

May 18, 2009 7:30 p.m.
Wall House

The regular meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) was held tonight. Voting members present were: Mary Beth Carroll, Daryl Carrington; Barbara Duffy, Bill Mettler, Miriam Moss, Lorna Rosenberg, and David McVeigh-Schultz. Non-voting (ex-Officio) member present was: Thomas Bale. Others present were: Robert DeMaria, Dottie Baumgarten and Bonnie Hay. Staff present was: Bryan T. Havir, Assistant Township Manager.

1. Call to Order - Ms. Duffy called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.
2. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes - Mr. Schultz requested that under the Buildings and Education report, that "Business Education Meeting" at Arcadia be changed to "Building Tour". Upon motion of Ms. Rosenberg and seconded by Ms. Moss, the EAC accepted the April 15, 2009 meeting minutes as amended.
3. Committee Reports were as follows:

A. Buildings and Education – Ms. Rosenberg reported that the next Community Workshop entitled, Geo-Thermal for Your Home or Business, will be held on June 3, 2009 at the Elkins Park Library at 6:45 p.m., presented by Alderson Engineering. Alderson Engineering, located in Lower Southampton, is currently working on the Kensington High School project. Ms. Carroll will advertise the event via e-mail.

Ms. Rosenberg reported that there has been some conversation that the Architect for the Glenside Elementary School reconstruction project, recently stated that additional funding would be needed to obtain The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for the project. The architect feels that the project can be designed and built for high performance and efficiency without the certification. Ms. Rosenberg

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highly recommended LEED certification and discussed the program benefits and said she would encourage the Cheltenham Township School Board be committed to LEED certification. It was the unanimous consensus that the EAC make a motion to send an EAC representative to the next school board meeting. Ms. Rosenberg and Mr. Carrington agreed to attend the next school board meeting.

Ms. Rosenberg also reported that Beth Shalom is applying for funding for a planning and feasibility study grant from Partners for Sacred Places to address energy efficiency issues that could be incorporated to make the building more sustainable. Ms. Rosenberg said this is a good funding opportunity for all congregations. Mr. Havar mentioned that the Interfaith Council in Cheltenham Township would be a conduit to get the word out to the other congregations.

Mr. Schultz reported that Dr. Robert Wirtshafter of Wirtshafter Associates recently performed energy audits pro bono at both the Rowland Community Center and LaMott Community Center and has recommended the following building improvements: installation of centrally located thermostats; room motion detectors; and use of compact fluorescent lights, (per the attached report). It was noted that the building retrofit recommendations are items eligible for inclusion in the Township's federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) which is due next month.

Ms. Moss suggested that the Cheltenham Township Board of Commissioners write a letter of thanks to Dr. Wirtshafter. The EAC concurred.

The EAC then discussed the benefits of LEED certification for existing buildings and how that may positively be viewed by the public as it retrofits such buildings as the

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LaMott Community Center. Ms. Rosenberg noted if an existing building could not be LEED certified, it could become an energy star building with a multi-year strategy. LEED certification for existing buildings include such issues as: outdoor air exchange; energy star rated equipment; and plumbing upgrades. The EAC recommended the Township staff consider this as it undertakes upgrades to Township facilities.

B. Communication - Ms. Carroll reported that e-mails have been sent out for the next Community Workshop.

C. Transportation – Ms. Duffy along with Mr. Schultz reported on Bridget Chadwick’s behalf concerning a position statement for the EAC regarding the Jenkintown-Wyncote Station parking garage. Mr. Havir reported that SEPTA had hired a marketing firm to conduct a survey, which did take place on May 13-14, 2009. The survey would be conducted at nine other stations above and below Jenkintown station and it was hoped that the survey results could be presented at the next workshop. The next workshop that SEPTA plans on holding is slated for late June, 2009 once the survey results are tabulated by the consultant. Ms. Moss suggested that Mr. Schultz be entrusted to use his best judgment and complete the draft position statement as discussed by the EAC and e-mail it to Bryan T. Havir. A motion was made by Mr. Mettler and seconded by Ms. Carroll to have Mr. Schultz complete the draft as discussed and e-mail it to Mr. Havir. The vote was unanimous. Once Mr. Havir receives the draft position statement, it should be attached to the minutes of this meeting.

