

Sustainable Jersey Certification Report

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

Merchantville Boro was certified on December 15, 2020 with 155 points. Listed below is information regarding Merchantville Boro's Sustainable Jersey efforts and materials associated with the applicant's certified actions.

Contact Information

The designated Sustainable Jersey contact for Merchantville Boro is:

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Actions Implemented

Each approved action and supporting documentation for which Merchantville Boro was approved for in 2020 appears below. Note: Standards for the actions below may have changed and the documentation listed may no longer satisfy requirements for that action.

Brownfields

Brownfields Assessment & Investigation

15 Points

Program Summary: More background and discussion is coming from the Borough employee involved in this process but has not been received yet. The PA report is too large to attach and I have not been able to isolate the main pages of the report from the attachments. There is an area of Downtown Merchantville that is slated for mixed-use redevelopment. The western part of the site has groundwater contamination and the entirety of the site has historic fill. The Borough received a Hazardous Discharge Site remediation Find (HDSRF) grant from the NJEDA (Economic Development Authority) to perform environmental studies. Here's a link to the two Environmental studies that Pennoni did for the Downtown triangle dated April 2019 (Preliminary Assessment and Remedial Investigation Report) and the DEP correspondence that shows our PI number for the site. <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qiPxiDWZdvnXq6fh3oxPaWbZfqGwCpd7?usp=sharing>

PDF: [RI REPORT](#)

PDF: [STATE OF NJ LETTER /BROWNFIELDS](#)

Community Partnership & Outreach

Create Green Team

10 Points

 Bronze Required  Silver Required

Program Summary: In 2017 Merchantville councilman, Griffin Kidd formed the Merchantville Green Team with the support of the Merchantville Borough Council. Monthly meetings began with a core group of Merchantville citizens, led by Griffin, all interested in improving the sustainability and environmental health of the community. Initial goals included an assessment of current recycling practices and community education on waste management and identifying existing actions that represent sustainability/ environmental actions and building upon those. Within a year, new recycling bins were introduced in the downtown, community education initiatives were offered weekly during our seasonal Farmers Market (see attached photo) and pollinator/native habitat plots along the community bike trail were planned and executed. Community cleanups are carried out four times a year. We have also partnered with Chad Holliday from Pennsauken Environmental Commission on clean-ups along the Delaware River. Beginning in 2018, we began offering free environmental movie screenings to the community, sometimes with guest speakers such as Food & Water Watch. Next movie screening was planned for April 21, 2020 at our local coffee house, The Station but plans were delayed because of COVID 19. We are proud that our Green Team was recognized by Camden County Board of Freeholders as a 'Sustainability Champion' at their September 2018 meeting (see attached). Within the last 12 months the Green Team has partnered with Incredible Edible Merchantville and begun planning for Sustainable Jersey Certification. The effort has led to partnerships amongst all organizations that are dedicated to sustainability. We now refer to these groups under the umbrella, Sustainable Merchantville. It includes: Green Team, Shade Tree Commission, Garden Club, Merchantville 4H, Incredible Edible and

Merchantville Borough. The Green Team had planned its first Green Fair, scheduled for May 9th, 2020, which had been approved and supported by Borough Council and included the participation of all the organizations in Sustainable Merchantville but COVID sidelined the project. We actively manage our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/447786962071621>

IMAGE: [GREEN TEAM LOGO](#)

PDF: [GREEN TEAM MEMBER LIST](#)

PDF: [GREEN TEAM HONORED BY CAMDEN COUNTY FREEHOLDERS](#)

PDF: [CREATE GREEN TEAM DOCUMENTATION](#)

PDF: [GREEN TEAM PRESENCE AT FARMERS MARKET](#)

