

Environmental Commission/Green Team Monthly Meeting October 2024

Dear Neighbors:

We hope you are enjoying the beautiful fall leaves! Speaking of which, environmental best practices suggest leaving some or all of the leaves on your property in the fall and through the spring. Leaves are great, free mulch and fertilizer, and they provide habitat for beneficial insects and other wildlife. [They even help trap carbon](#) and prevent it from turning into carbon dioxide (which contributes to global warming). If this practice is new to you (and that's OK – it is new to many of us!), consider leaving the leaves in one or two garden beds. Of course, if you have excess leaves, the Borough will pick them up as usual. [You can read more about the benefits of leaving the leaves here](#), and feel free to let us know if you have questions.

Let's get to the update.

Upcoming Events

Want to help do a little work in the rain garden by the Riverton School? Join Katie Lucas on Sunday, October 20, at 9AM. No experience required! This is a great way to learn a bit about working with native plants if you would like to learn more.

Upcoming Meetings

You are invited! This month, we will hold a joint Environmental Commission/Green Team Meeting in-person at The Porch Club (213 Howard Street) on Thursday, October 17, at 7:30PM. Thank you to the Porch Club for sharing their space! Everyone is welcome. You do not need to be on the Environmental Commission or Green Team to join us. Bring a neighbor or family member!

Some agenda items will include:

-An update on the recent regional Green Team meeting.

-A discussion of the tree ordinance the Borough Council passed on August 20, 2024. The ordinance language can be found attached to the agenda for

that meeting. [Click here to access that content \(page 68\)](#). [Visit the NJ State League of Municipalities to learn more](#).

-Working on getting certified with [Sustainable Jersey](#). We will be dedicating about 15 minutes of each meeting to getting our application in order. If we succeed in getting certified, we can qualify to earn some grants for Riverton through this program. We could use everyone's help putting the application together. Again, no experience necessary!

-Sign-ups for committees such as events, communications and grants, speaker series, plantings and rain garden maintenance, and Sustainable New Jersey certification. *We would like to create a NEW committee related to Borough ordinance/regulatory review and collaboration!*

-Hearing reports from the Borough Council and Planning Board.

-And more! As always, there will be opportunities for everyone to share what issues they care about most.

If you know a neighbor who may want to sign-up for the Environmental Commission and Green Team monthly email, they can do so by texting the word NEWSLETTER to 888777. They will be prompted to share their email address.

Nature Neighbors—Q&A

Last month, we started a new feature called Nature Neighbors. Each month, we'll feature a short Q&A with someone about their interest in and involvement with environmental and sustainability concerns in Riverton and beyond. If you know someone who you'd like us to interview, please be in touch!

For our inaugural Nature Neighbors Q&A, we are featuring Katie Lucas, Chair of the Borough of Riverton Green Team.

How did you first get involved with the Riverton Green Team and/or Riverton Environmental Commission?

I initially got involved before Riverton actually had a Green Team. Jim Quinn (now Mayor) invited me to attend Palmyra's Green Team meetings

with him and, when we saw what they were working to accomplish, we decided to start one in Riverton. As for Environmental Commission, I initially began attending meetings as an interested resident and got more involved from there!

What is your favorite natural spot or feature in Riverton?

The Pompeston Creek just behind Riverton Park is a special spot for our family. We like to explore back there and look for signs of the different animals who call that area home.

What actions do you take at home to help the environment?

We [compost](#), [leave the leaves](#), [plant native plants](#), and refrain from pesticides and herbicides. We [keep pet chickens](#) who help naturally keep down bugs for us and help us keep meat scraps out of the trash.

What steps do you think anyone can take to be greener?

Remembering that small steps can be a huge help! You don't need to go entirely green to make a difference! Pick one thing that matters to you and your family (maybe you want to start composting, [conserve water](#), or enjoy more fireflies in your yard?) and start with small, attainable goals from there!

What sustainability or environmental initiative have you seen other municipalities that you think would be great idea for Riverton to consider adopting or promoting?

An "adopt a storm drain" program, recycling receptacles at each public trash receptacle, EV Borough vehicles and maybe even a charging station at a public parking spot/train lot.

Thanks, Katie!

[Learning Opportunities and Upcoming Events](#)

[Boo! Mark your calendar for "All About Arachnids: Halloween's Eight-Legged Wonders," webinar with Dr. Sebastian Echeverri, October 31, 2024, 1:00-2:00PM Eastern via zoom.](#)

[Thinking about adding a small pond to your yard? Check out “How to Create a No-Fuss Wildlife Pond with Pat Sutton,” which took place on October 9, 2024. The recording is available through the Native Plant Society of New Jersey through November 9.](#)

Your quick read for the month: Do you want to work *with* your land as opposed to *against* it? [Check out the Native Plant Trust’s interview with its CEO](#) on how he adapts his gardening practices to be environmentally friendly and in keeping with what the land wants.

Your long read for the month: Did you know the State of New Jersey has a water supply plan? It was release in September, and [you can dig in here.](#)

Social Media

You can follow us on social media for more regular updates.

Green Team Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/riverton_green_team/

Green Team Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/people/Riverton-NJ-Green-Team/100082748494990/>

Environmental Commission Facebook:

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

Borough Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RivertonNJ>

Borough Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/boroughofrivertonnj/>

We hope to see you Thursday, October 17!

Sincerely,

Nicole Belolan

On behalf of Kathy Simon and Katie Lucas

Borough of Riverton Environmental Commission and Green Team