

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
Monthly Meeting
May 19, 2021 6:30pm

Present: EAC Members: Laura Obenski, Alexa Manning, Kathy Sotak, Toni Gorkin, Nicholas Kurtz; Jim Warihay, Kathy Cook, John Neilson, Scott Greenly, Kate Carpenter, Kevin Manning

Laura called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Meeting Minutes of 3/17/21, workgroup notes 4/15/21 were approved.

Business:

1. Welsh Pool Road Rain Garden Update
Nick reported several EAC members met last Tuesday afternoon with the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary to tour the rain garden. The Partnership has asked us to keep tabs on it. On their visit they cleaned up trash out of high grass that had grown. He suggested that the Township incorporate the same plants and structure in Baird Park, where Bruce McKenney is hoping to do rain garden, as such rain gardens are good with self-sufficiency and regulate storm water better than just letting it flow into the waterway. It was noted the tall plants are winter wheat used to root over the plantings for one season, to hold and prevent erosion while perennials take hold. Laura was excited to meet more master watershed stewards. Alexa noted a couple of drainage issues to still work on, but it is huge. Katharina Henderson and Alexa will do regular maintenance. Nick noted it is taking up some sediment, but he would like to see similar rain gardens around more industrial areas that need more mitigation. Laura will coordinate EAC help.
2. 2021 EAC Education Series Update
6/22/21, 7:00 pm - Suburban Yard to Native Landscape, Connie Schmotzer
Targeted for 7/12, 6 pm - Clean Energy overview
8/??, Heart of Uwchlan Tour - in person or video overview - when Learning Trail is in prime condition
3. Earth Day Clean-up Presentation
After tally of scores, EAC finished first, winning the Trash Trophy with 19 bags of trash. Parks and Rec had 7 bags from Brookwood area. Supervisors didn't report. Laura suggested we repeat the event next year.
4. EAC Network Fall 2021 Gathering
Carolyn Grayshaw is asking for interest to host or participate; West Pikeland EAC chair wanted to know if we are interested in sharing hosting it. Opportunity to showcase what we have done and build collaboration with other EACs. Scott will check with the BOS. Alexa noted West Pikeland has an outdoor site on Art School Road.

Reports:

Land Use - TownCenter II proposal was reviewed at the last Planning Commission meeting. The EAC sent a letter with comments: concern with extended construction period and potential to control sediment. Still at preliminary phase of planning. A document is being prepared by a consultant outlining how to comply with Ready for 100, which the Planning Commission will take time to review.

RF100/Energy Planning - Alexa gave a brief overview of the process to draft an Energy Transition Plan document out of the BOS Ready for 100 resolution approved two years ago. She, Laura, Bruce McKenney, Scott Greenly, Mayme Baumann, and Tawnya McCain have been meeting as a steering committee. The draft is nearly 50 pages. The Executive Summary focuses on municipal operations. The piece being worked on includes setting action items with point people and timelines, guided by goals from BOS:

1. Conduct a detailed energy audit for municipal operations and establish a township energy management plan that includes benchmarking and bill audits.
2. Electrification of municipal buildings and operations including the wastewater treatment plant and municipal buildings.
3. Review and update township ordinances for zoning, codes, benchmarking, encouraging renewable energy and high efficiency energy net zero expectations for new construction.
4. Establish a budget that will include energy transition planning and implementation costs, including an energy reinvestment savings plan.
5. Community outreach, education and advocacy of the ETP to promote energy efficiency best practices, education of the needs and benefits, and collaborate with and recognize community partners who are leading the way in Uwchlan Township.

Alexa noted that Uwchlan Township is focusing first on municipal operations. The overall initiative involves 50 municipalities in 5 county area working similarly, where similar documents being developed. Laura noted we are in the top third of municipalities with what we have been able to put together. It has been very technical at times, a lot of new things to learn.

Heart of Uwchlan - Toni summarized progress with gardens. Extensive seedlings were prepared and are being planted in the New Garden. The Milkweed Garden is doing well, as is the Streamside Garden.

Parks/Historical - Kathy Sotak attended the Parks and Rec meeting, which covered park updates. The commission is excited about the new disk golf course at Shamona.

Announcements:

5/21 9a Stormwater Management Workshop sponsored by the Christina Watershed, on HOAs and property management practices - Laura will attend; Alexa and Toni will attend via Zoom.

6/2 7:30p Planning Commission

6/7 7:30p Board of Supervisors -- moved to FIRST week.
6/10 7:30p Historical Commission
6/17 6:30p Environmental Advisory Council
6/22 7:00p Suburban Yard to Native Landscape Webinar

Nick showed a pamphlet done by a Shamona Creek 6th grader which was included in the Township mail he got as a new resident.

Toni noted Fall 2021 Pennsylvania Master Naturalist Training: August 18- October 27. The Education Session showing Dr. Tallamy's talk was co-sponsored with the PAMN and registration encouraged.

Open to the public for comments and questions

John Neilson commented that he watched the EAC's Zoom education session of the talk by Doug Tallamy, and he was amazed at impact of small gardens, etc. He enjoyed it very much. Toni was asked to send the link to the presentation Jim Warihay and Kate Carpenter.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Gorkin
Secretary