

# Sustainable Frenchtown Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 8, 2018  
(Environmental Commission 7 - 8 pm)  
Sustainable Frenchtown 8 - 9 pm  
Location: Frenchtown Borough Hall

## Meeting Agenda

| Topic/Issue                      |  | Facilitator        | Min.    |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------|---------|
| Welcome                          |  | Margaret           | 5 min   |
| Creative Team update             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creative Assets Inventory</li><li>• Hunterdon Hub meeting, May 15, Flemington DIY 6 - 8 pm</li></ul> | Leigh and Margaret | 10 min. |
| Current project updates          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small grant -- grant reimbursement update</li><li>• Anit-idling campaign update</li></ul>            | All                | 10 min  |
| Sustainable Jersey Certification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2019 Recertification planning</li></ul>  | ALL                | 15 min. |
| Misc.                            |  | ALL                | 5       |

In attendance:  
Margaret Waldock, Chair  
Leigh Marino, Hunterdon Creative Team chair  
Joel Boriek, Jim Meade, Tom Woodruff, Gerry St. Onge

## Meeting Minutes

Well testing:  
Mara Tippett from the Raritan Headwaters Association (RHA) presented information on well testing, and programs we might support for residents to test their drinking water.

All of Frenchtown's drinking water comes from aquifer/ground water sources, with 50% of households drawing from their own private wells. The remainder of households and businesses get drinking water from public wells, owned by American Water. AW is required to test, report to the public, and treat for regulated contaminants under the Clean Drinking Water Act. Private well owners are responsible for their own testing and treatment -- by law, a thorough test is required prior to the sale or transfer of real estate

RHA has been assisting residents with well tests for over 30 years. They provide well tests for households on private wells, covering a slate of possible contaminants, from bacterial to minerals like lead. They also provide and recommend that households on public water supplies test for lead and other minerals that could be leaching into water from pipes and plumbing fixtures inside the home, which are not the responsibility of the water company.

Arsenic is high in our region, its naturally occurring, and there are concerns that construction for PennEast pipeline will further exacerbate and elevate these levels. Best practice is to test annually.

In addition to working with individual homeowners, RHA also partners with municipalities to host community wide well testing events. The benefits of a community event are many: advances public education on the importance of testing and treating, increases awareness of threats and concerns, and establishes a community wide baseline of aggregated data over time, important for tracking changes, trends, and potential sources of contamination.

Though it's acknowledged that "causality" is difficult to prove, a baseline could assist residents in litigation against pipeline companies in the event of increased water pollution related to construction activities. Those concerned with this might consider more thorough testing by an independent, third party agent, which is expensive but stronger in the courtroom.

Community event works as follows:

## Promotion

1 or two scheduled days for residents to pick up tests tailored for their concerns

1 scheduled drop off day

RHA sends the tests to the lab

Lab reports back to RHA

RHA emails reports to households, with some recommendations for treatment or further testing if needed

RHA sends borough an aggregated “report card” to share with community (individual results are anonymous)

There was agreement that a community well test program would be worthwhile to address people’s concerns with drinking water quality. This is also a more affordable option, as the well tests RHA are steeply discounted in price. And we could use the aggregated data report card in educational outreach going forward. We also discussed partnering with Kingwood Township, and to explore how to use this effort to qualify for Sustainable Jersey credit.

We agreed to explore possibility of June 30th as a “water day” in Frenchtown, a public educational opportunity for people to test drinking water and potentially sign up for our rain barrel workshop.

## Next steps:

Margaret will check with Mara from RHA to confirm availability

Joel with the watershed ambassador to confirm availability

Pick a location, develop and distribute promotional materials, schedule well test drop off day

## Waste/Recycling:

Joel will reach out to Michele Liebttag about attending the next meeting, to discuss recycling performance, waste reduction, and downtown receptacles. Specifically, we’d like to discuss what we can do to increase recycling, decrease waste and litter, and explore single use plastic bag ban.

Creative Team: Leigh Marino

The Creative Team will present the Creative ASsets Inventory to the Sustainable Jersey Hunterdon Hub meeting on May 15th, 6PM, at Flemington DIY. Leigh and Susan Mania will do a presentation on the how, what, why of the CAI , and there will be time for networking. 14 people are registered. Carrie from the Hunterdon County Cultural Trust is donating food. All are encouraged to attend and spread the word.

Our CAI Consultants have also transferred the CAI site to Leigh, whose opened a Square-space website to host it, which will be a site for the creative team website to expand upon. For example, we could follow up on feedback from the CAI launch, and a request for a bulletin board to publicize events and connect artists. Leigh covered the initial \$200 registration fee for the website, all agreed that we would use Green Team (Sustainable Frenchtown) budget to reimburse her. She will pick up reimbursement forms and submit to Diane along with these minutes to confirm our approval of this expense. The county cultural trust has micro-grants that we can apply for in future, to cover this annual expense.

Leigh also notes that our CAI consultants (Environmental Connection) have not been paid yet. Leigh will follow up with Diane.

It was agreed that we would join the Frenchtown Business Association as a non-profit member; the benefits are promotion of Sustainable Frenchtown events and potential for collaborative projects. Leigh will ask about how we facilitate payment.

We discussed idea of having a planning/brainstorming meeting to generate some energy and participation around sustainability efforts in the community, and also continue to sustain our certification with the Sustainable Jersey program; we are scheduled to renew next year. There's interest in a brainstorming meeting on what we can do to facilitate sustainability -- Gerry and Margaret will work on

planning this, we will invite community to participate. Find a weekend morning to do this.

We also discussed a broader community convening, beyond Frenchtown, to build community, around a central question. The goal of this would be to strengthen relationships across municipal boundaries, and build a culture of self-determination and collaboration to nurture local action, celebration, and problem solving. Margaret and Gerry are meeting with Creative New Jersey, community conversation facilitators, to discuss how we might do this in Frenchtown.

Meeting adjourned at 9 PM