Community Education and Outreach

10 Points

Program Summary: Environmental Documentaries Film Series checklist attached. A brief summary: Incredible Edible and Green Team member Dorothy Foley developed an ongoing Environmental Documentary Film Series beginning in 2018. Three films were shown in 2018 and three films in 2019. Plans for another three part series was scheduled to begin Friday, May 8th 2020 with the screening on the Biggest Little Farm but were sidelined with COVID-19. Incredible Edible and The Green Team plan on reviving the series in 2021. Details of the series can be found on the attached checklist. We are submitting the two movies that were part of this series because they had guest educational speakers: 1. At the documentary, Plastic Paradise we had Lena Smith, a New Jersey organizer for Food and Water Watch speak before the film screening and afterwards she moderated a discussion and Q&A. 2. At the documentary, Seed we had Ron Smith, Environmental Science teacher at Haddonfield Memorial High School speak before the film and at the conclusion he moderated a discussion and Q&A.

PDF: [PLASTIC PARADISE & SEED MOVIE SCREENING FLYERS](#)

PDF: [COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH CHECKLIST - FILM SERIES](#)

Food

Community Gardens

20 Points

Program Summary: The Merchantville Community Gardens, located on the grounds of the Merchantville Community Center, began in 2006 by residents Kris Donahue and Lisa McSparron with the support of Merchantville Borough. The plots are offered to residents at no cost but with rules (attached). Since 2006 the Community Garden has been and continues to be farmed organically. Currently the garden has 8 families tending plots, the Incredible Edible Merchantville team farming a new plot, the Shade Tree Commission

tending a nursery plot and the Merchantville School Green Team/Garden Club plot (on hold for the season due to Covid-19). There are plots that have become available this year and are in process of being assigned to new gardeners. The Merchantville Borough recently received a \$2K grant from Sustainable Jersey for an expansion project at the Community Garden by the Merchantville Green Team/Incredible Edible volunteers. The project includes expansion of the garden to include a 10 X 20 plot for Incredible Edible Merchantville, a native/pollinator garden adjacent to the Community Garden, a composting system and fruit trees along the fence by the tennis courts. Already we have completed the Incredible Edible Garden and are nearly done the native habitat/pollinator garden. The project will be complete by May 2021. Beginning this year we are providing participating gardeners the option to donate excess produce to charity through a program run by the Incredible Edible (IE) organization through Merchantville's Grace Episcopal Church food pantry. As of 6/13/20, the Community Garden gardeners have donated 26 bags of produce to the food pantry. We are working on a homemade sign that will read, "Merchantville Organic Community Garden" and will be seen from Somerset and Plymouth Streets (see attached PDF of the sign in progress and its promotion on social media.) Kerry Mentzer, a local artist is currently working on its completion. Resident Ray Hertneck is helping with the structure and resident Dorothy Foley did the lettering. We will send a picture once its in place. Here's a link to the Facebook Page for our garden https://www.facebook.com/merchantvillecommunitygarden/?view_public_for=102079795022061

PDF: [COMMUNITY GARDEN ARTICLE PAGE 3](#)

PDF: [COMMUNITY GARDEN RULES](#)

PDF: [DONATION LETTER FROM GRACE EPISCOPAL](#)

PDF: [PRODUCE DONATIONS TO CHARITY](#)

PDF: [COMMUNITY GARDEN QUESTIONNAIRE](#)

PDF: [ORGANIC GARDEN SIGN AND PROMOTION ON SOCIAL MEDIA](#)

Farmers Markets

10 Points

Program Summary: The Merchantville Task Force with support from the Borough of Merchantville, operates a local farmers' market called Market Off Centre. The Market's philosophy is to provide an active and entertaining family oriented atmosphere offering a variety of local, handmade, and homemade goods and services with a focus on sustainably farmed and organic options. The Market averages about fifteen vendors each Saturday with between 2 and 5 farms depending on the time of year. The rest of the vendors are made up of crafters, bakers, and local artisans. Market Off Centre operated each Saturday, June through October during the 2019 season from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. In 2020 we'll begin our 9th year of continuous operation. The Markets costs around \$3,000 to run each year which is paid for by vendors fees. That income is used for marketing, paying for bands/entertainment, and other supplies for regular operations. The coordination of the market is done completely through volunteer efforts. Any income remaining after expenses is used for start-up for the following year. The Borough of Merchantville actively supports the farmers' market, Merchantville Market Off Centre by: promoting the market, allowing the market to operate on municipal land, providing liability insurance, garbage control,

coordinating combined activities, and cash or other in kind donations of municipal staff resources to support the market. More details about Market Off Centre can be found on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/merchantvillemarketoffcentre/>

