

The meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) was held tonight. Members present were Kurt Ahrens, Yuri Berg, Tom McHugh, Brad Pransky and Lorna Rosenberg, Ex-Officio members present were Doryan DeAngel, Bill England and Beth Yount. 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 7:30 p.m.
2. **Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:** Ms. Rosenberg made a motion to accept the minutes of July 21, 2014 meeting; seconded by Mr. Berg. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. McHugh asked to revisit the discussion about protocols for the EAC making presentations to the Zoning Hearing Board, which was discussed at the July meeting. Discussion was postponed until Old Business.

3. Committee Reports:

A. Communications and Engagement Committee: Mr. Ahrens reported that he just emailed the E-newsletter and raised questions in his report about the various uses and format of the newsletter. (See attached). He continues to focus on community engagement and suggested soliciting feedback via polls in the E-newsletter. [A Survey feature from Constant Contact would cost an additional \$126 per year.] Mr. Pransky thought it would be important to clarify whether the feedback was received by the EAC or the Board of Commissioners. Replies to the E-Newsletter go to Mr. Ahrens.

Mr. Ahrens asked if Committee Chairpersons could email their committee reports earlier so he could incorporate any appropriate information in the E-Newsletter that he tries to send out prior to each EAC meeting. Ms. Rosenberg suggested that the committee report format could be improved to facilitate his effort.

Mr. Berg recently attended the annual Senior Fair at Keneseth Israel where hundreds of people were in attendance. He suggested the EAC consider participation at that event in the future.

B. Water and Ecology Committee: Ms. Duffy was not present but submitted her report. (see attached).

Mr. McHugh commented that he attended two Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) meetings this summer and was pleased that the ACOE study seems to be relying heavily on retention basins to control runoff in some areas. He also supported consultant recommendations that Abington Township control its stormwater run-off before it reaches Cheltenham Township by using some ball fields as dry retention basins by installing underground piping.

Ms. DeAngel noted that volunteers will be needed for the Parkview Park Planting scheduled for October 25, 2014 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Ms. DeAngel also provided several handouts regarding upcoming Tookany-Tacony/Frankford Watershed Partnership (TTF) events.

C. School Liaison Committee: Ms. Rosenberg submitted her report (see attached), and noted that the School District is embracing sustainability. The student-conducted waste audit that was well received by the School Board was a prime example. Mr. England added that interest continues in walking buses and bus idling campaigns. Ms. Rosenberg will encourage the School District to become Green Ribbon Schools like Council Rock and Lower Merion.

Mr. Berg asked about any actions resulting from the waste audit. Ms. Rosenberg responded that recommendations included an awareness campaign and more collection bins. She would like to see a committee composed of teachers, support staff, students and administration to implement changes.

D. Energy and Emissions Committee: Mr. McHugh had no report but noted that he attended the climate change meeting recently hosted by Rep. Steve McCarter at Curtis Hall, and reported on in *Citizens Call*.

Mr. Berg encouraged installation of “piano key” style of pedestrian crossings as more effective than the traditional style. Ms. Yount thought that adding signage, like the bright green sign in front of the Elkins Park Library, in conjunction with “piano keys” was even more effective. Ms. Rosenberg stated that the surveys collected at Arts in the Park indicated the public had a strong interest in improving community bikability and walkability.

4. Old Business:

A. Status Update on 1900 Ashbourne Road Development - Mr. Pransky stated that the Board of Commissioners approved the conditional use application with 27 stipulations, many to protect the wetlands. The approval also reduced the development from four stories to three, although it is not clear how that will impact the number of units. Mr. Pransky predicted this residential development will not improve the Township tax base in the long run.

B. Update on Elkins Estate - Mr. Pransky stated that the Board of Commissioners adopted the M4 Zoning District Ordinance without incorporating any changes recommended by the Township and County Planning Commissions. Up to 250 units could be built. However, Mr. Pransky reported that the developer has asked for a six month extension for settlement.

C. Ashbourne Country Club – Mr. Pransky reported that a judge threw out an agreement between Matrix and the residents. [Matrix advised the Township Engineer that the agreement was signed after modification by the judge.]

D. Lynnewood Hall – Mr. Pransky stated that this property is up for sale for \$20 million. There has been some interest in the property.

