



Ben Weiner

Chair, Wyckoff Environmental Commission
Steering Committee Member, Sustainable Bergen Hub
 Bergen County, New Jersey



As Chair of the [Wyckoff Environmental Commission](#), Ben Weiner has played an important role in helping [Wyckoff Township](#) achieve silver-level Sustainable Jersey certification, a recognition of the township's commitment to environmental action. Ben has been a driving force in regional sustainability efforts. He is part of the team that formed the Sustainable Bergen Hub Steering Committee, bringing together municipalities to collaborate on green initiatives. He has encouraged new towns to participate in the Hub, strengthening environmental efforts across Bergen County. To foster collaboration, he developed an online resource-sharing system, allowing towns to track progress, exchange ideas and support one another in their sustainability goals.

Ben's leadership, vision and commitment to community-driven environmental action make him an outstanding example of a sustainability hero—one who is not only protecting the environment today but also paving the way for a greener future.

"I believe climate change is a real challenge, and I want to be part of the solution—preserving a world with clean air and water for future generations. As a father, I want my daughter to grow up in a healthy environment," said Ben. "My goal is to inspire people to focus on sustainability, and here in Wyckoff, we are proving that environmental stewardship is something everyone can get behind."

Wyckoff Community Garden

Ben coordinates the [Wyckoff Community Garden](#), which has been thriving for nearly 15 years. The garden is a collaborative effort, managed by the Wyckoff Environmental Commission/ Green Team and the Eisenhower Middle School Parent Teacher Organization Environmental Committee. Located at Eisenhower Middle School, the garden features ten 4' x 10' raised planting beds separated by gravel pathways. Two of the beds are dedicated for school use, while the remaining eight are tended by local community members. The garden is entirely pesticide-free, per both school and community garden policies, and is maintained through hand-weeding by dedicated volunteers.



Ben has enjoyed vegetable gardening ever since he was a kid. "This garden is more than just a place to grow food—it's a space to grow connections, teach sustainability and give back," Ben said. "Seeing members of our community grow their own food and flowers is truly inspiring." Ben is also a member of the [Master Gardeners](#)

[of Bergen County](#) and volunteers in the summer at Bergen County's McFaul Environmental Center also located in Wyckoff.

Sustainability is at the heart of the garden's mission. It includes two rain barrels for water conservation and is home to native perennials carefully selected to support pollinators. A diverse mix of vegetables, herbs and annuals is grown, with produce from several beds donated to local food pantries, including Families for Families in Wyckoff and Social Service Association in Ridgewood, to help support households in need.

The garden is further supported by 6th-grade science teachers, as well as parent and family volunteers. Over the years, various student and community organizations have played a role, including the Eisenhower Middle School React Club, Ramapo High School Environmental Club, Indian Hills High School Environmental Club and the Wyckoff Girl Scouts.

Annual Composting Workshop

The Township of Wyckoff holds an annual [Composting Workshop](#) and began offering composters to residents at wholesale cost in 2007; over 300 composters have been sold. He said, "We made it an annual event because there is a lot of interest. Dozens of people attend every year to learn how to turn their kitchen scraps into black gold." The 2025 Spring Backyard Composting workshop is planned for March 22, 2025, at Russell Farms Community Park. The Wyckoff Green Team will provide a presentation and there will be a question and answer session.



Sustainable Bergen County Hub

Ben is a member of the recently formed Bergen Hub Steering Committee that is leading regional initiatives, including single-use plastic reduction and Styrofoam recycling; food waste reduction; and coordination to build resilience and manage stormwater. The Bergen Hub holds quarterly meetings to share ideas between a growing number of 15 participating towns. Ben said participation increases by a few towns each meeting. Towns work together on sustainability actions, allowing municipalities to add certification points through collaboration. The Bergen Hub formed a Styrofoam Committee that organizes collection drives to keep expanded polystyrene, or "EPS" used for packaging, out of the landfills. Thanks to their advocacy work, the Bergen County Commissioners funded the purchase of an EPS densifier that was placed in Ridgefield Park and is available at no charge to all municipalities in Bergen County.

Educational Signage at Russell Farms Community Park

The Township of Wyckoff, with support from a [Sustainable Jersey grant](#) funded by the PSEG Foundation, recently upgraded and installed educational signage at Russell Farms Community Park. These three signs are durable, weatherproof, and designed to enrich visitors' experiences and deepen their connection to the park's natural features.



Ben said, "These signs serve as a bridge between the community and nature. They invite visitors to not only enjoy the beauty of the park but to learn from it. By understanding our local environment, we foster a greater appreciation for sustainability and conservation efforts in Wyckoff."

The first sign highlights the Sensory Garden, encouraging visitors to engage their senses—sight, sound, touch and smell—as they explore its diverse elements. The second sign provides insights into the trees of the park, helping visitors identify different species and appreciate their ecological importance. The third sign offers a comprehensive overview of the park, including key features like the Monarch Butterfly Garden. It also highlights Sustainable Jersey certification and why Wyckoff prioritizes environmental sustainability. Wyckoff Township has received \$17,000 in Sustainable Jersey grants since 2011.



Wyckoff Township: Sustainable Jersey Silver-Certified

The Wyckoff Green Team works closely with the Wyckoff Environmental Commission, collaborating on initiatives that promote sustainability and environmental awareness throughout the community. Thanks to their good work, Wyckoff Township achieved Sustainable Jersey silver-level certification in 2016, 2019 and 2022. The Township achieved its first certification in 2011.

The educational campaigns cover a wide range of sustainability topics, including [anti-idling awareness](#), a [reusable bag initiative](#) to reduce plastic waste, composting education and the importance of native plants in supporting pollinators. One of their flagship projects is the annual Green Film Festival, organized in partnership with neighboring municipalities to inspire action through environmental documentaries.

The group also organizes impactful community events such as the town-wide [Team Up to Tidy Up](#) cleanup, the annual [Shred Fest](#), [Styrofoam recycling events](#) and the popular [Fishing Derby](#). They actively engage with the community by staffing educational tables at local events like Wyckoff Day and YMCA Healthy Kids Day, spreading awareness about their initiatives.

To ensure sustainability education reaches the next generation, the team shares environmental resources with K-8 schools through Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) communications and participates in high school community service fairs, encouraging students to get involved in environmental efforts. In addition, several high school students volunteer to be Junior Commissioners and take on a unique project each year. In 2024, this event was an Upcycled Art Show at the Wyckoff Library.

Through their dedication and outreach, the Wyckoff Environmental Commission/Green Team continues to make a lasting impact, inspiring residents of all ages to take action for a greener future. To learn more about all of the sustainability actions that Wyckoff Township has accomplished, read the [2022 Sustainable Jersey Certification Report of Wyckoff Township](#).

More About Ben

Ben grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and attended Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, where he earned a B.A. in Economics and an M.M. in Finance. Before retiring in 2019, Ben built a successful career in the automotive industry, starting out with Ford Motor Company in Detroit, moving to New Jersey in 1992 to work for Jaguar Cars and then spending over 19 years at Jaguar Land Rover North America after the two companies merged, holding various leadership roles.

Ben has lived in Wyckoff with his wife Mindi for over 30 years, raising their daughter Liz, who is currently a senior at George Washington University. In his free time, he enjoys gardening, playing tennis and following his hometown Steelers, Pirates and Penguins.