



**Annual Work Plan of the Environmental Commission  
of the Borough of Alpine, Alpine, NJ. 07620  
December 20, 2008**

The purpose and goal of the Alpine Environmental Commission, E.C., is to ensure the protection and propagation of the community's valuable natural resources, in particular our magnificent trees, and to influence development in order to minimize negative impact. This is accomplished by the following steps, which are supported by dedicated E.C. members, borough officials, and Alpine's Mayor & Council;

1. Holding formal E.C. Open Public meetings, as the demand requires. The goal of these meetings is to discuss issues of concern offered by any E.C. members, as well as the public in general, thereby presenting the opportunity of airing areas of interest. (see attached minutes)
2. Meeting frequently to promote conservation of trees through numerous on-site inspections of properties to be developed or of tree removal applications on already developed properties. These inspections take place shortly after completion by an applicant of the E.C. check list and Tree Removal application on a regularly advertised schedule (see attached) in order to grant;
  - Approval of clearly marked & identified trees wishing to be removed
  - Approval of tree removal under certain warranted conditions
  - Denial of tree removal (see attached examples)

A written report of the E.C.'s findings is then submitted to the Borough's Building Inspector for his information and, if necessary response, within a few days of inspection.

In this endeavor it is the E.C.'s prime focus to prevent unnecessary tree destruction so as to protect our Borough's prized and admired natural environment within the scope and conditions of the existing Alpine Tree Ordinance. This Tree Ordinance was revised to improve the protection of our trees. (see attachment #1 to the Growth Award application) The EC. devoted approx. 200 hours to the revision of the ordinance

The E.C. held two formal public meetings in 2008. In addition the E.C. conducted twelve on site inspections for tree removal. These inspections were attended by a quorum of the commission. (see attached reports)

The E.C. has also, as of 2005, been requested by the Building Inspector to revisit developing sites prior to the release of the Tree Surety Bonds in order to assure that unauthorized destruction did not take place, as well as to assure that sufficient safeguarding of remaining trees has been accomplished. In this connection six revisits for Bond Release were conducted.

The E.C. identified a violation to the Tree Ordinance and its approval for tree removal on Closter Dock Road. Reference is made to the E.C. Site inspection report dated 11/13/08, and three attached letters – one from the owner and two from the Borough's Engineer. We are now awaiting the property owners response to the request for the submission of a original plan identifying the trees removed on the site, as well as a revised landscape plan showing the deciduous trees to be included in the replacement trees within the buffer zone.

Furthermore on October 18, 2007 the E.C. approached the Mayor & Council in writing requesting that an abandoned Gas station site be purchased by the Borough for the purpose of revegetation with trees in order to create a natural open space in this prime location.

3. The E.C. Chairperson also sits on the Borough's Planning Board and presents monthly reports on the E.C.'s activities. The Planning Board includes the Mayor and the Council's liaison person.
4. The E.C. created a page for the Alpine School calendar (April) which is intended to educate parents and children to go green and preserve trees. (see attached)
5. The E.C. is continuing in its efforts to preserve the 200 ft. natural buffer zone along the major north/south state highway in town – Route 9W. The E.C. has issued a Buffer Zone brochure, which provides all residents with formalized guidelines on the maintenance and preservation of this sensitive area, recommending Do's & Don'ts, as well as advising of native revegetation plantings when the necessity arises to intrude into this zone by Borough approval.

6. The E.C. continues its membership and participation in ANJEC activities.
7. The E.C. interacts with other Borough agencies, such as Building Inspector, Historical Society, Health Dept., Maintenance Dept., etc. In additional special effort has been placed upon ongoing interaction with the Alpine School in achieving education goals and objectives of developing a platform of environmental appreciation by students and also parents.
8. The E.C. is currently at the direction of the Mayor & Council and the Planning Board reviewing the existing process of tree removal for septic system installation in order to coordinate efforts with the Health Dept. and the Borough Engineer to minimize tree removal.
9. The E.C. coordinates the Arbor Day celebration, which include;
  - The Mayor's proclamation designating April 14, 2008 as Arbor Day in Alpine,
  - The distribution of seedlings to all school children, as well as to Borough residents along with a planting guide created by the E.C. (see attached)
  - The flying of the Arbor Day flag for two weeks
  - The display of a poster in Borough Hall, where all residents pick up their mail, announcing this special event.

Submitted by Lorraine Mattes, Chair.