Mr. Pransky added that work on the Draft Zoning Ordinance is still in progress. Ms. Rosenberg asked if EAC had a role on development proposals. Mr. Pransky noted a distinction between working to improve development proposals and trying to block them. He commented that Township economic development could focus on establishing a business hub for a certain type of industry, such as niche technology companies e.g., green technology or 3D printing.

E. Update on Township Social Media Policy – Ms. Gibson reported the Township had received recommended guidelines for use of social media from the Delaware Valley Insurance Trust, the Township’s insurance provider. Ms. Gibson is developing a draft policy based on those guidelines and policies from other communities. She expects to launch a Township Facebook site before the end of the year.

F. Township policy on Citizen Committee input to the Zoning Hearing Board - In July, Ms. Gibson informed the EAC that the protocol for citizens committees that want to testify before the Zoning Hearing Board on any matter is to present that request to the Building and Zoning Committee. Mr. McHugh noted that the Township Ordinance establishing of the EAC states its purpose is “to advise the Cheltenham Township local government agencies, including, but not limited to, the Board of Commissioners, the Planning Commission, and other local citizen advisory commissions, boards and committees.” Ms. Gibson noted the ordinance specified “advisory” boards, which the Zoning Hearing Board is not an advisory board. It has authority independent of the Board of Commissioners. However, the Ordinance specifically does not limit local government agencies to the ones listed, so members concurred with Mr. McHugh and Mr. Ahrens and asked for a legal decision from the Township Solicitor on whether the Board of Commissioners can establish guidelines requiring the EAC to first obtain permission.

G. Harvest Festival - Ms. Rosenberg indicated that the EAC will have a table at the event that will display the Sustainability Award project posters from Arts in the Park. In addition, students will conduct a survey of attendees to assess their understanding of the Sustainability Plan and nonpoint source pollution, per the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. Volunteers are needed for October 11, 2014 from 11:30 to 5:00 p.m. Ms. Rosenberg requests to have recycling at the event. Perhaps students and/or scouts can help ensure only proper items are recycled near the food vending area. Ms. Gibson added that a Township recycling truck will be present.

5. New Business:

A. EAC 2015 Budget – Following discussion, the consensus was to use the same amount as last year. Ms. Gibson noted that the Township Budget Workshop is scheduled for October 7, 2014.

B. Discussion of an Ad Hoc Water Conservation Committee – In conjunction with implementation of the Township's new sanitary sewer rate structure, the EAC considered establishing a water conservation campaign. Ms. Rosenberg noted that the Environmental Protection Agency established Water Sense, a labeling program to identify water-conserving equipment. Several other ideas were discussed. Ms. Rosenberg would like to establish an ad hoc committee to formulate a proposal by next meeting. Mr. Berg was appointed to the committee.

Ms. Gibson commented that any effort should be coordinated with consultants Gilmore and Associates, who formulated the sewer rate fee structure.

C. Ms. Gibson reported that ReCommunity, the company that receives the Township's recycling material, has noted an increase in unacceptable items in all their facilities. Ms. Gibson

will prepare publicity about proper recycling, which can be included at the Harvest Festival and featured in the EAC newsletter. Members discussed pros and cons of several recycling models.

6. Announcements:

A. Natural Lands Trust PECO Green Region Open Space Bonus Round Grant Application

- The Township Manager requests the EAC's support for a matching grant application to help fund the Tookany Creek Pedestrian Trail, Phase III (New Second Street to Harrison Avenue).

Ms. Rosenberg made a motion to support the filing of a grant application for matching funds for the Tookany Creek Pedestrian Trail, Phase III; seconded by Mr. Ahrens and unanimously accepted.

B. PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Tree

Vitalize/Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) Fall 2015 Planting Season Grant Application.

Upon further review, the Township Manager requests EAC's support for a grant application to help fund buffer restoration at Curtis Arboretum pond. Ms. Rosenberg made a motion to support the filing of the Tree Vitalize grant for a buffer restoration at Curtis Arboretum; seconded by Mr. Ahrens and unanimously accepted.

7. Adjournment: Mr. Ahrens made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Pransky.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.



