

**To: Mayor Jeff Martin  
Township Council**

**From: Karl Vetter, Chairman  
Clinton Griggs, Vice Chair**

**Date: January 30, 2026**

**Subject: 2025 Annual Report of the Hamilton Township  
Environmental Advisory Commission and Green Team**

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:56A and the Ordinances of the Township of Hamilton, the following is a summary of the activities of the Hamilton Township Environmental Advisory Commission (Commission) and Green Team for the year 2025.

The Commission has the responsibility for the protection, development, and/or use of natural resources, including water resources and open spaces located within the Township.

Membership of the 2025 Environmental Advisory Commission and Green Team consisted of the following individuals:

John Balletto, Chairman (January to June) – Regular	Claudia Shaughnessy – Green Team Chair
Karl Vetter, Chairman (July to December) – Regular	Eric Tyira – Green Team (new member)
Clinton Griggs – Vice Chair – Regular	James Hopkins – Green team
Haig Kasabach – Planning Board Liaison – Regular	Jeanette Bergeron – Green Team
Robert Benjamin – Regular	Kenneth Hill – Green Team
Ann Wolf – Regular	Monica Martinez-Collins – Green Team
JoAnne Bruno – Regular	
Andrew Garcia – Alternate Member	*Nicole McHugh
Claudia Shaughnessy – Alternate Member	*William Wall
Theodore Buehler – Associate Member	*Dony Oommen
Nicolina Contardo – Associate Member	*Tara Heagle
Cathy Wagner – Associate Member	
Carrie Feuer – Mayor’s Representative	*Resigned in 2025
Richard Tighe – Council Liaison	
Madison Nebbia – Commission Secretary	

All meetings were held in the Hamilton Call Center with public participation welcome. Eleven (11) meetings were conducted. Commission and Green Team meetings were combined. The July meeting was cancelled due to a lack of items on the agenda and no applications to review.

### **Change In Leadership**

During 2025, John Balletto was the Chairman of the Commission from January to June. John stepped down due to health issues. The Mayor appointed Karl Vetter as the new Chairman in July 2025.

During the September 16th Township Council meeting, a proclamation was issued thanking John for his 37-years of service on the Commission both as a commissioner and chairman. The proclamation was signed by the Mayor and the Township Council. Chairman Karl Vetter attended the meeting and accepted the proclamation on John’s behalf.

The Commission wrote a “Statement of Appreciation for John Balletto.” The statement was signed by members of the Commission and Green Team at the October 8th meeting. During the meeting, Chairman Karl Vetter accepted the document on John’s behalf and read the document out loud.

### **Sustainable New Jersey Certification**

The Commission continued to complete actions necessary to maintain our Sustainable New Jersey Bronze Certification (Vice Chairman Clinton Griggs lead the effort). The Commission continues to look ahead to the next level, Silver Certification, and continues to work toward achieving that higher goal. It should be noted that Sustainable New Jersey is undergoing a re-organization and will not be receiving information concerning certifications until 2027. Therefore, the requirement for recertification for the Bronze Level will be extended. This will provide more time to obtain additional points toward Silver Certification.

### **Annual Community Cleanup**

On April 12<sup>th</sup> the Commission held its annual volunteer Community Land and Water Cleanup effort. The event was very successful despite the terrible weather (about 35 degrees with some rain). Even so, 52 participants showed up, not including the Township Department of Public Works (DPW) crew. The cleanup collected 1.14 tons of materials (both waste and recyclables). The following areas were cleaned:

- Assunpink Blvd. and Whitehead Park
- Shady Brook Park
- Samuel Alito Way (trees between golf course and library) and Project Freedom around the stormwater detention basin
- Old Olden Ave. and behind animal shelter on Sylvan Ave.
- Municipal Park

Commission members Haig Kasabach and Karl Vetter were responsible for scoping out the various cleanup locations and conducted site inspections prior to the cleanup event. James Wyrrough and the Public Works team were also instrumental in the cleanup. The cleanup event was publicized through the NJ Clean Communities Program headed by Jim Wyrrough. Several Commission and Green Team members acted as Team Leaders to guide the volunteers to the specific locations and to support the volunteers as needed. Commission members Clinton Griggs, Haig Kasabach and Karl Vetter provided support to the Team Leaders by supplying additional equipment and bags.

### **Rain Barrel Workshop**

The 2025 Rain Barrel Workshop took place on May 10<sup>th</sup> at the Tulpehaking Nature Center in Hamilton. It was a sold-out event with thirty (30) people attending. The Commission provided 30 empty barrels and the necessary hardware to build the rain barrels. Jessie Lisanti, the Watershed Ambassador, gave an excellent Power Point presentation regarding the use and need for rain barrels. Vice Chair Clinton Griggs demonstrated the construction of a rain barrel and provided support to participants as they built the rain barrels. Karl Vetter, Claudia Shaughnessy, and Nicolina Contardo were also present to provide support as needed. While the barrels were donated, a nominal fee was charged for each set of rain barrel hardware.

### **Green Team Initiatives**

Claudia Shaughnessy, the Green Team Chair, and members of both the Commission and Green Team continued to work on and maintain the following gardens, meadows and bird houses present throughout the Township:

- George Dye Raingarden and bird houses
- Library Rain Garden and bird houses
- Wing Haven Flower Meadow and bird houses

- Endicott Park Garden and bird houses
- Alexander Elementary School rain garden
- Veterans Park bird houses

The main accomplishment this year was the creation of the Wing Haven Flower Meadow (official title) across from the Township Call Center. In May, the DPW plowed the area twice and delivered one load of compost and eight loads of mulch. Many varieties of plants (donated by the community and a landscape architect from Montgomery Township) were planted and watered throughout the season. These included a Ground Cherry plant with thousands of fruits, large pumpkin vines, and several species of flowers that support Monarch and other butterflies. The meadow was nominated for an Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) award and was awarded “Honorable Mention” at the ANJEC annual conference on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

The rain garden at the library was watered, weeded, and new plants were established. Maintenance (mostly weeding and watering) was also conducted at George Dye, Alexander Elementary School, and Endicott Park.