PDF: [FARMERS MARKETS DOCUMENTATION](#)

Health & Wellness

Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Public Places

10 Points

Program Summary: On 04/13/2015 the Borough of Merchantville adopted an Ordinance which prohibits use of tobacco products in public areas within the borough (B.O. 15-02). The ordinance specifically bans use of tobacco products in all structures owned, leased, rented and/or operated by the Borough of Merchantville; all public parks, playgrounds and ball fields publicly owned by the Borough of Merchantville. The ordinance specifically prohibits persons from smoking within the boundaries of the Merchantville Department of Public Works, Merchantville Public Library, Merchantville Borough Hall and/or the Merchantville Community Center. Appropriate signage has been affixed to the buildings listed above to serve as notice of the “No Smoking” areas. Additionally, the ordinance prohibits smoking within 500 feet of any parks or playgrounds owned or leased by the Borough of Merchantville. Enforcement of the ordinance is handled by the Police Department, Fire Department, Recreation Department, Public Works Department and the Health Department of the Borough of Merchantville. In addition to the borough ordinance 15-02, the Borough has introduced an interdepartmental policy to all borough employees. In accordance with State Law, the Borough of Merchantville has adopted a smoke-free policy for all buildings. Smoking is permitted for borough employees but can only be done in areas designated as such. Under Merchantville’s Policies and Procedures manual smoking inside borough owned vehicles and near equipment that may be sensitive to smoke is also prohibited. The Merchantville Police Department has been directed, by order of the Chief of Police, to be vigilant in enforcing B.O. 15-02. The intention of the adoption of B.O. 15-02 and the instruction provided to borough personnel is to regulate the use of tobacco produced in all structures owned, leased rented and/or operated by the Borough of Merchantville and/or occupied by Borough employees and used for official business of the Borough of Merchantville. Residents were informed of the Ordinance adoption on the front page of the local paper The Merchantville Observer (distributed to all residents), thru social media <http://www.merchantville.com/k2/merchantville-boro/merchantville-boro-mayor-and-council/merchantville-boro-mayor-and-council-notices/smoking-ordinance-introduced-2015033010/> and thru notice in the local paper, The Retrospect. In September 2020, Police Chief Grassia sent a memorandum to department heads and posted a notice on the Borough website reminding employees and residents of the importance of this ordinance <https://merchantvillenj.gov/index.php/departments/police-department>

PDF: [SMOKE-FREE AND TOBACCO-FREE PUBLIC PLACES ORDINANCE](#)

PDF: [PUBLIC NOTICE-RETROSPECT](#)

PDF: [POLICE CHIEF SMOKE-FREE LETTER](#)

PDF: [FRONT PAGE MERCHANTVILLE OBSERVER ARTICLE](#)

PDF: [SMOKE-FREE SIGNAGE W/DATES & LOCATIONS](#)

PDF: [POLICE CHIEF LETTER TO EMPLOYEES](#)

