



## **Long Branch Environmental Commission**

### **2012 Annual Report**

*As of July 29, 2013*

Under the New Jersey Statutes Annotated (NJS), the environmental commission enabling statute (NJS 40:56A) directs environmental commissions to prepare and submit an annual report to the municipal governing body. In addition, Long Branch Ordinance Section 35-4, states that the environmental commission "shall ... make an annual report to the governing body of the municipality". This memorandum is the Long Branch Environmental Commission (LBEC) Annual Report for 2012. The Commission planned and executed a variety of tasks and projects in this third full year of our organization. These efforts respond to our objective of better understanding and protecting the City's environment and increasing public awareness of the City's resources. Accomplishments for 2012 are described below:

**Community Education and Outreach:** Several events were attended by the LBEC to enhance public awareness including: - West End Cruise Night, the Long Branch Block Party, Downtown Renew Campaign and several clean up events. Networking and collaboration with the Long Branch High School was initiated. One member attended the NJ Land Trust Rally.

**Green Committee:** Developed schedule for quarterly joint workshops with the LBEC for 2013.

**Heritage Trees:** Development of draft Guidelines for identification, protection and care of heritage trees; purchase of a field guide to common trees for distribution at public events.

**Beachscapes:** Templates were developed to catalogue the existing relief of Long Branch beaches. This documentation began in September, and was cancelled after Superstorm Sandy. It will be re-initiated in 2013.

**Surface Water Quality:** Inventory of information regarding stormwater control. Long Branch has approximately 800+ outflow pipes. Funding sources to improve outflow pipes were evaluated but found to be limited.

**Sustainable Jersey:** LBEC continues to support the City's efforts in Sustainable Jersey certification. In particular, the attendance at the Downtown Renew Campaign satisfies an anti-litter campaign for Sustainable Jersey.

**Troutman's Creek:** Letter of endorsement for Troutman's Creek Park to go to Green Acres was developed.

**Whale Pond Brook Watershed:** Numerous events and activities were convened in 2012 as part of the Watershed restoration as follows:

**Ross Island:** Ross Island is a City historic resource. A significant level of effort was expended with the help of the Urban Coastal Institute and Whalepond Brook Watershed Association to ‘weed’, clean up, and enhance this structure on the Whalepond Brook.

**Elinore Avenue Project:** Several clean ups and weeding events occurred at this site along Whale Pond Brook. A draft planting plan was developed along with logistical plans for a planting effort with the assistance of the Urban Coastal Institute, Monmouth County Master Gardeners, Whalepond Brook Watershed Association, and Monmouth University faculty.

**Inlet/Outlet:** Meetings and site visits were convened to assess the damage and develop a path forward for the outlet to the Atlantic Ocean. Stakeholders include the Urban Coastal Institute, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, American Littoral Society, Angler Conservation Network, Whalepond Brook Watershed Association, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

**Dredge Project:** Monmouth County is providing funding for dredging portions of Lake Takanassee west of the railroad tracks. LBEC provided limited review of these plans.

**LBEC Bylaws:** Minor revisions were made to the bylaws to more accurately reflect and support current activities and management.

**Superstorm Sandy:** As with many coastal towns, Long Branch was severely impacted by this storm and the subsequent December noreaster. LBEC is monitoring relevant items as provided by the City:

- Effect of storm on sandpiper population in Seven President’s Park
- Participation in the NOAA Climate Change Resiliency Conference
- Impacts of the storm on surface water quality