 (see ordinance appended). The Commission has contributed significantly to many of the Sustainable Jersey actions, notably the Environmental Resource Inventory, for the preparation of which it obtained a grant. It co-sponsored Green Forums on energy-saving actions in 2010 and 2015, and sponsors twice-yearly seminars on environmental topics (see annual reports). It annually gives awards to the individual(s) and organizations which have done the most for township environmental stewardship in the past year. It conducts a stream corridor clean-up yearly around Earth Day. It reviews all applications to the Planning Board and Board of Zoning Adjustment, and makes recommendations. It adapted from Montgomery Township and distributed a flyer Beyond Curbside Recycling, on recycling or reuse of items not collected at the curbside (attached, though on 3 pages rather than two)

**WORD:** [ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 2015 REPORT](#)

**WORD:** [RECYCLING BEYOND THE CURBSIDE FLYER](#)

**PDF:** [ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION ORDINANCE](#)

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## Environmental Commission Site Plan Review

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The Township Environmental Commission (along with various township staff) receives all development applications that go before the Township's Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment, including use and hardship variance applications. The Commission reviews applications at its once- or twice-monthly meetings; if time is short, the Chair reviews the application. Typically one member reads the application fully and writes comments; for major applications, all members look at the application and offer comments. The written comments are included in the Boards' packets so that Board members are able to review the comments from the



Environmental Commission (and township staff) before their meeting. An example of an EC report is attached. Given the number of reports reviewed annually, we are not summarizing them all. The input provided by the Environmental Commission differs depending upon the nature of the application, the site in question, the environmental issues involved, etc. However, the Environmental Commission's review typically relies upon the information in the Township's Environmental Resource Inventory and commonly involves recommendations addressing light pollution, impervious coverage, excessive site disturbance that may lead to flooding and soil erosion, nonstructural techniques to manage storm water, and review of the applicant's environmental impact statement. In 2015 the Commission reviewed 46 applications; in 2014, 34; in 2013, 46; in 2012, 36; in 2011, 46; in 2010, 48.

**PDF: [ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION SITE PLAN REPORT](#)**

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## Open Space Plans

10 Points

**Program Summary:** In 2013 the Township prepared a new, updated Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). The OSRP was adopted by the Planning Board as an element of the Township Master Plan on December 4, 2013. The Planning Board's resolution adopting the OSRP is included at the end of the OSRP pdf, and as a separate pdf. The OSRP includes the requisite components of NJDEP's Open Space and Recreation Guidelines for Participation in the Green Acres Planning Incentive Program, including: goals and policies; inventory; needs analysis; and action plan. The development of this Plan was initiated by the Township Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC), which includes members of several Township committees including the Recreation Advisory Council, the Trails Advisory Committee, the Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Environmental Commission and the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee. Drafts of the Plan were developed with input from the OSAC and from a Plan-specific ad-hoc committee. After several drafts, the OSAC endorsed the Plan and forwarded it for the Planning Board's consideration. The Planning Board reviewed the new OSRP at two public meetings, with the second session being a public hearing that was noticed per the Municipal Land Use Law. The OSRP built upon public input, analysis and recommendations received by and resulting from the Preservation and Recreation Needs Assessment and Action Plan prepared by the Township the year before, in 2012. The extensive public participation program involved in the preparation of that plan consisted of: (1) a series of stakeholder meetings with various Township committees and boards, community organizations, user groups (e.g., senior citizens group), elected officials and Township staff; (2) a series of public hearings; (3) a joint meeting of the Steering Committee/ Open Space Advisory Committee/ Recreation Advisory Council; (4) a statistically valid mail/ phone survey to Township residents; and (5) a web survey.

**PDF: [OPEN SPACE PLAN](#)**

**PDF: [OPEN SPACE PLAN RESOLUTION](#)**

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## Water Conservation Education Program

10 Points

**Program Summary:** In 2012, the Franklin Township Environmental Commission embarked on a program of water conservation by encouraging the use of rain barrels in the Township. In conjunction with the New Jersey Water Supply Authority, a workshop was held on March 31, 2012

for residents to construct their own rain barrels for use at their homes. This first workshop was focused on residents along DeMott Lane, the stream near which drains into the D&R Canal by the Van Wickle House. That area was selected by the Authority because there are 72 outfalls draining surface water into the canal. The rain barrel workshop was part of a program by the Authority to reduce surface flow, which picks up contaminants, into the canal to improve water quality. The attendance at this first workshop was disappointing, so it was decided to continue the program in 2013 by opening it to all residents of Franklin. The results were very successful, with about 40 people in attendance constructing the 24 rain barrels that were available. The success of this workshop led the Environmental Commission to schedule a second workshop on July 25, 2013, which was also successful in that 13 of the 14 rain barrels available were used. The Environmental Commission and NJWSA have continued the program, with 19 barrels constructed on May 3, 2014, 26 barrels on April 25, 2015, and 13 (all the available barrels) on May 16, 2016.