Innovation Projects

Innovative Community Project 1

10 Points

Program Summary: Innovative Project #1 - Incredible Edible Merchantville In May 2018, motivated by climate change and a TED Talk on "How We Can Eat Our Landscapes" two residents met to consider the environmental well-being of their community and realized that securing future sustainability in Merchantville would require innovative community efforts. They discussed a project built on individual actions and modeled after Pam Warhurst's mission, "creating a kind, confident and connected community through the power of food". On July 9, 2018 their proposal for Incredible Edible (IE) Merchantville (attached), was approved by Council under the municipal Green Team and, on September 19, 2018, seeds were planted at their first meeting. Six residents attended and enthusiastically embraced moving forward with IE's proposal to advance land stewardship in the community. Fortified by this core working group, a mission to nurture environmental stewardship, encourage a culture of wellness and promote food justice through edible landscapes emerged. Organization, promotion and funding were key member goals. Meetings were advertised and documented, social media and website pages were created, educational and informational content was published weekly, grant funds were pursued and, community sustainability stakeholders were engaged. Messaging and buy-in grew fruitful by Spring 2019. Membership blossomed as we partnered with county and local planting experts while working to educate the community through schools and at public and social events including the farmers market. Small projects like Jack's Beanstalks, Herb Your Curb, and Blueberry Hill sprouted. Students planted gardens, neighbors shared gardens, businesses distributed their harvest and neighbors learned about growing our future. In August 2019 Incredible Edible Merchantville formalized our mission under Merchantville's Green Team and to date, have succeeded in connecting our community through an innovative "garden to plate" project that cultivates a sustainable future through enduring land stewardship, wellness and food justice.

PDF: [INCREDIBLE EDIBLE PROPOSAL BOROUGH COUNCIL](#)

IMAGE: [INCREDIBLE EDIBLE BANNER](#)

PDF: [INCREDIBLE EDIBLE ACTIONS](#)

IMAGE: [INCREDIBLE EDIBLE YARD SIGN](#)

Innovative Community Project 2

10 Points

Program Summary: Innovative Project #2 Adopt a Storm Drain Over the past few years Merchantville citizens noted areas surrounding storm sewers in residential and municipal areas had, at various times, become packed with debris that funnels through grates to enter and contaminate waterways. Public works employees are responsible for removing trash surrounding storm drains; however, due to limited personnel some drains had not been maintained. Volunteer driven Adopt a Storm Drain (ASD) is a no cost initiative that addresses this issue, protecting valuable resources and managing waste. Members of the Green Team, Merchantville Garden Club, Merchantville Shade Tree Commission and Merchantville Incredible Edibles conceived and executed the initiative; municipal staff and the Merchantville Public Works Department acted in an advisory capacity. *ASD augments public works efforts. It does NOT absolve the department of responsibility to maintain drains. Initial program implementation included (1) volunteers locating and mapping all storm drains in residential and municipal areas (2) promoting public awareness of the role of storm drains in waterway contamination by placing signage at storm drains and uploading information to appropriate websites. Ongoing program efforts include (1) soliciting community members to adopt and pledge to maintain one or more storm drains and (2) maintaining a spreadsheet to track program participation and gather feedback.

PDF: [PDF OF EXCEL SPREADSHEET FOR MAINTENANCE/VOLUNTEER TRACKING](#)

IMAGE: [ADOPT A STORM DRAIN TOWN MAP](#)

IMAGE: [SIGNAGE INSTALLED 5/21/2020](#)

IMAGE: [POORLY MAINTAINED STORM DRAINS 2/5/2020](#)

Innovative Community Project 3

10 Points

Program Summary: Well coordinated, highly effective and volunteer driven, Merchantville Welcomes Pollinators is an innovative project that promotes civic engagement and resource conservation. The initiative is a new approach to landscaping that provides models to inspire citizens to restore habitat, support pollinators, and plant natives. During the last three years volunteers have planted and maintained numerous plots along the borough's mile long circuit trail. The centerpiece of the trail is a stunning, professionally designed rain garden packed with native plants (holly, blueberries, dogwood shrubs and echinacea) that sustains wildlife. In addition, there are 14 plots of daffodils, an important early season source of nectar for bees, two no-mow zones planted with winter wheat, red clover and rudbeckia, and a 300 square foot sunflower plot. Last fall milkweed was planted to host monarchs. Inspired by the flourishing plots, volunteers created pollinator gardens off trail in an area surrounded by an asphalt parking lot. They also planted a pocket pollinator garden and a second monarch nursery at Wellwood Park. The annual Daffodil Festival celebrates the Welcome Pollinator's project every spring and attracts over 200 people to the Merchantville Path at the Gazebo section. The 1st Daffodil festival in 2017 was the brainchild of Garden Club leader Cindy Hertnick and hosts the Shade Tree's sapling giveaway, plant swaps, authors, games and activities. Over 4,000 daffodil bulbs have been planted in Merchantville since this effort began, expanding way beyond the circuit trail. This year's festival was cancelled due to COVID-19. Pictures from the 2019 Daffodil Festival are attached. The highly visible gardens on public land have inspired citizens to "grow native" to sustain wildlife. Sunflowers have blossomed along many borough curbs, and