The thirteen (13) bird houses were occupied by tree swallows, wrens, and blue birds. Two bird houses were repaired and one was destroyed. A large owl house was placed at Veterans Park but was not monitored for occupancy.

The Green Team and Commission are developing plans for various upgrades scheduled for the Spring of 2026 (pending approval). These include establishing more plants at the Wing Haven Flower Meadow and installing educational signs for Wing Haven and Endicott Park. Building more bird houses and installing bat houses are also being considered.

### **Miscellaneous Topics**

The Commission and Green Team web page continued to be updated with new photographs of events. Links to new and old information such as plans and reports continued to be added.

The revised Hamilton Township Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) was issued as a final document by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission in January 2025 (date on cover) and posted on the Commission’s web page. The Commission provided comments and suggested revisions in 2024 before the document was completed.

The Commission and Green Team were represented at the 2025 National Night Out event on August 5<sup>th</sup>. The event was very well attended, and the Commission/Green Team was able to pass out a lot of information concerning upcoming activities and informative flyers on current environmental issues.

Commission members Ann Wolf, Nicolina Cantardo, and Cathy Wagner put together a library display that included information on recycling in the Township and Mercer County. The display was seen by the public in September at the Township library and was a great success.

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, Commission and Green Team members attended the annual Clean Communities Delaware River Cleanup event at the Abbott Marsh, coordinated and overseen by Jim Wyrrough.

Changes to the Township Ordinances concerning the Commission and Green Team were approved by Township Council and took effect on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Martin attended the October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. A summary of the meeting was compiled and included discussions regarding appointments to the Commission/Green Team, a community garden, revised by-laws, municipal boundaries identification, grants, and goals and objectives.

The Commission/Green Team was introduced to the new Watershed Ambassador – Felicity Cruz, who attended the October 8th meeting.

The Commission/Green Team continued its annual membership with the ANJEC. Claudia Shaughnessy, Jeanette Bergeron, Nicolina Contardo, and JoAnne Bruno attended the annual ANJEC conference on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

Another Commission banner (thinner) was designed, then produced by the DPW in time for the Oktoberfest event.

On October 19<sup>th</sup>, the Commission and Green Team were also represented at the 2025 Oktoberfest in Veterans Park. This event was also well attended, and the Commission/Green Team table attracted a lot of attention. An example rain barrel, pumpkins from the Wing Haven Flower Meadow, and an ANJEC game that tested visitor’s knowledge of different environmental issues were very popular. Eight people signed up for the 2026 planned rain barrel event. Both children and adults had fun guessing the weight of the largest displayed pumpkin (was 84 pounds). Displays highlighted the various gardens and meadows created throughout the Township. Information concerning pollinator gardens was also passed out (very popular).

A new “Clean Rain, Clear Drains” flyer was developed by staff from the administration with comments provided by the Commission/Green Team. Copies of the flyer were made to distribute throughout the Township. The flyer was posted on the Township web site. This was made possible by a \$2,000 grant provided by Sustainable New Jersey.

The Commission and Green Team held three team building events in 2025: a mid-summer picnic, a late-summer miniature golf outing, and a holiday pot luck prior to the December meeting

Throughout the year, the Commission and Green Team encouraged public participation at its monthly meetings. The following members of the public were present at the meetings: Stan De Riel, Scott Sullivan, Brian Boyer, and Janey Mazer. Jim Wyrrough, Hamilton Recycling Coordinator, and Clean Communities Representative, was present at the April 9<sup>th</sup> meeting to assist in final preparations for the Community Cleanup. Lucia Middleton from the Watershed Institute presented a program on stormwater activities at the October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. At the November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting Dipti Sheth gave a brief introduction to the “Eat Plants – Plant Trees Campaign.” She will give a more formal presentation in 2026.

### **Land Use Applications Reviewed**

All major land use (development) applications are reviewed for environmental and land use concerns prior to Planning or Zoning Board review. The Commission conducted eight (8) development site plan reviews at its monthly meetings in 2025:

January – 0	July – 0
February – 3	August – 3
March – 0	September – 2
April – 0	October – 0
May – 0	November – 0
June – 0	December – 0

Of these, the Commission submitted comments on:

1. Application No. 25-07-023: Kulture Hamilton, LLC @ 3690 Quakerbridge Road – converting existing building to a dispensary for retail cannabis
2. Application No. 25-08-030: Township of Hamilton @ 208 Patterson Ave. – installation of solar arrays on the Patterson Landfill

The number of development applications submitted to the Township slowed this year (21 applications in 2024, 8 applications in 2025).

cc: Kathlyn Monzo, Business Administrator  
 Richard Tighe, Councilman  
 Fred Dumont, Director, Planning & Economic Development  
 Samantha Brown, Township Engineer  
 Alison Sabo, Township Clerk  
 Carrie Feuer, Mayor’s Liaison, Director of WPC  
 Environmental Commission/Green team Members  
 ANJEC

### Photographs For 2025



2025 Octoberfest



2025 National Night Out



2025 Rain Barrel Event



Library Recycling Display



Wing Haven Pumpkins



Library Rain Garden



Wing Haven Flower Meadow



Alexander School Rain Garden



2025 Community Clean Up