

Environmental Advisory Council  
Cheltenham Township

28 February, 2022

To the Commissioners of Cheltenham Township,

At the EAC meeting on February 14, 2022, members of the EAC, as well as many concerned residents, discussed the proposed development at 222 Church Road. The EAC's recommendations resulting from that discussion are summarized here and respectfully submitted to the Board of Commissioners.

222 Church Rd is a mostly undeveloped property with many mature trees. One side of the property borders the 100-year floodplain of the Tookany Creek and its associated wetland.

Regarding the proposed development, the Environmental Advisory Council strongly recommends the following:

Due to the ever-increasing threat of extreme rainfall events coupled with the legacy of impervious surfaces in Cheltenham Township and upstream, it is of the utmost importance to ensure that all development projects meet or exceed the legal requirements that have been enacted to protect other property owners and the environment, as described in the Zoning Code and the recently revised township SALDO.

The presence of vulnerable wetlands on and downslope from the proposed development is of particular concern. The Township must ensure that the developer adheres to all appropriate state and federal permitting requirements as required by the township Engineer, STAC, and the SALDO, during pre-construction, construction, and post-construction activities. Special consideration should be given to the design and maintenance of the retention basin and the downstream impacts of the project in order to protect existing properties from flood damage. This is especially important given that residents in the surrounding area already face serious flooding problems.

Furthermore, the EAC endorses the recommendations contained in the letters you have received from the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership. The EAC reiterates some of the recommendations for emphasis:

- The applicants should provide as many as possible of the required replacement trees on site. Trees should be placed by a registered landscape architect (RLA) near the wetlands in order to enhance the effectiveness of the wetlands and to provide additional buffering and filtering to protect this important habitat. Trees, including smaller trees, as well as shrubs, should also be planted in the other areas recommended by TTF.
- Native trees should be used, and best practices for the care of these plantings should be clearly stated in the development plan.

- Impervious surfaces should be reduced as much as possible, including by reducing the size of the cul-de-sac.
- A more coherent and sustainable stormwater management plan should be articulated and should include a better plan for the drainage system's maintenance.

These recommendations are meant to highlight the imperative for **sustainable** development practices, enacted by our community to protect and enhance its desirability as a place to live and work.

Sincerely,

Greta Bunin, Chair

Wendy Ankrom, Vice-chair

Kurt Ahrens

Michael Freeman

John Raisch

Sidney Kahn

Boris Kerzner

Cc: Bob Zienkowski, Township Manager

Henry Sekawungu, Director of Planning and Zoning

Alyson Elliot, Assistant Township Manager

Lauren Walter, Special Projects Coordinator

Julie Slavet, Executive Director, TTF