

# **2021 Annual Report**



# **Executive Summary**

The Red Bank Environmental Commission (RBEC) was established by ordinance in 1990 and is composed of volunteer Red Bank residents appointed by the Mayor and is consistent with NJ state laws creating environmental commissions.

RBEC advises the Mayor, Borough Council, Business Administrator, and municipal department heads on environmental issues that may affect the natural resources and inhabitants of the community including but not limited to, solid waste management and recycling, energy conservation and renewable energy, stormwater management, preservation and use of parks and open spaces, clean water resources, and protection of flora, fauna, soil and landscape throughout the Borough. Additionally, the commission reviews and comments on the building and development applications for the Planning and Zoning Boards.

RBEC met online via Zoom meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All RBEC meetings were opened to the public as we encouraged public participation and action in our discussions, programs and projects.

RBEC Member: Title:

Nancy Facey-Blackwood Chair

Paulo Rodriguez-Heyman Vice Chair

Denelle Johnson Secretary

Travers Martin

Roy Meyer

Kristina Bonatakis Planning Board Liaison

Dave Johnson Jenna Leder Ana Almerini

Kate Triggiano Council Liaison

The RBEC renewed its two sub-committees, Green Team (GT) and Creative Team (CT), to collaborate on RBEC projects and events throughout the year, and in keeping with Sustainable Jersey's community partnership and outreach best practices.

Green Team Members*	Creative Team
Matt Hershberger	Sarah Mastriano
David Schmetterer	Monika McCall
Helena Blyskun	Eileen Kennedy
Mary Jo Hinds	Juana Santamaria
Bob D'Addario	
Cliff Keen – Dept of Public Utilities	
Charles Hoffman/ Lou Del Pra – Parks and Rec	

<sup>\*</sup>All EC members are automatically Green Team members per ordinance 2021-07

# **RBEC Activities and Accomplishments**

The RBEC and the Green Team were productive this year. Two public-facing events held were the GreenFair in May and assisting the Borough with the launch of a Pilot Plastic Film Recycling Program in October.

### **Plan Reviews:**

Reviewed building plans and presented comments to the Municipal Planning and Zoning Boards for best environmental practices. RBEC often suggested increased open space and setbacks, rain gardens, increased use of native trees and plants, use of pervious materials replacing commonly used asphalt, and use of green building practices when possible. Some of the plans reviewed in 2021 include:

- o 141 West Front St-new apartment building with first floor retail
- o 234-240 Shrewsbury Ave—an apartment building with first floor retail
- o 120 Monmouth St-new apartment building with first floor retail
- 96-98 West Front St-new apartment building
- o 21 East Front St-conversion of the first floor of a building to a luxury car rental store
- 121 Monmouth St-new apartment building
- o 121 Dr James Parker Blvd-Expansion of Lunchbreak building
- 26 Wallace St-teardown of a historic home to make a parking lot

## **Ordinances and Resolutions**

The EC provided support for the following ordinances and resolutions:

- Ordinances
  - o 2021-04 Clean Soil Fill Ordinance
  - o 2021-05 Statewide Stormwater Ordinance
  - o 2021-06 Bamboo Ordinance
  - 2021-07 Designate all EC members as Green Team members in addition to Green Team members appointed annually by resolution
- Resolutions
  - o 21-89 Continued support for Sustainable Monmouth Alliance Energy Aggregation Program

#### Grants

- Maintained a shared spreadsheet where members can add grant ideas. The EC also participated in discussions of grants with the Borough.
- Successful grants with EC participation in 2021 were:
  - O AARP Grant for Wayfinding and a Parklet

## **Education and Community Outreach**

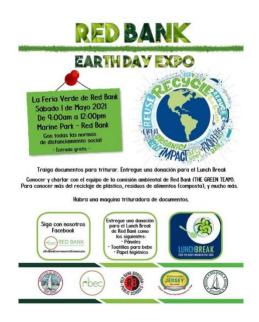
RBEC, the Green Team, and the Creative Team participated in several community events. RBEC held several community educational workshops and participated in community events for the residents of Red Bank and neighboring townships. Our workshops and events were developed and executed to improve the health and well-being of our citizens and municipal employees as well as to inform the public of improved environmental and sustainable quality of life issues.

