

## Environmental Commission/Green Team Monthly Meeting January 2025

Dear Neighbors:

Happy New Year! Let's get to the update.

### 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, January 16, 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:

-Discussion of planning 2025 events such as a Fix It Fair, speakers, and film screenings.

-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.

-Sign-ups for committees such as events, communications and grants, speaker series, plantings and rain garden maintenance, and Sustainable New Jersey certification.

-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.

Want to mark your calendar for our 2025 meetings now? We usually meet the third Thursday of each month at 7:30pm.

### Stuff to Do and Things to Learn

Concerned about light pollution and how it affects people and the environment? This webinar is for you! the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) recently hosted a webinar about light pollution problems and solutions called “Bring Back the Stars: Fighting Light Pollution for Darker Skies.” [Watch it here](#). You can also learn more about light pollution from this resource developed by the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History: [Lights Out: Recovering our Night Sky](#). The Smithsonian site complements their exhibition on the same topic, which is [open in Washington, D.C.](#), through December 2025.

Want to learn more about climate change and how you can help manage it locally? Register now for two online workshops hosted by the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC). Webinars will take place on Tuesdays, January 14 and 18, at 7PM. [Register here](#).

A collective of Burlington County Green Teams will meet on Sunday, January 26, 2025, in Moorestown, NJ. The meeting will take place at Bayada Foundation HQ at 1 West Main Street. Everyone is welcome! No need to be a formal member of the Green Team to join us.

Want to see some bald eagles in the wild? Register for the Eagle Trail Walk, organized by Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River & Its Tributaries. The walk will take place on Wednesday, January 18, 2025, at 9:00AM in Port Norris, NJ. [Register here](#).

Are you a native plant gardener or someone who wants to get started with native plants? Check out this opportunity learn how to grow native plants from seed over the winter. The Jersey Shore chapter of the [Native Plant Society of New Jersey](#) is hosting a winter seed sowing workshop taught by Ellen McGuff-Silverman, a NPSNJ member and Ocean County Master Gardener, in Beachwood, NJ. [Register here](#).

Want to learn more about trees and how to identify them once they've lost their leaves for the winter? Register for Winter Tree ID, a free program offered by the Burlington County Park system. The event will take place on

Monday, February 24, 2025. Mark your calendar now and [register here](#) in February.

## Nature Neighbors—Q&A

*In place of this month's Nature Neighbor's, we're featuring a short welcome for our new Green Team Chair, Nicole Belolan. Katie Lucas, who had been the Green Team Chair for several years, is now a new member of Borough Council. Thank you, Katie, for your service as Green Team Chair!*

As former Chair of the Green Team, it's my honor to introduce you to our new Chair, Nicole Belolan. Nicole is an internationally-recognized historian and a sustainability enthusiast. When Nicole and her husband bought their home in Riverton six years ago, they quickly got to work both restoring it to historical accuracy and volunteering in various capacities around town. In particular, Nicole has been an integral part of the growth and success of our Environmental Commission and Green Team these past few years - tirelessly collecting and dropping carloads of stretchy plastic for our TREX Challenge; organizing our efforts to secure grant funding; helping out in Riverton School's rain garden; as well as dreaming up this very e-newsletter; and so much more! At present, Nicole is working toward her Environmental Stewards certification through Rutgers - personally, I cannot wait to see how Nicole uses this to further advance Riverton's sustainability efforts. Feel free to stop by 605 Thomas to say hi to her, and please join me in welcoming Nicole to her new role!

--Katie Lucas

*If you want to be featured or would like to suggest someone to feature for our Nature Neighbors Q&A, please email Nicole Belolan at [nbelolan@gmail.com](mailto:nbelolan@gmail.com).*

## Don't Forget!

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](#). Also be sure to [leave your stems in the winter](#) instead of pruning them or cutting them down. They provide important habitat for overwintering insects and other beneficial critters. Feel free to let us know if you have questions.

Please also keep in mind best practices in salting your sidewalks this season. To balance safety with environmental needs, experts encourage us to use less road salt than we often do. Did you know that you only need about a coffee mug's worth of salt for the average twenty sidewalk squares? [You can learn more about how to "salt smarter" through this Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions \(ANJEC\) webinar](#).

## Social Media

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

Green Team Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/riverton\\_green\\_team/](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, January 16!

Sincerely,

Kathy Simon and Nicole Belolan

Borough of Riverton Environmental Commission and Green Team

