

## **Chatham Borough Sustainability Fair Remarks (September 24, 2022)**

Good morning, and welcome to our annual Sustainability Fair! An event, in various forms, that we've been holding here in the Chatham Borough for over a decade now. And rightly so. Why? Because of the critical importance of environmental sustainability – to our community, and to the entire planet – both in the short and long term.

You see, we simply cannot maintain the Earth's ecosystem, or continue to function as a flourishing society, if more sustainable choices are *not* made. To live long and healthy lives, we need – and deserve – unpolluted air to breathe, clean water to drink, and places free of toxic substances in which to live. And it is our job – our responsibility – to ensure that future generations will have all the benefits of a healthy environment and global ecosystem as well.

I am proud to say that Chatham Borough wholeheartedly embraces – and endorses – this most important, and most necessary, cause. I am also proud to say that we have here in Chatham Borough one of the most dedicated, energetic, creative, and resourceful Environmental Commissions in the State. Evidence of which – in part – is this magnificent Sustainability Fair we have here today.

Indeed, this year the Fair boasts 17 different organizations offering innovative ideas on how to live more sustainably, including “super smart” strategies for: green garden care; the use of native plants; gardening for wildlife, bird and pollinators; composting and recycling; reducing use of plastics, clean energy options (including solar); and preserving our natural habitat.

A special thank you to one of these, Ace Hardware, for donating the electric leaf blower as our raffle prize!

Also, joining us today are 25 local dealerships and private owners displaying an exciting range of fully electric or hybrid cars and bicycles as part of the Fair's very exciting EV EXPO. Feel free to check these vehicles out and ask their owners questions!

An additional special thanks to Chief Miller and the Chatham Township Police for sharing their hybrid Interceptor with us!

One element of this year's Fair which we are all tremendously excited about is the public rollout of the Environmental Commission's “How Green Are You?” Campaign. This effort will recognize and promote those Chatham businesses that are implementing sustainable business practices. It will do so by listing the names of such businesses on a “Green Business Registry” to be located on the Chatham Borough website. Moreover, the Environmental Commission will work collaboratively with these and other local businesses to support new sustainable initiatives. Those businesses that qualify for the “Green Business Registry” will be identifiable to shoppers and patrons by a distinctive (and official) window cling displayable on their windows or front

doors. This will indicate to all who support this vital cause that these businesses are “green credentialed”.

I’d like to thank the Blue Foundry Bank for its generous sponsorship of this exciting campaign. Its assistance in the purchase and distribution of promotional materials is very much appreciated!

The Environmental Commission is also delighted to announce today the first six businesses to be recognized in the new Green Business Registry. They are:

- Chatham Family Dental
- Fleur de Sel Patisserie and Bistro
- JB Peterman Orthodontics
- Kings Supermarket
- Scoops – The Chatham Creamery
- Weichert Realtors

Each of these local businesses has taken thoughtful steps to ensure that their business practices are *promoting sustainability* and *minimizing their impact* on the environment. Bravo!

The Environmental Commission, together with the Borough as a whole, look forward to additional such collaborations with our local business as a means of promoting progress in the vital areas of clean energy and water; waste reduction; sensitive resource management; and the protection of our local environment and natural habitats.

In closing, I’d like to thank the members (tireless volunteers all!) of the Environmental Commission and Green Team for their amazing effort at putting all of this together:

- Rozella Clyde
- Yana Doyle
- Allison Slater
- Pat Soteropoulos
- Susie Robertson
- Joe Treloar
- Lisa Allocco

I’d also like to thank the High School Volunteers for their similarly prodigious effort in making today’s event happen:

- Macey Arden
- Emma Batljan
- Sarah Fidora
- Madi Kaplan
- Mariana Pirez

And now, please go forth and enjoy this wonderful Fair! Thank you all!