Bryan T. Havir
Township Manager

Submitted by:
Kathy McDevitt

CHELTENHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL- September 15, 2014

Committee: Water & Ecology

Liaison to the Council: Barbara Duffy

Date of last meeting: July 7, 2014

Date of next meeting: October-TBA

Questions for the board/larger group:

Action Items Completed:

- Attended TTF's August 7th (6:30 to 8pm) "Water Blues, Green Solution" movie screening at Towers in Wyncote. Great venue and show!

Action Items In-progress/Pending:

- **Flooding Projects (DEP & Army Corps)** – Steering Committee Meeting has been scheduled on August 12, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. at the Township Administration Building Board Room to review the Draft Study. Tom McHugh represented the EAC.
- **Tree Vitalize Planting Project** – Last phase of Parkview Park planting–planting targeted for October 25th. Volunteers will be needed to prepare the area prior to the planting & then again on planting day.
- **TTF Partnership**- WREN project started on August 21st & TTF invited over 900 creekside residents to a program to improve their buffers. The program reportedly was overall very good! TTF will need help recruiting planting volunteers once sites are selected.
- **TTF Trash Task Force** – looking at other nationwide municipalities and how they have decreased trash in the stormwater systems and creeks.
- **Curtis Arboretum Master Plan**- no meeting planned as of this report.
- **Invasive Controls with Public Works & Parks Superintendent** - Dave continues to work with Parks Superintendent on targeted mowing and spraying of past planted Riparian areas to decrease invasive take over.
- **America in Bloom**- No update on the beautifying of the Elkins Park Town Centre, including the train station and shopping/dining area.
- **Native Plant Ordinance** (still pending)
- **"Herbicide Application Recommendations" Review**- meeting to review the policy as per the "Monitoring" recommendations will be set up after the fall planting to assess how successful the spraying schedule was.

Announcements:

HS Park Events: <http://highschoolpark.org>

- **Workday Weekends**- Sept & October from 10 to Noon (Repeated every 2 weeks until November 1, 2014) Check website for specific dates. Help steward this great park! Wear long sleeves, pants and a hat.

TTF Watershed Partnership Events: <http://ttfwatershed.org/events/>

TTF be holding an Open House fundraiser during Philadelphia's Open Studios at **Globe Dye Works** on **Sunday, October 26 from 2 to 4 pm**. They are seeking sponsors for this event at \$500 per sponsorship, which will include the sponsor's logo on all materials and recognition at the event. They are expecting 150 attendees. Requesting a donation of \$25 from each visitor.



PLANNING SMARTER MONTCO 2014

Rain Gardens

*Learn how to manage stormwater
in a more environmentally
friendly and attractive way*



*Butterfly in rain garden at Upper
Perkiomen Valley High School*

DATE:

September 27, 2014

TIME:

10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. (Sign-in at the Main Pavilion - 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.)

LOCATION:

Lower Perkiomen Valley Park • 101 New Mill Road, Oaks, PA 19456

This exciting event offers a great opportunity to learn how to create a rain garden on your property! You're invited to come and discover how rain gardens can be used to clean rainwater and create wildlife habitat. This family-oriented event will offer a variety of information that is useful to all county residents as well as municipal employees interested in installing a rain garden in their community. Two short presentations on rain gardens and how to select and plant the appropriate plants will be repeated at 10:00 and 11:00, followed by an opportunity to participate in installing a rain garden at the park. Participants will get their hands dirty planting native plants that provide food and habitat for important insects and animals. Our site will be pre-excavated and ready for planting. Plants, tools, and other equipment will be provided. Ages 6 and up can join in the planting. There is a suggested donation \$2 per person (collected at the event). Pre-registration is required. Register online or by contacting Rita McKelvey at 610-278-3753. The event will be held weather permitting. Participants can park at the main pavilion lot or at the park office. This event is being offered by the Montgomery County Planning Commission and the Montgomery County Division of Parks, Trails, and Historic Sites. Additional information is available at www.montcopa.org/PlanningSmarter.

CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL- Sep. 2014

Committee: Communication Committee

Liaison to the Council: Kurt Ahrens

Date of last meeting: unknown

Date of next meeting: TBD

Questions for the Council:

- **How to focus on “Community Engagement,” especially in regard to our communications.**
 - o **Should the Newsletter publish letters from residents?**
 - o **Should we solicit feedback on various issues?**
 - o **Sustainable Cherry Hill (NJ) has a non-governmental, nonprofit organization; should we actively encourage the development of a similar entity to shepherd the Sustainability Plan in Cheltenham? (that is one of the sub-goals of Community Engagement)**
 - o **Should we provide advice to the township on setting “policy” for the use of social media?**
- **Can we include a section in each Committee Report that includes items to be published in the Newsletter? Note this needs to be available early enough that I can send the Newsletter out prior to the EAC Meeting, each month. It would be simple to include a subsection in the newsletter for each committee, focusing on related topics.**

Action Items Completed:

- **June EAC Newsletter was sent to 1128 email addresses (although some people may receive it at multiple addresses), with 397 recipients opening the message (multiple openings by the same recipient are not counted). 201 email addresses “bounced.” Some of these were easily identified as typos and corrected. About 30 new subscribers were added to the mailing list from the Sustainability Festival Guest Book.**
- **Twitter Report: Although we have followers, active “tweeted” has been curtailed until the township develops a more nuanced understanding of community engagement.**
- **September EAC Newsletter was sent to 1128 email addresses; results pending.**
- **Investigated the “Social Media” usage of other communities, focusing on those that do:**

Autumn Monahan
Communications Manager
City of Issaquah
Office: 425-837-3026

Presentation that the City of Issaquah gave to municipal governments across Washington State <http://prezi.com/acr0wy-7pxsn/the-social-side-of-issaquah-city-hall/>

Issues discussed:

Record Retention, and her response was that they use an inexpensive outside contractor to maintain those records (socialsafe.net, mentioned on the last slide of the presentation above). However, she also said that we could maintain our own records-- which in the case of the EAC Twitter account might amount to a page of text each week, which could be emailed to Nancy Gibson.

Although the City of Issaquah has a unified voice across the various forms of Social Media, she said their internal policy is that if a group or committee within the government felt they had compelling reasons to have their own account, the City would consider allowing it. This matches my own thoughts of what might constitute a reasonable policy for Cheltenham Township, as well.

One interesting comment she made was about the distinction between emergency communications and other types of messages. If the only Social Media voice the town has is about (rare) emergency situations, there won't be many followers, and the whole endeavor is somewhat pointless. By "engaging" the public with a wide variety of useful and interesting topics, you have their attention when a really important message needs to be sent.

She also said they modeled their approach on Seattle, to some degree--apparently Seattle was the first city to embrace Social Media...

Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment
(206) 615-0817

Director: Jill Simmons

"We collaborate with City agencies, business groups, nonprofit organizations, and other partners to protect and enhance Seattle's distinctive environmental quality and livability."

Interestingly, this office can be found online by following the "City of Seattle Social Media Websites" link (<http://www.seattle.gov/html/citizen/socialmedia.htm>), where we see this:

"NEW: Seattle has been recognized as the nation's most sustainable city by STAR Communities - a national organization which evaluates the livability and sustainability of U.S. communities."

We can also find links for their Facebook, Twitter, blog and RSS new feed accounts.

Action Items In-progress/Pending:

- **Advise Township in development of policy for use of social media by EAC.**

- Discuss visitor concerns and comments from EAC booth at Sustainability Festival and consider forwarding summary of resident concerns to the Board of Commissioners:

What actions do YOU NOW practice that are sustainable?

- √√ Recycling more!
- √√ Changed all bulbs to LED's
CSA share
- √√√√ Composting + gardening!! ☺
Learned about meadow monitoring and adopted a plot at HS Park!
- √ Kitchen garden
Wormery! lots of castings
native plantings to support wildlife
Use Re-usable bags at grocery
Hang wash out to dry on clotheslines in backyard
In winter drape over radiators and stair rails – and clothes rack
Put in Energy Star & ADA appliances
Expanded my vegetable garden in 2013 – This year I'm planting different vegetables and some berries
Taking train & walking more instead of driving

What sustainable practices would YOU LIKE TO ADOPT? (more biking, composting, healthy eating.....)

- √√√√√ Ride my bike more (but don't feel safe on Chelt roads.)
- √√ Bike paths to all schools and through all neighborhoods – less buses!
- √√√ Yes! Bike paths! Road Markers! Established Routes
- √ Vegetable Garden
- √ Backyard Chickens
- √ Composting
Put in butterfly garden
- √ Continue to eradicate invasive plants
Timed Traffic lights so bikers don't have to run red lights or wait for cars

What Sustainable changes would like our Township to adopt?

- Police vehicles that are more appropriate for twp use & are consequently more fuel efficient.
- √ “No Volcano Mulch” Policy
- * √ More “Green” infrastructure to hold stormwater

- √ Partner more w/ Institutions/Businesses to increase their help in adopting creeks near their properties (esp. adding trees, scrubs (sic) & doing cleanups.)
- √ Train Park Maintenance staff to adopt better practices for maintaining park lands esp. near creeks.
- √√√√ More bike paths to connect greenways & schools.
- Collect compost from residents + use in green places
- Recycle Alkaline batteries
- √ Free Cycle drop off/pick up
- √ More education/awareness about chemical use & less lawns -> harm to environment.
- √ Adopt more open space & promote more open space in to-be developed properties
- Collect waste cooking oil/grease
- Participate in take back drug days (Chelt. Police Dept.)
- Haz waste collection (not on a Saturday)
- √ BE MORE PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY – Sidewalks, stop signs, turning arrow's, IT'S SAFER TOO.
- Battery Recycling in weekly recycling pickup
- √ Garden Plant Exchange
- More sidewalks & bike lanes!

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CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL-
August/ September 2014

Committee: Schools Committee

Liaison to the Council: Lorna Rosenberg

Date of last meeting: July 2014

Date of next meeting: September

Questions/issues for the board/larger group:

- Green Apple Day of Service – Sept 27 (through October 2014) opportunity for EAC to join schools in service projects.

Action Items Completed:

- August 6 Myers Elementary Green Ambassadors win Young Heroes Liberty Museum medal and \$1000.
- Iris Parker is the new Principal at CHS
- Student Council Nissim Lebovits presented the findings from the April Waste Audit report to the Cheltenham School Board on Sept 9

Cheltenham High School

- **The final waste audit is complete. The next step is for the students and school from Nissim:**
- 1. Establish immediate goals that can be accomplished by the end of the year. I'd suggest bringing our recycling rate to 30-35%, first, as well as one or two other things.
- 2. Come up with a plan to implement the necessary programs to accomplish these goals. Once these programs are in place, we can start to think about where we want to take things long term, but we need to actually get the program up and running before we can consider the future.
- 3. Focus on informing the student body and the staff so that as soon as the programs are in place, we have a perfectly smooth transition. If we combine this education with proper implementation of the programs, everything will be a massive success.
- Karen Shaffran will be supervising the CHS Environmental Club along with Cedarbrook. Now there is amazing opportunity for the two groups to work together on Projects under her guidance.
- Students are working with TTF on a storm sewer labeling project for the Sept 27 Green Apple Day of service.
- Installation of Solar Hotwater for the Gym will be completed by October. Upon completion, there is an opportunity for a public awareness and ribbon cutting.

Myers Elementary:

- Myers is planting a butterfly garden with a plant registry for the appropriate plants for Green Apple Day of Service -
- They are working to increase their recycling rate with the green ambassadors. They are looking to CSD facilities staff to provide training and assure all collection bins are in place.
- Green Ambassadors are creating a web page on the Myers Website
- They are working on their anti-idling campaign
- They are working to create signage in their school to showcase the green features.

Cedarbrook

- Cedarbrook West @ Ivy Hill is working with the folks from the Wissahickon Watershed on a stream sampling with Karen Shaffran.

Cheltenham Elementary School

- Will be working with a Chef from Park Plates to learn about fresh foods and cooking using the produce from their garden.

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All schools are being encouraged to do a Green Apple Day of Service Project.

- Cheltenham School District Health and Safety Committee will be meeting on Sept 29 to continue work on health and safety policies.

Action Items In-progress/Pending:

School Board: Still working on a green policy to guide over all green activities and strategic planning for CHS, the Administration building, EP and Cedarbrook.