

The regular meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) was held tonight. Members present were Dottie Baumgarten, Jonathan Essoka, Lorna Rosenberg and David Schultz. Ex-officio members present were Kurt Ahrens, Chris Edelstein and Earl Stamm. Township Liaison present was Nancy K. Gibson, Public Information Officer. (See attached attendance sheet.)

**1. Call to Order** – Ms. Rosenberg called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**2. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes** – Ms. Rosenberg made a motion to accept the November 18, 2013 meeting minutes; seconded by Ms. Baumgarten. The motion was unanimously approved.

**3. Committee Reports:**

**A. Communications Committee** – Ms. Baumgarten was present and reported that Mr. Carey had requested information from the members for the EAC Newsletter. Discussion ensued regarding featuring sustainability themes in the monthly newsletters. Mr. Ahrens might provide an article for the newsletter on invasive species, specifically Japanese Knotweed. Ms. Gibson reported that she had received billing for the Google Apps in November because the one-year service cannot be canceled early. The current agreement should expire in March 2014.

**B. Water and Ecology Committee** – Ms. Duffy was not present to give her report.

**C. Energy and Emissions Committee** – Mr. McHugh was not present to give his report.

**D. School Board Liaison Committee** – Ms. Rosenberg reviewed her report (see attached). She indicated many positive things were happening throughout the School District, including a waste audit at the High School and positive feedback from six students who attended the International Green Building Council Expo and are excited to implement changes like upgrading to LED light bulbs at schools. Ms. Rosenberg plans to invite high students to “Green Your School” on January 10, 2014. Mr. Edelstein reported that Myers Elementary School held a successful Green Apple Day and introduced a Walking School Bus Program that will hopefully expand in the spring when the weather is more conducive. They may focus more on safe pedestrian walking routes to schools.

They plan to sponsor a Zero Waste Program for the cafeteria. It was suggested that High School students could assist that endeavor. Third and fourth graders under the supervision of Ms. Rubin created a music video on the benefits of providing recycling bins in the cafeteria for review by the School Superintendent. Mr. Edelstein reported they will develop an anti-idling campaign and he will apply for a garden grant funded by Fiskars to create raised gardening beds in 2014. Ms. Rosenberg reported that Ms. Jacoby at Elkins Park School is working with students on a water use survey, based on “A Long Walk to Water” by Linda Sue Park. Ms. Rosenberg noted that traffic problems at Cheltenham Elementary School could be ameliorated a Walking School Bus Program. She learned that a similar PennDOT program sparked student interest in walking programs by providing pedometers.

**4. Old Business:**

*A. Sustainable Cheltenham Festival and Sustainable Cheltenham Awards Program* - Ms. Rosenberg reported that Ms. Gibson sent her a sample of online award nominations to review. Ms. Gibson noted that the Township spring newsletter is generally published in March or April, so Sustainability Award details must be finalized by January 15<sup>th</sup> to be included. Ms. Rosenberg and Ms. Baumgarten agreed to spearhead the effort. Mr. Essoka reported that he spoke with the Friends of High School Park (FHSP) regarding sponsorship. Mr. Essoka shared information on fund-raising contacts used by the Economic Development Task Force (EDTF). Ms. Blackwood provided the Arts in the Park (AIP) fund-raising package. It was suggested that awards could be presented at the AIP event and recognized at a Township public meeting afterward as well as publicized through the EAC newsletter and Township press release.

*B. Discussion of Municipal Action Plan (MAP) Implementation* – Ms. Rosenberg asked that the Energy and Emissions Committee review the capital budget and make recommendations on energy-related purchases and Sustainability goals for discussion at the next meeting.

*C. Sustainable Cheltenham Open House* – Mr. Ahrens reported that the Open House was very successful with a turn out of approximately 50 visitors. The architects were on hand to answer questions, which was very helpful. Ms. Rosenberg provided the attendance list to Ms. Gibson to add their e-mails to the EAC E-Newsletter distribution list.

*D. PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Grant* – Ms. Gibson reported that the Township received the \$100,000 grant for the Rock Creek Greenway Implementation Project.

*E. Discussion of Super Wawa Zoning Hearing Appeal No. 3468* - Ms. Rosenberg thanked Mr. Stamm and his wife for their review of the appeal and for attending three meetings. He provided the EAC position statement (attached) that he unsuccessfully attempted to give to the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) on December 9, 2013. The ZHB ruled that the EAC must have permission from the Board of Commissioners to provide testimony. Ms. Rosenberg in turn asked Commissioner Haywood for advice on how to present the EAC's position to the ZHB. She reported that he advised her to present the written position to Township Manager Havar who could possibly forward it to the Commissioners by their December 18 meeting. Ms. Gibson asked EAC members to confirm their support for the position, which they did. However, Ms. Rosenberg decided to seek additional consensus from EAC members not in attendance. Mr. Stamm strongly felt that this is the proper role for the EAC to support Sustainability. Discussion ensued about incorporating Sustainability Plan goals into the zoning and land development process and the role of the EAC to educate the community and other citizen committees to support the Sustainability Plan. Ms. Gibson reiterated that recommendations from the EAC should normally go to the Public Works Committee of the Board of Commissioners.

**5. *New Business:***

*A. Discussion of City of Yonkers, NY Green Building Ordinance* – Ms. Rosenberg noted that the ordinance targeted Yonkers' municipal buildings. Her feeling, at this point, is that the EAC

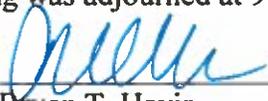
should continue to focus on fulfilling the Cheltenham Sustainability Goals of Green Purchasing and the Municipal Action Plan.

*B. Review of Committee Membership* – Several voting members will not be continuing to serve on the EAC citizen committee in 2014. Ms. Gibson noted that the Township will be advertising the open positions for voting members on the various citizen committees. Interested parties should forward written letters of interest and a short bio to the Township Manager or by e-mail to the Assistant to the Township Manager by January 6, 2014. Mr. Schultz will send an e-mail to all EAC ex-officio members.

**6. Announcements:**

The Township will be conducting five community meetings beginning in January for public comment on the new draft Zoning Ordinance and new zoning map.

**7. Adjournment** – Ms. Rosenberg made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Schultz. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 P.M.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bryan T. Havir  
Township Manager

Submitted by:  
Kathryn McDevitt

**CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL-**  
**December 2013**

**Committee:** Schools Committee

**Liaison to the Council:** Lorna Rosenberg

**Date of last meeting:** Sept 2013

**Date of next meeting:** January

**Questions for the board/larger group:**N/A

**Action Items Completed:**

- CHS - Preliminary Walk through held for CHS Waste Audit that will be conducted on Dec 18.
  
- Myers: ` The Green Ambassador's video plea for recycling bins in the cafeteria is finished and is FANTASTIC! It can only be accessed through the url below. [http://youtu.be/pK9o\\_azWvIU](http://youtu.be/pK9o_azWvIU)
  - Student environmental art display and show at the Administration building.
  - Students have created a recycling song and video
  
- Glenside: had Alex from TTF come out to do a clean-up around the creek and lesson with a group of Glensiders in November.
  
- Cedarbrook
  - Students participated in the Sustainable Cheltenham Tour of Sidney Kahn's LEED Platinum open House on Nov 24
  
- Elkins Park
  - 5th grade Challenge students did a water use survey of their homes and produced posters displaying collective data. Mrs. Jacoby will save the posters for the sustainability festival. Done in conjunction with reading *A Long Walk to Water*, a book (based on a true story) that takes place in southern Sudan and deals with the drought conditions and water accessibility there.

**Action Items In-progress/Pending:**

School Board:

- Environmental Health and Safety Committee is preparing a position paper on next steps for Cedarbrook due the week of 12/16.

**CHS:**

- **6 students attended Greenbuild Expo - International Green Building Conf. Philadelphia Nov 21, 2013**
- **Students are completing Energy Star Portfolio Manager measuring school energy use compared to other high schools**
- **Student environmental club will be participating in a Waste Audit and documentary video, on December 18 to evaluate the current recycling and waste disposal processes for CHS - they will make recommendations for increasing recycling**
- **The student Greenhouse is back up and running under Ms Ana Salazar**

**Cheltenham ES:**

- **Consideration of creating Walking School Bus to address traffic concerns and receive health benefits**

## REPORT OF THE CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

There is currently pending before the Township Zoning Hearing Board ("ZHB") Appeal No. 3468 by Good Pro requesting 13 variances on a 3.65 acre unimproved parcel of land (the "Parcel") currently owned by Matrix so that Good Pro may construct a "Super WaWa" (the "SWW") on the Parcel.

This matter was the subject of a discussion at the monthly meeting of the Cheltenham Township Environmental Advisory Council (the "EAC") on November 18, 2013, at which time it was announced that there would be a further meeting on this matter on December 5, 2013, which meeting also took place.

One or more of our members have attended the last three hearings of the ZHB on this matter.

We have reviewed at the Township Zoning Office the entire record currently before the ZHB, including all notes of testimony and all exhibits. We have also reviewed the minutes of the Township Planning Commission, Building and Zoning Committee, and Economic Development Task Force at which the proposed SWW was discussed.

The Parcel abuts a larger parcel of ground upon which Matrix is currently developing a community ("Wyngate") of what is projected to eventually be 198 townhouses of which, to date, significantly less than half have been constructed. In order to make its proposed project possible, Good Pro is requesting of the ZHB, the Township, and/or the state, permission, among requests:

- To pave 1.8 acres and build a 5,500 square foot convenience store with 16 gasoline fueling stations on the Parcel, as well as underground fuel storage tanks sufficient to service the facility.
- To construct 66 parking spaces on the Parcel rather than the allowed 31.
- To increase signage on the abutting roads to slow and attract patronage to the SWW.
- To place new entrances and/or exits on the Parcel which would facilitate WaWa patrons driving through Wyngate.
- To place the refuse area of the SWW twice as close to Wyngate as allowed.

The Parcel also abuts and is upslope of a large green conservation easement area dedicated by Matrix to the Township (the "Conservation Area"). The Conservation area contains Rock Creek (the "Creek") which is also downslope from the Parcel and, at best, is only several hundred yards away from the Parcel.

Our concerns about the environmental effects of the proposed construction on the Parcel are as follows:

- The Conservation Area and Creek are environmentally vulnerable and valuable natural assets of the Township which are meant to attract current and prospective residents.
- There can only be increased trash and garbage discarded by WaWa patrons that will find its way into Wyngate, the Conservation Area, and the Creek.
- We see no justifiable reason for putting this very sensitive natural area at risk for gasoline leaks and spills, automobile emissions, and other pollution.
- The area wildlife will be frightened away and/or, even worse, harmed by the activity at the site.
- There were no tests by independent or even any environmental experts on the possible environmental and other effects of the underground storage tanks, water runoff, and automobile emissions.
- The additional and new commercial traffic on the streets in Wyngate, which we understand are private and only for the use of the residents, will unnecessarily increase automobile emissions in Wyngate.
- We are aware of a recommendation by the State of California that for health reasons, and to reduce the concentrations of emissions in any one area, gasoline stations should not be placed within 500 feet of a freeway such as Route 309. There is no such 500 foot buffer here.
- We are aware of a Spanish scientific medical study advising that no one should live closer than 50 meters from a gasoline station and that the sick, children, and seniors, should live no closer than 100 meters. It is our understanding that the homes in Wyngate are closer than that.

- We are aware of a French scientific medical study advising that living near a gasoline station can quadruple the incidence of childhood leukemia and increase by seven times the incidence of childhood non-lymphoblastic leukemia.
- We are aware of an article from *Scientific American Magazine* strongly advising, especially for children, against living near a gasoline station. Among other factors, lung, brain, and kidney damage are discussed.
- The proposals are in direct contravention of many of the Goals of the Sustainable Cheltenham Plan approved by the Commissioners: as follows:
  - \*The Sustainable Development Goal to “promote building (and) site development...that respect the natural environment (and)...ensure that all permitting, codes, and regulations support the community’s sustainability goals.”
  - \*The Ecological Stewardship Goal to “protect and improve the overall health and ecological diversity of the Township’s habitats, waterways, and soils...on...private lands.”
  - \*The Mobility Goal to “minimize vehicular travel and emissions... (and) make it desirable, safe, and convenient to walk and bike...,” including, without limitation, in Wyngate
  - \*The Water Management Goal to “... reduce wastewater flows, (or) increase natural absorption of rainwater...”

The Cheltenham Sustainability Plan, just as with all other Township wide public policies, should be a strong guide to all Township officials and citizens.

There are more appropriate and less environmentally vulnerable locales for a SWW in the Township.

In light of all of the above, the EAC cannot recommend and, further, strongly condemns the construction of the proposed SWW on the Parcel.

Dated: 12/16/13

---

Lorna Rosenberg, Co-Chairperson  
Cheltenham Township Environmental Advisory Board