D. Energy – Mr. Mettler reported on the Community Gardens workshop held on April 30, 2009 at the LaMott Community Center. There were 29 participants and

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Cheltenham, Springfield, Abington and East Oak Lane communities were represented. The meeting format consisted of 1) viewing a film, "The Power of the Community", which documented the Cuban model of community gardens and 2) discussion groups. Mr. Mettler reported that the event was very successful and many would like to see more community gardens in the Township on parkland and how to go about it. Mr. Havar stated that anyone with a particular interest in a community garden in Cheltenham Township property would have to first contact John Hoover, Director of Parks and Recreation to begin a formal process that would be considered by the Township and perhaps the Park and Recreation Committee of the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Mettler reported that he would like to utilize the same meeting format used at the community gardens workshop to promote energy efficiency and conservation workshops to be offered over the next year at the Township libraries. The kilowatt meters would be something that could be introduced at these meetings to see who would be interested in knowing about current energy usage in their homes and how they could reduce usage and conserve energy and then passing the meters along to their neighbors. Possibly, an EAC representative could visit private homes and point out where energy savings could be achieved. The EAC liked the idea and asked Mr. Mettler to refine this proposal and bring it back for further discussion.

Mr. Bale, Ms. Moss and Mr. Mettler also reported that they recently met to discuss recommendations for inclusion of projects in the Township's EECBG application. There was discussion about 10% of the grant being earmarked for education where there would be at least one-half dozen kinds of information that the EAC could

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develop to make residents aware of energy efficiency issues that could be achieved in retrofitting their buildings, e.g., the idea of kilowatt meters being used as a means to provide education and measure energy usage. Mr. Bale reported on a previously discussed behavioral modification system called Positive Energy which is offered by numerous utility companies to measure energy usage by all households in the community. Mr. Bale said reductions obtained in other parts of the country were 200-300 kWh per month per household. There was discussion about the monetary charge for this service. Mr. Bale will research the cost.

Mr. Havir referred to Act 129 which requires each of the seven major Electric Distribution Companies (EDC's) in Pennsylvania to adopt a plan to reduce energy demand and consumption within its service territory. The Act requires a 1% reduction in consumption by May 31, 2011, a total of 3% reduction in consumption and a 4.5% reduction in peak demand by May 31, 2013. PECO is required to file their proposed plan by July 1st to the Public Utility Commission (PUC) and is subject to public comment. Mr. Havir recommended that once PECO's plan is filed with the PUC, the EAC Energy Committee review and discuss the details. The PUC has 120 days to approve PECO's plan once it is submitted. Ms. Rosenberg agreed to get a copy of the PECO plan.

Ms. Moss then made a motion and the EAC agreed to recommend the \$147,400 EECBG be entirely allocated for building retrofitting for energy efficiency in accordance with Wirtshafter & Associates' energy audit. Ms. Carroll voted to oppose the use of the grant entirely for building retrofits and suggested a portion be used for education.

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E. Watershed Committee - Ms. Duffy prepared a report on those activities. (see attached) and stated that the Earth Day activities last month were very successful. Ms. Duffy reported she was beginning to work with Hibbert's on an EAC table display banner for public education and outreach events. Funds are already earmarked in the Township budget for this matter. Ms. Duffy asked if a display board could also be purchased.

4. Chairman's Report- Ms. Duffy attended the Historical Commissions' lecture on May 12, 2009 about the Cheltenham Mills along the Tookany Creek. Ms. Duffy also reported that the Watershed Committee, along with the help of the Historical Commission, continues to work on the stream naming project and they are still finding more maps.

Ms. Duffy reported on a section of parkland near Waverly/Harrison/Lismore roadway intersection that is in need of more native plantings to replace the invasives that were removed a year ago. The EAC discussed the feasibility of exploring the relocation of newly installed trees from the Glenside Elementary School property that will be damaged when the school is demolished in the fall. The trees could perhaps be relocated to Township parkland such as the Waverly/Harrison/Lismore parkland. EAC and Township staff will explore further and discuss the matter with School District Property Superintendent.

5. Old Business:

A. The EAC had a lengthy discussion of the need for public education and developing a budget to promote the purchase and development of educational materials to address energy efficiency issues. There was a recommendation to explore educational grant opportunities to help fund this concept or submit a nominal budget request to the Board of Commissioners in the fall.

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B. Mr. Havir provided a status report on the progress of the Public Bid Schedule for the Phase II Tookany Creek Streambank Restoration and Stabilization Project. He noted that there was a meeting scheduled with the Matrix Corporation, owners of the former Ashbourne Country Club which is directly effected by the streambank stabilization.

6. New Business: Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance Arts Grant application is due on June 19, 2009. Mr. Havir suggested that the EAC might consider spearheading an environmental watershed theme for public art. Ms. Duffy suggested the Keswick Avenue overpass (east side) which could be a joint effort with Abington Township where a mural could be painted. Ms. Duffy reported that those involved would like a watershed theme and also to embellish the flag that was painted on the (west side) last year in order to tie into a theme for the entire Glenside Community. Ms. Duffy agreed to contact June Parkinson and Rita Stevenson in Abington to determine interest in forming a partnership. The EAC concurred.

Ms. Duffy said she is also working on the Annual Report of the EAC activities accomplished from its inception in July, 2007 which is required to be submitted to the Cheltenham Township Board of Commissioners per the Township's ordinance annually.

7. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2009 at the Wall House.



David G. Kraynik
Township Manager

Submitted by
Kathryn McDevitt

Preliminary Walk Through Audit Recommendations

Primary Recommendations:

1. Install centrally controlled thermostats for zone heating and temperature set backs.
Projected Savings: 15% of gas costs (Rowland \$3,600/year, LaMott \$1,800/year)
2. Install Motion Detectors in Halls and Rooms
Projected savings: \$60 per year per fixture.
3. Install more efficient fluorescent lighting
Projected Savings: \$37.50 per fixture per year.

Total: over 245 volunteers

Cheltenham Township EAC Watershed Subcommittee Earth Day Projects Report 2009

Saturday, April 18th -Neighborhoods, schools and community groups celebrated our Earth with projects at various locations throughout the Township.

Here is a list of the projects and the follow up report from each site:

Tookany Creek Parkway Cleanup Competition

Activity: Cleanup Tookany Creek Parkways

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Group Leaders: Roy Hollinger, Rotary Club, Rick Kraske, EP teacher, Vicki Fella-Plier, CHS teacher, Beverly Fries, Girl Scout Leader, Joe Vescovich, Tookany Parkway Neighbor

Sponsoring Groups: Cheltenham-Rockledge Rotary Club & the Elkins Park and Cheltenham High School teachers and neighbors of Tookany Creek Parkway and Girl Scout Troop #7307.

Attendance: over 60 volunteers.

Note: neighbors suggested trash and recycling cans be placed at the Roller Rink at Elkins Park School because numerous bottles and cans were being thrown over the fence into the woods next to the rink. Also some neighbors reported see new stands of Japanese Knotweed coming up near footbridge at Jenkintown Road along Tookany Creek bank.

Parkview Park

Activity: Cleanup near the creek

Contact: Pru Rebitz

Sponsoring Group: Girl Scout Troops #7325, #7684 & #759

Attendance: 12 volunteers

Note: found a loveseat in the woods- public works was notified.

Glenside Elementary School

Activity: invasive plant removal in preparation for riparian buffer planting

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Group Leader: Sarah RobbGrieco, TTF Director

Sponsoring Group: TTF Watershed Partnership, Arcadia Environmental Club

Attendance: over 30 volunteers

LaMott Community Center

Activity: Cleanup & flower planting

Group Leader: Janice Jones

Sponsoring Group: Girl Scout Troop

Attendance: 9 volunteers

High School Park

Activity: Cleanup (family workday)

Time: 10:00 a.m. to Noon

Contact: Gina Craigo

Sponsoring Group: Friends of High School Park

Attendance: about 12 volunteers

Ralph Morgan Park

Activity: Trash Cleanup

Time: 10:30 to 11:30 am

Contact: Ben Mosko 215-885-1506

Sponsoring Group: Friends of Ralph Morgan Park

Attendance: one volunteer

Renninger Park

Activity: Creek & playground cleanup (Also did mulch pile at the Glenside Library)

Time: 10:00 a.m. to Noon

Contact: Mary Beth Carroll, Scout Leader

Sponsoring Group: Girl Scout Troop #75107

Attendance: 9 volunteers

Note: New plantings by Shades of Green were improperly mulched. Woodchips were piled on the delicate trunks of the shrubs and trees.

