



**Annual Work Plan of the Environmental Commission
of the Borough of Alpine, Alpine, NJ. 07620
December 12, 2009**

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. The E.C. has made enormous strides to protect our trees with the revision of our Tree Ordinance in 2008. The Tree Ordinance revisions have developed strong interactions between the borough engineer and the E.C. as will be demonstrated in the Growth Award Application. Alpine's tree preservation and protection is strongly supported by dedicated E.C. members, borough officials, and Alpine's Mayor & Council. The following steps are taken to accomplish our goals;

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. The tree removal application has been revised to show new tree removal charges, (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 enhanced with revisions in 2008.

The E.C. held two formal public meetings in 2009. 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 requested by the Building Inspector revisited developed sites prior to the release of the Tree Surety Bonds in order to assure that unauthorized tree 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. One site required 3 site visits starting in 2008 with final bond release in 9/24/09. This particular site had 27 regulated trees removed and required 64 replacement trees in the buffer area.

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 native to the area. This site has been purchased and the E.C. is currently participating in the Landscape planning 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 activities of the EC. The Planning Board includes the Mayor and the Council's liaison person.
4. The E.C. created a page for the Alpine School calendar, the April page. This year's page is intended to make all aware of the Land mark Tree ordinance, the caption on the page is "Arbor Day Challenge...Find A landmark Tree" and get a beautiful honorary plaque! The E.C. has also issued a press release to local newspapers to publicize receiving the prestigious Growth Award. (see attached in the Growth Award Packet)
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 revised a the Buffer Zone brochure, which provides all residents with formalized guidelines on the

- maintenance and preservation of this sensitive are commending 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 addition the E.C. has strong support from our borough Engineer in enforcing our revised Tree Ordinance. The Engineer reviews the sites the E.C. visits for tree removal and includes in a formal written document to the Planning Board and Mayor & Council the amount of the tree bond required and the number of replacement trees required.
 8. The E.C. now receives along with the owner of the property a formal agenda for site reviews. (see attached sample)
 9. The E.C. coordinates the Arbor Day celebration, which include;
 - The Mayor's proclamation designating April 25, 2009 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 at Borough Hall.
 - The display of a poster in Borough Hall, where all residents pick up their mail, announcing this special event.

Submitted by Lorraine Mattes, Chair.