

A Brief History

In **2009** the Town Board hired Dani Glaser, **Green Team Spirit**, as a consultant to help establish the Town of Cortlandt Green Team as a spin off group for the 25x12 sustainability plan.

A meeting was held for all employees who thought they might be interested in learning more about the Green Team. Names, phone numbers and email addresses were collected and volunteers enlisted for service.

In order to facilitate communications among members, **a Google Group was set up** and all volunteer members were instructed on how to sign up for the Group.

An **on-line survey** was sent to all staff to gather feedback on how business is done in their work area and to elicit ideas on how to make improvements that would help the environment and save money.

A follow-up survey was sent **one year later** in June 2010 revealing significant improvements across the board, including an 8% reduction in energy usage and a 66% reduction in purchased cases of copy paper in one year.

Once the Green Team was established with new members registered in the Google Group, an effort began to **design** and agree upon an official **Green Team logo** to be used on information flyers, correspondence and other areas where the Green Team had launched a project.

Based on ideas collected during departmental interviews and surveys initiatives were laid out and presented at a **regular monthly meeting of the Green Team**. Members were asked to volunteer for **committees** to begin projects. In an effort to **start small**, the new Town of Cortlandt Green Team began to implement a few of these initiatives.

1. Reminders from the Green Team (with logo) were posted over every light switch in all Town owned buildings, to turn off lights.
2. A utility closet was painted and redecorated to serve as a usable sink to wash dishes and get away from disposable paper goods.
3. The faucet on the sink in the utility closet was replaced to stop a drip leaking up to 700 gallons of water per year.
4. Paper brochures for Recreation and Sanitation departments were consolidated to save paper and postage with the plan to eventually make these available on line.
5. Recycling receptacles were added at ballparks and fields.

Committees and Initiatives:

- The Brochure Consolidation Group
- Vehicles/Fleet Group
- Recycling
- Water Conservation
- Green Procurement
- Communication, Motivation and Education Group (CME) –
 - Create awareness
 - Educational and motivational programs
 - Signage and reminders
 - Family Fun Day – coordinating a table to share ideas with the public to learn what the Town is up to

Executive Board:

The team structure evolved with the creation of a **5-person executive board** that serves an organizational role to oversee team activities where goals, timelines and accountability are tracked to stay on course.

Awareness became a primary goal of the Green Team Executive Board. The following initiatives were taken to raise awareness about the Green Team and its efforts.

1. Bulletin Board in Town Hall
2. Link on the Town Website to the Green Team information page
3. Green Team tables were set up at community events run by the Town of Cortlandt
 - a. Family Fun Day
 - b. Earth Day
 - c. Chamber of Commerce events
4. Lunch and learn events take place every month or two for employees and members of the public
5. Weekly Friday emails went out to employees to remind them to turn off computers etc. over the weekend and these emails often included “green tips”

Policies have been passed by the Town Board to assist in conservation efforts:

- Green Procurement Policy
- Double sided printing policy
- Limited ordering of paper goods

Community Engagements put the Green Team in the Public’s view. The Green Team has sponsored events to help the people of the community learn more about ways to reduce, reuse and recycle.

- Community Swaps – Offering the public a chance to give or take gently used items for free

- Furniture Sharehouse – collecting gently used furniture for re-use in the community
- E-Waste recycling
- Paper Shredding
- Information tables at Family Fun Day, Charles Cook Pool, and Cortlandt's 225th Celebration

Environmental Exploration of local Parks and Trails has been a great way to educate the public about the beauty of nature right here in our own back yard of Cortlandt Manor.

- Blaze the Trail event at Hudson Highland Gateway Park – Earth Day 2013
- Explore the McAndrews Estate – Earth Day 2014

Website

Other information and Green Team updates and activities can be found on the Town of Cortlandt website under Keeping Cortlandt Green visit: www.townofcortlandt.com

Facebook

Like the Town of Cortlandt Facebook page to get event updates

The Green Team has continued to operate in correlation to the Town's sustainability plan. Dani Glaser of Green Team Spirit continues to act a liaison for the Green Team and the Town departments and board along with other local governments and businesses to assist in our efforts. See Town of Cortlandt Case Study. <http://greenteamspirit.com/green-business/uncategorized/municipal-green-teams-%E2%80%93-a-case-study/>