Merchantville resident Brigid Austin carefully nurtures a milkweed plot that supplies valuable transplants for public and private monarch nurseries.

PDF: [WELCOME POLLINATOR ACTION LINKS](#)

PDF: [DAFFODIL FESTIVAL 2019](#)

PDF: [RAIN GARDEN 2019](#)

PDF: [SUNFLOWER PLANTING 2019](#)

IMAGE: [POLLINATOR SIGN ALONG CIRCUIT TRAIL 2019](#)

IMAGE: [DAFFODIL TRAIL PLAQUE 2019](#)

Land Use & Transportation

Sustainable Land Use Pledge

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority

Program Summary: Dorothy Foley and Cindy Hertneck, members of the Merchantville Green Team, worked with the Community Development Director, Mara Wuebker, PP/AICP, and the Borough Clerk, Denise Brouse, to review and prepare a Sustainability Land Use Pledge for consideration by Borough Council. On February 24, 2020, Borough Council adopted Resolution 20-37, the Sustainability Land Use Pledge. Ms. Wuebker prepared a memo to the Planning Board and the Green Team describing the Sustainable Land Use Pledge, recapping the Planning Board's Sustainable Smart Growth Policies already in place in the comprehensive Merchantville Master Plan and 2019 Master Plan Reexamination Report. In her memo, she discusses how the implementation of the Sustainable Land Use Pledge, coupled with the implementation of the Master Plan and Reexamination Report recommendations, will help to achieve the goal of making Merchantville a truly sustainable community. This matter was discussed at a Planning Board meeting on August 11, 2020, where Green Team members were in attendance. The Planning Board adopted a Sustainability Resolution, which is attached.

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

PDF: [COUNCIL MINUTES 02.24.20](#)

PDF: [COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR MEMORANDUM](#)

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

PDF: [PLANNING BOARD MINUTES](#)

PDF: [EMAIL NOTICE TO PLANNING BOARD AND GREEN TEAM WITH AFFILIATIONS](#)

Local Economies

Buy Local Campaign

10 Points

Program Summary: In early 2019, the Merchantville Business and Professional Association (MBPA) launched a new improved Buy Local campaign for the town, Shop Merchantville. Nicole Eiland of The Station Coffee and Eilandarts, Jackie Ricci of Merchantville Salvage and Antiques and Nicole Nurthern of Nicole Nurthern Photography along with Borough employee Mara Wuebker, Director of Community Development and Sean Fitzgerald, Borough Councilperson were the key leaders in the yearlong effort which continues today. One of the first successes was the Merchantville Art Walk held on May 3, 2019 <http://www.merchantvilleartwalk.com>. The event included displays of 19 local artists in 12 downtown businesses and live music by local musicians at 6 downtown businesses. The MBPA team advertised the event, using the Shop Merchantville logo created by Nicole Eiland, in their places of business, and thru local and social media. A Facebook and Instagram page was created for the Shop Merchantville campaign <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=shop%20merchantville> and an e-mail created for inquiries. The Borough and the MBPA are working together to present a cohesive campaign. The downtown bulletin board at Borough Hall is regularly updated and decorated, showcasing Shop Merchantville promotions, events, businesses and owners. The campaign includes regular advertising in local media (The Merchantville Observer and All Around Pennsauken), use of logo on takeaways at businesses, promotion at the Farmer's Market (now First Friday's), featured business of the month (by Nicole Nurthern Photography), and advertised events including Monsterville (October 30, 2019) and Shop Small Saturday with the 'Shop Merchantville 30 on the 30th' promotion (November 30, 2019). Currently the Shop Merchantville movement, along with the Borough of Merchantville, is keeping customers updated of all downtown business practices, procedures and contact information for purchasing product during COVID 19. The following links are a sampling of those efforts:
<https://www.facebook.com/ShopMerchantville/>
<https://www.facebook.com/ShopMerchantville/videos/569710360398553/>
<http://sh1.sendinblue.com/v1cvyuxytf7e.html?t=1591877285>