Grove Park

Activity: Cleanup and educational activities

Time: 10:00 a.m. to Noon

Contact: Dottie Baumgarten

Sponsoring Group: Friends of Grove Park

Attendance: over 40 residents participated.

Note: Residents reported that contractors who are working in the neighborhood are washing their tools out in Shady Nook Creek.

Edward Drach Memorial Scout Cabin

Activity: Trail maintenance & native plantings along creek

Time: 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Contact: Dave Jennis, Scout Leader

Sponsoring Group: Boy Scout Troop #22

Attendance: about 12 volunteers

Note: This project continued Tom Johnston's planned planting for the 85th Anniversary of the troop (85 native trees and shrubs) that was presented and accepted by the EAC back in the Fall.

Laverock Garden Eagle Scout Project

Activity: Invasive removal & redesign of the entire garden

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 pm

Contact: Sherry Hazelwood, Civic Assoc & Mike Borowy Eagle Scout Applicant

Sponsor: Eagle Scout, BS Troop #304 & Custis Woods-Twickenham Civic Assoc.

Attendance: over 30 participants

Note: Eagle Scout applicant, Mike Bowery worked on the garden hard scape and plant design, got community donations for materials, drummed up fellow scouts and neighbors to volunteer to remove invasive and plant new plants.

Keswick Avenue Underpass

Activity: Cleanup & neighborhood networking for future beautification project of that area—possible mural and planting project.

Time: 9:00 to 10:30 am

Contact: June Parkinson, Abington neighbor & Mary Santorelli, Cheltenham neighbor

Sponsor: Abington & Cheltenham Neighbors

Attendance: over 30 neighbors participated

Note: Cheltenham EAC will be working with Abington's EAC and neighbors this summer to improve this area.

Dear SEPTA Planning Officials,

As you know, the Cheltenham Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) is represented at the SEPTA's workshops along with other Cheltenham and Jenkintown community groups in discussion about the objectives and design of Jenkintown-Wyncote parking and station development. Four or more members of the Cheltenham EAC have attended each of the three hearings hosted by the Cheltenham Public Works Committee and SEPTA since the summer of 2008. The EAC's Chair, Barbara Duffy, was invited to participate in the SEPTA workshops series. The EAC affirmed at its April 20 meeting that Ms. Duffy will attend the workshops with the full support of our group as its designated representative. We were also pleased to learn that Bridget Chadwick, who has served as the EAC's advisor on transportation issues since its inception, is also participating in the workshops.

We have approached these discussions with these core concerns:

1. Protect our Airshed:

The EAC supports the environmentally-responsible goals of Cheltenham's Comprehensive Plan (2005) to "provide a safe, efficient transportation system that balances automobile, pedestrian, and public transportation". This Comprehensive Plan also complies with regional transportation plans, such as the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's long range plan to provide alternatives to the single-occupant vehicles, and to improve connections between different modes of transportation.

As a result, we conclude that;

- a. A major expansion of car parking at the Jenkintown-Wyncote Station, at the expense of other alternatives, will further solidify our dependence upon auto transport for individuals and not conform with DVRPC's plan..
- b. Our community needs better access to sustainable transport opportunities such as improved scheduling of public transit, safe pedestrian crosswalks, and more bike paths and parking.
- c. Our community's leading businesses should partner with SEPTA to develop innovative transit alternatives that connect to the station, such as workplace and campus jitney service, and remote parking with shuttles.

2. Protect our Watershed:

The water quality of Tookany Creek that runs throughout Cheltenham Township is impaired, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 'because of erosion, siltation, and non-point source pollution' due to water run-off from non-porous surfaces such as roads, parking lots and roofs. Our Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan (2003) also recognizes these problems and outlines goals to improve our watershed.

As a result, the EAC supports the following:

- a. Our community needs to reduce traditionally paved surfaces, particularly in areas surrounding our creek. We would oppose any development plans that would expand surface parking next to, or over, the creek as an alternative to the garage proposal.
- b. Our community needs to preserve and increase our riparian buffers surrounding the Tookany Creek especially by retrofitting existing parking lots that pollute our Creek. The Council strongly supports some elements of the SEPTA Jenkintown Improvement Project recommendations, especially regarding the greenway along the Tookany Creek to replace what was cleared and in-filled in the 1990s for parking expansion. However, we strongly oppose any plans that would further hard scape or channel the stream bank on the parking lot side of Glenside Avenue.

c. Our creek banks need to be protected from further erosion by implementing natural designs using Best Management Practices and native plantings.

3. Flooding:

Given the fact that the upper Tookany Creek headwaters, and particularly its Jenkintown-Wyncote-Glenside watershed, is largely covered with impervious pavement and large commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential buildings, we view any redesign of the Tookany Creek streambed along the parking area as inadequate to reduce the likelihood of flooding in the 50 year peak flood zone. As a result, we also concur with the findings of the 2004 feasibility study that any Jenkintown-Wyncote parking development should not include a subterranean (below grade) floor. We believe that additional surface parking adjacent to the station can be made available in Jenkintown that would offset any need for parking spaces to be provided by a below grade floor of a parking garage. We advocate a whole watershed approach to assessing flood and stream bank issues in the Wyncote area closest to the Station, including reassessing Cheltenham Township acquisition of the businesses on North Avenue in order to create a nature water holding basin during high water storm events.

4. Measure Rider Demand for more Diverse Environmentally Friendly Modes of Transport:

The Council supports the concept of some expansion of SEPTA ridership at the Jenkintown-Wyncote station, especially through increased use of pedestrian and transit connections. We have not seen evidence showing that the potential benefits of improving public bus or private jitney connections to rail service at the Jenkintown-Wyncote station has been sufficiently studied or considered. The EAC suggests that a study of non-auto transport demand be integrated into a new service demand study approved by SEPTA. We also suggest that alternatives to SEPTA's current parking policies be explored in this study, such as prospects for SEPTA leasing existing parking lots in the vicinity of the station, eliminating monthly permit parking, designating reserved parking for Philly Car Share, and designating reserved lanes for station drop off.

5. Elevate the Platforms Without Decreasing Service to Elkins Park Riders:

The EAC realizes that efforts to elevate platforms in all of SEPTA's rail stations is linked to establishing legally mandated handicapped access to rail travel at our station. We also acknowledge the importance of elevated station platforms for reducing rider boarding time in an effort to speed rail commute travel for the region, and thereby encourage additional rail ridership in the region. We believe Elkins Park Station platform elevation should be completed soon after Jenkintown improvements, so as to eliminate any reason to reduce rail service there in the interest of faster rail service.

As the workshops with SEPTA continue, we believe it is important for all parties to acknowledge that SEPTA is making a good faith effort to respond to community concerns. While the number of cars at the station is still a point of contention, SEPTA has reduced the scale of its proposal from 900 to 600 vehicles. We applaud SEPTA for continuing to work with the community on design changes and for acknowledging the need for green space along the Tookany Creek and abandoning the proposal to temporarily pave over the Township's bird sanctuary for temporary parking. We wholeheartedly support SEPTA's effort to seek the advice and counsel of our community's officials and representatives of its civic groups.

As a review, here are **our overall environmental goals:**

1. Our community needs to become more walkable & bikeable.
2. Car traffic in general needs to be discouraged.
3. Mass transit (bus, jitney, light rail, train) needs to be encouraged.
4. Our creeks need to be protected with natural riparian buffers and native plantings.
5. Reduce the impervious surfaces and incorporate other storm water BMPs to decrease flooding.
6. We need to preserve and increase whenever possible our green space--parks, gardens, bird sanctuaries within our community and especially around our train stations and railways.

The EAC hopes to continue its dialog with SEPTA well after the completion of the Jenkintown/Wyncote Station Improvement Project in order to help advise and assist SEPTA in making environmentally sound decisions with regard to service, station and railway improvements within Cheltenham Township.

Sincerely,
Cheltenham Township Environmental Advisory Council