PDF: [RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP NOTICE 2012](#)

PDF: [RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP NOTICE 2013](#)

PDF: [RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP NOTICE MAY 2014](#)

PDF: [RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP FLYER 2016](#)

WORD: [RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP NEWS RELEASE 2016](#)

PDF: [RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP POSTER 2016](#)

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## Easement Inventory & Outreach

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The Engineering Department, with the help of summer interns, has compiled an inventory of conservation easements held by the township (1661 entries), and a brochure addressed the property owners with easements has been prepared. This will be publicized through the township web site and distributed at the Franklin Day festival in September; it has not yet been decided whether to mail it to all property owners affected.

WORD: [CONSERVATION EASEMENT PLAN WORKSHEET](#)

PDF: [CONSERVATION EASEMENT INVENTORY](#)

PDF: [CONSERVATION EASEMENT BROCHURE](#)

WORD: [CONSERVATION EASEMENT PLAN WORKSHEET](#)

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## Clustering Ordinance

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The pdf file summarizes and reports in full our municipal ordinances providing for clustered development for natural resource protection.

PDF: [NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION OR](#)

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## Tree Protection Ordinance \*Retires 12/31/25\*

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The pdf summarizes and presents in full our tree protection ordinance.

**PDF:** [TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE](#)

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## **Community Forestry Management Plan & NJUCF Accreditation**

**20 Points**

**Program Summary:** In 2014 the Shade Tree Commission worked with Forestree Consultants to draft a new Community Forestry Management Plan, and submitted it to the State for approval in late 2014; they received notice of Plan Approval in early December, 2014. They have a 5 year plan which they began implementing in 2015. They worked with the Township's Planning Department to assess the Township's current tree canopy cover. An estimated 39% tree canopy cover was calculated through the i-Tree assessment. They considered that Franklin Township was a mix of urban, suburban and rural land uses. The Planning Department provided the Shade Tree Commission with an analysis of acreage in these land uses that was based on State Plan designation and an adjusted land use scenario prepared by the Planning Department. Considering the various land uses, especially agricultural lands and preserved grasslands, the commission proposed a 42% tree canopy goal for the township. This was adopted unanimously on Feb. 25, 2016.

**WORD:** [SHADE TREE COMMISSION REPORT 2014](#)

**PDF:** [FORESTRY CERTIFICATE](#)

**PDF:** [NJ COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLAN END-YEAR REPORT 2015](#)

**WORD:** [SHADE TREE COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2015](#)

**WORD:** [TREE CANOPY GOAL DETERMINATION](#)

## **Public Information & Engagement**

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### **Municipal Communications Strategy**

**10 Points**

**Program Summary:** In the summer of 2013 the Township of Franklin began updating its overall communications strategy. In January of 2015 the Township launched a new website and social media channels. Our new site includes an updated directory, a better way to know whom to contact at the Township and how to reach them, and a dynamic news and events engine. Our site homepage also includes links to all social media accounts, a search function and a feedback method for those who interact with our departments that delivers feedback directly to the Township Manager. This new website also included a new e-notification (email) engine that gives residents the ability to customize the email notifications they receive. The site is fully responsive. All regular communications flow through the Information Technology Department, which maintains the communications channel inventory (see Examples list) and is responsible for the Municipal Website. Many departments contribute postings via the website CMS. All postings (except police news articles) are approved by the Township's IT Director prior to publishing, allowing for consistent look, feel and messaging, and a safeguard to insure postings are

appropriate and correct. This department is also responsible for the FTTV government cable channel - anything of interest that comes via the website is also posted to FTTV. Township Council, Planning and Zoning Board meetings are broadcast live and posted to FTTV and YouTube the same week the meeting occurs. The Township Newsletter, mailed to all residents, is coordinated by our purchasing agent; deadlines for submission are published and reminders sent to department heads to solicit input. All social media accounts are linked to the website news and events engine which allows for integrated posting. The police department assigns staff to maintain their social media pages. Township news is also reported by an independent on-line newspaper, Franklin Reporter.

**PDF:** [EXAMPLES OF STRATEGIES IN USE](#)

**EXCEL:** [COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY INVENTORY](#)

**IMAGE:** [MARKED-UP HOME PAGE](#)

**WORD:** [MUNICIPAL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY SUBMISSION CHECKLIST](#)

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## Improve Public Engagement in Municipal Government

10 Points

**Program Summary:** The Township of Franklin has long had policies promoting public meetings and citizen engagement in those meetings. Citizens can subscribe to meeting schedules and news about those meetings via our municipal website. All meeting schedules are posted at the beginning of the year, and residents who opt in for the email subscriptions are sent reminders of the meetings automatically 7 days prior to the meeting. Meetings are also noticed via official newspapers and in our print newsletter. Residents can also subscribe to meeting schedule updates via our news feed. Rules for citizen participation at the public meetings are established by ordinance and listed on our municipal website. We also have a guide to citizen participation which is available in print at the office of the Township Clerk and via download on our website (attached). Agendas are posted no later than the Friday before the meeting via our automated agenda system. Due to this system, anytime an agenda is updated or published it is made available to the citizens immediately. Public comment is scheduled early in (evening) Council meetings, after only Proclamations and Commendations (which typically draw the largest attendance). Council meetings are all broadcast live via the Township cable television channel and the internet. By the Friday following the meeting the recorded meetings are rebroadcast on a schedule which is posted on the website and the cable station. All meetings and recorded special programs are also available for on demand playback, 24/7, via the Township's YouTube Channel. Email addresses for elected officials have been in place for nearly 10 years at the Township and are listed in both the staff directory and on the Township Council Member page.

**PDF:** [IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTATION \(WEB REFERENCES\)](#)

**PDF:** [GUIDE TO CITIZEN PARTICIPATION](#)

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## Improve Public Engagement in Planning and Zoning

10 Points

**Program Summary:** Franklin Township has long had policies promoting participation in Planning and Zoning Board meetings. Interested parties can subscribe to meeting schedules and updates via our municipal website's e-notification feature. All meeting schedules are posted at the beginning of the year, and residents opting for the email subscriptions are sent reminders of the

meetings automatically 7 days prior to the meeting. Meetings are also noticed via official newspapers and in our print newsletter. Approximately two years ago the land use boards began to use our agenda management system which allows for the full applications and backup to be published to the residents in full. Rules for citizen participation at the public meetings are established and listed on our municipal website; we also have a guide to citizen participation available in print at the office of the Township Clerk and via download on our website. On reviewing this action it was realized that the Planning Board was no longer holding an open public session at the beginning of the meeting; after discussion the public comment period was reinstated. Agendas are posted no later than the Friday before the meeting via our automated agenda system. This system ensures that when an agenda is updated it is made available to the citizens immediately. Links to agendas with items of interest are included in the meeting reminder e-mails. All important documents pertaining to land use are readily available and searchable on our municipal website, including our Master Plan, ERI and all forms related to land use applications. Our municipal code book is searchable via a link in our website header. Planning and Zoning Board meetings are recorded and broadcast live on our Municipal Government cable station and on demand playback via our YouTube Channel. Our cable station is also streamed live via our municipal website.

**PDF:** [PLANNING BOARD TO RESUME PUBLIC COMMENT](#)

**WORD:** [LINKS TO AGENDAS AND MINUTES](#)

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## Online Municipal Public Service Systems

15 Points

**Program Summary:** The Township of Franklin has and continues to strive to make as many of our services accessible via online channels. Launched in 2014, this new website contains improved search and menu structure, giving visitors relevant information quicker. Statistics show that since the relaunch website visitors visit 50% fewer pages to find the information they are looking for. The website homepage's flexible design contains a search tool, FAQ, Directory and links to frequently visited services via buttons and a spotlight area. Our menu system highlight is the "I Want To" menu which showcases the most frequently visited services in an easy to understand layout. One of our quick access buttons links to our "Citizen Request Portal" which provides quick access to a GIS based mapping application as well a way to file general request such as report a pothole or a downed tree, file an OPRA request or track the status of a construction permit. All online submittals are reviewed by assigned staff members and routed internally to staff via our workflow application SDL Desktop. As staff work proceeds on the requests, residents are notified via updates on the portal and via email. Coming soon to this system will be the addition of online payments for dog and cat licenses. Another feature of our homepage will bring residents to online recreation program registration and to our online tax and water payment system. Both systems are integrated with internal workflow systems and allow residents to pay via credit card 24 hours a day. Residents have the ability to sign up via the website for website updates via email, Nixles and to self-register additional notification methods via our emergency notification system. All of these items represent a concerted and ongoing effort by the township to make services and information more accessible via electronic channels.

**WORD:** [PUBLIC SERVICE DOCUMENTATION](#)

**PDF:** [SOCIAL MEDIA FLYER](#)

**PDF:** [COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM](#)

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## Digitizing Public Information

10 Points

**Program Summary:** Franklin Township has long strived to provide as much information as possible readily available online. Via the Township homepage visitors can find links to all social media sites; a header link provides contact information to all staff and our contact us page to all main departments and buildings. Agendas and Minutes for Council, Planning and Zoning are all published the Friday before our meetings and available via our website and agenda management system. Boards and Commissions with their terms and positions are available on each board page and updated as membership changes. Public services and who provides them are listed on the website, designating which are performed by the Town, County or private providers. Recreation activities and non-profit clubs are shown via our Recreation Department page; online registration is available there as well. The Board of Education website with all school information is linked to our Township website; their budget information is also listed on our finance page. OPRA request forms can be found on our Township clerk page as a fillable PDF, but also via an online submission process which feeds into our town management software. RFP/Bid opportunities are listed in one consistent spot and categorized, interested parties can subscribe to email notices on these opportunities. Ordinances and resolutions are all indexed and available via our online code book and updated as needed via our Township Clerk's office. The township continues to explore ways to make more data available to its citizens and will explore open data initiatives as project workload allows.

**PDF:** [LIST OF LINKS FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION](#)

## Waste Management

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### Prescription Drug Safety & Disposal

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority

**Program Summary:** A Prescription Drug Drop-Off Box has been established in the Public Safety [police] Building, 495 DeMott Lane, Somerset (see picture). It is available 24 hrs/day, 7 days/week. Collected prescription drugs are handed over to the Somerset County Sheriff's Dept. for disposal. In 2015 737 lb of drugs were collected; in 2016 to date 425 lb have been collected. The box has been publicized through the township newsletter (notice attached) and a statement for the township web site with a link to the state information site is in preparation.

**WORD:** [TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER NOTIFICATION OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG DROP-OFF](#)

**PDF:** [PRESCRIPTION DRUG DROP-OFF BOX](#)

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### Community Paper Shredding Day

5 Points

**Program Summary:** The annual paper shredding days were held on Sept. 7, 2013, Sept. 6, 2014, and Sept. 5, 2015. They were publicized on the township web site and by news releases from Somerset County (attached below). Four hundred and twenty-six cars participated in 2013

(see shredding letter attached) and 25,160 lb of paper was shredded (see Certificate of Destruction 2013). In 2014, 458 cars participated, and 25,980 lb of paper was shredded (see Shredding Certificate 2014). In 2015, 431 cars participated and 26,100 lb of paper was shredded (see Shredding Certificate 2015).

**PDF:** [NEWS RELEASE - OPERATION SECURE SHRED](#)

**PDF:** [SHREDDING LETTER](#)

**PDF:** [CERTIFICATE OF DESTRUCTION 2013](#)

**PDF:** [SHRED CERTIFICATE 2014](#)

**PDF:** [2015 SOMERSET COUNTY SHREDDING FLYER](#)

**PDF:** [SHREDDING CERTIFICATE 2015](#)

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## **Recycling Depot**

**10 Points**

**Program Summary:** We have had a Convenience Center for some years, supplementing regular pick-up of bottles, cans, paper, cardboard from residences by Somerset County Recycling. The public is annually reminded of this in the township newsletter (Dec. 2015 notice posted below). A Frequently Asked Questions column in the newsletter addressed some questions about recycling. Address: 23 Berry Street, Somerset, NJ 08873 Hours: Winter (Dec. - March), one Saturday/month from 9:00 to 1:00; Summer (April - Nov.) alternate Saturdays 9 - 1, one Monday/month 7:30 - 11:30. The Center used to be open more days/month, but use was slow during the winter. The township must pay a Public Works employee to be present when the Center is open, and this schedule balanced need and expense. Materials Collected: Bottles, cans, paper, cardboard, metals, tires, bulky waste (Hurricane Sandy clean-up). Electronics are recycled at Newtech Inc., 600A Apgar St., Somerset, or through the Somerset County Recycling Program. Tonnage collected (2015): metal 24.67 tons; paper 19.48 tons; cardboard 40.23 tons; motor oil 500 gallons. After Hurricane Sandy bulky waste 373.13 tons of tree and brush waste were picked up from roadsides by the Dept. of Public Works and processed here. We do not have separate numbers for bottles, cans and newspapers because they are collected from the center by Somerset County and included with our overall curbside collection numbers. Residents using: 7000

**IMAGE:** [PICTURE OF RECYCLING CENTER, WITH SIGN](#)

**PDF:** [CURRENT CONVENIENCE CENTER INFORMATION](#)

**WORD:** [RECYCLING INFORMATION 2015](#)

**PDF:** [CONVENIENCE CENTER CALENDAR](#)

**WORD:** [FAQ \(RECYCLING\)](#)