PDF: [BUY LOCAL AD EXAMPLE](#)

IMAGE: [BUY LOCAL/SHOP MERCHANTVILLE EVENT](#)

PDF: [SHOP MERCHANTVILLE MONSTERVILLE](#)

PDF: [BUY LOCAL MEETING MINUTES MBPA](#)

Natural Resources

Community Forestry Management Plan and NJUCF Accreditation

20 Points

Program Summary: Merchantville has submitted its 2018-2022 Community Forestry Plan and has completed the Annual Accomplishment report for 2019. Our Shade Tree Commission consists of 5 community volunteers and are supported by Mayor Ted Brennan, Merchantville Borough Council, the Merchantville Department of Public Works, Denise

Brouse, Borough Clerk and Mara Wuebker, Community Development Director. A portion of the borough's budget is dedicated to the ongoing training of the Shade Tree Commission and Public Works crew. All the members of the Commission have attended CORE training as included in New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act. All the Commission members have attended continuing education courses at the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation's annual meeting and have earned CEUs. One member of the Commission is certified arborist and certified roadside tree expert. Another member has a Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture. The contract for an urban tree inventory is about to be awarded. The commission itself regularly performs inventories to identify planting sites, trees to preserve and hazards to respond to. Merchantville's tree protection ordinance is in the process of being updated along with their planting plan.

PDF: [COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN AND NJUCF ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTATION](#)

PDF: [NJUCF ACCREDITATION](#)

PDF: [MERCHANTVILLE 2019-2023 CFMP CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL.PDF](#)

PDF: [MERCHANTVILLE 2019-2023 CFMP LETTER OF APPROVAL.PDF](#)

PDF: [ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT](#)

Waste Management

Prescription Drug Safety and Disposal

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority

Program Summary: Merchantville's Prescription Drug collection program began in 2014. The permanent disposal container is located in a secure and prominent location in Borough Hall outside the Police Station (see attached photos) and is accessible everyday during normal business hours. The Police have also participated every year in the DEA Takeback initiative. Since 2014 they have collected 571.37 pounds of prescription drugs. In 2019 there was a 54% increase in the amount collected over 2018 (see attached collection spreadsheet). In 2020 the Merchantville Police will once again be participating in the DEA National Takeback Initiative at the CVS on Maple Avenue, originally scheduled for April 25th, with a rescheduled date to be determined. An armed officer will be present. The Police Department is also planning to coordinate a pill take back during the annual American Legion P.T.S.D. walk. The Merchantville Prescription Drug program is promoted through Merchantville Police Facebook page, the Merchantville Borough website, our local newspaper, The Merchantville Observer and signage and flyers located prominently in Borough Hall. <http://www.merchantville.com/k2/merchantville-news/merchantville-news-boro/old-pill-collection-box-2019091115/> <http://www.merchantville.com/k2/merchantville-news/merchantville-news-boro/dea-operation-take-back-2014081415/> <https://merchantvillenj.gov/index.php/departments/community-affairs-and-crime-prevention> https://www.facebook.com/pg/Merchantville-Police-Department-745376118881842/posts/?ref=page_internal

PDF: [MPD TOTALS 2014-2019.PDF](#)

PDF: [PRESCRIPTION POLICE.PDF](#)

IMAGE: [COLLECTION AREA.JPG](#)

IMAGE: [COLLECTION AREA CLOSEUP.JPG](#)

IMAGE: [PRESCRIPTION DRUG SOCIAL MEDIA](#)

PDF: [LINKS TO EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION](#)



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