All events were promoted on the RBEC website page, Red Bank Borough events calendar, RBEC Facebook page and in local online and press media. Library events were also promoted by the Red Bank Library online, newsletters and traditional media.

# Red Bank 4<sup>rd</sup> Annual Earth Day/Green Fair

RBEC and the Green and Creative Teams held a Green Fair in Marine Park on Saturday May 1<sup>st</sup>. Features were sign-ups for a pilot program for Plastic Film Recycling, and a donation station for LunchBreak as well as a shredding machine available.

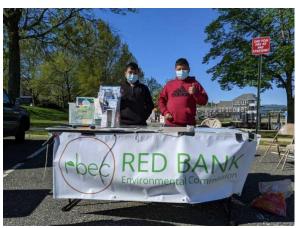














#### Curbside Plastic Film Recycling Program

Under a <u>one-year agreement</u> entered with S.C. Johnson & Sons in June, Red Bank became the fourth New Jersey municipality to team up with the consumer products giant to recycle film packaging. (The others are Bradley Beach, Loch Arbour, and Matawan.)

Materials eligible for recycling include grocery bags; bread bags; food storage bags, including Ziploc bags; newspaper bags; bubble wrap; shrink wrap, including that used with multipacks of bottled beverages; and boat wrap.

The plastic film is collected by Red Bank DPU and transported to Mazza Recycling who then sends it to a plastic film recycler to repurpose the film.



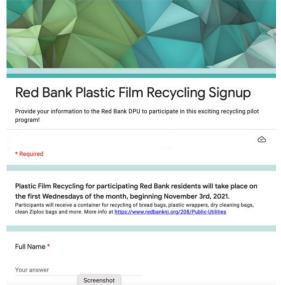


Figure 1Photo Credit John Ward

RBEC/GT created the sign-up form used by residents to sign up for the program. The information went to a spreadsheet used by DPU to have a list of the addresses for the monthly pickup. Participants who signed up early had their buckets delivered to them. A bucket signup/pickup event was held October 16<sup>th</sup> handing out over 125 buckets. The program began the first Wednesday in November and as of the second month, Red Bank collected more than 15 cu yards or around 440 pounds of plastic film.

## Turtle Habitat at Bellhaven Nature Preserve

Bellhaven is home to different animal species, including at least three turtle species—diamondback, snapper and box, a protected species. Hatchlings trying to cross the emergency access road near the Primary School could not make it all the way across. Residents reached out to the EC and Animal Welfare. A team consisting of the EC, Clean Ocean Action, and Animal Welfare reached out to Project Terrapin to investigate ways the Borough could make it safer for the turtles. Project Terrapin's research concluded that a habitat would provide the turtles with the space they needed and avoid any future mishaps. Turtle gardens are artificial nesting sites built with mounds of a sand blend. Bellhaven was then surveyed and a perfect location for a turtle habitat was selected.





#### **Collaboration with Other Organizations**

#### The Red Bank Public Library

 The Green Team collaborates with the Red Bank Public Library about monthly topics on sustainability for its Sustainable Red Bank Series. Topics covered were:

January
 February
 April
 May
 June
 How to Talk to your Kids about Climate Change
 Stormwater Management and your Community
 The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind Viewing Party
 Discussion: The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind
 How to Make Your Home More Energy Efficient

August Solar Q&A

OctoberSustainable FashionNovemberCurbside Recycling

#### Sustainable Jersey Recertification

- The Green Team achieved silver certification status with Sustainable Jersey with 380 points by documenting the sustainable actions in Red Bank.
- The Borough received the Creative and Innovative Project Award for the Senior Lockbox and the Volunteer Translator Program. Both programs are run through the Red Bank Police Department.

#### Sustainable Jersey Monmouth Hub

 Green Team members actively participate in the bimonthly meetings where county Green Teams come together and discuss topics and share actions in their community.

#### **Environmental Partnership**

 EC members actively participated in the bimonthly meetings hosted by the Monmouth County Urban Coast Institute where local municipal environmental members meet and discuss topics, issues, and share actions in their community.

# **Memberships**

- Red Bank is a signatory to the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.
- RBEC is a member of the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC).