

Plainfield Township Environmental Advisory Council

On December 13, 2006, the Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors passed Ordinance #315. The Ordinance provides operating procedures and powers for the Environmental Advisory Council. The Council advises other local government agencies, including, but not limited to, the planning commission, park and recreation boards, and elected officials, on matters dealing with protection, conservation, management, promotion and use of natural resources including air, land and water resources located within its territorial limits. The Board of Supervisors appointed seven residents to serve on the Council. The members are Chairman Terry Kleintop, Vice-Chairman Robert Cornman, Matt Glennon, Jane Mellert, Robert Simpson, John Santo and Jim Sandt. The EAC meets at 7:00 P.M. on the first Tuesday of the month at the Municipal building. The meetings are open to the public.

The EAC has the following responsibilities:

1. Identify environmental problems;
2. Recommend plans and programs to the appropriate agencies for the promotion and conservation of the natural resources and for the protection and improvement of the quality of the environment within the area of the Municipality;
3. Make recommendations as to the possible use of open land areas of this Municipality;
4. Promote a community environmental program;
5. Keep an index of all open areas, publicly or privately owned, including, but not limited to, flood prone areas, swamps, and other unique natural areas;
6. Advise the appropriate local governmental agencies in the acquisition of property, both real and personal;
7. Undertake such environmental tasks as requested by the Board of Supervisors of Plainfield Township.

During 2008 the EAC reviewed and/or were involved in the following:

- Outdoor Solid Fuel Burning Appliance Ordinance
- Building Height Regulations
- Roadway Standards
- Williams Pipeline
- Updating of the Flood Plain Ordinance
- Riparian Streamside and Wetland Buffer Regulations
- Northampton County Farmland Preservation Partnership Program
- HB 1281/Act 24 of 2008 Protection of the Appalachian Trail through increased zoning measures
- Pennsylvania Fuels for Schools and Beyond (A Renewable Energy Resource Project) is a Statewide energy use initiative promoting the use of local renewable resources such as wood, wood residue, and dedicated agricultural crops like warm season grasses (i.e., switchgrass and big bluestem) also known as biomass, to provide reliable energy for Pennsylvania schools and businesses. The EAC of Bushkill, Lower Mount Bethel, Plainfield, Upper Mount Bethel Townships and the City of Bethlehem in conjunction with the Bushkill Stream Conservancy (BSC) www.bushkill.org, and the Martins-Jacoby Watershed Association (MJWA) www.mjwa.org, presented two conferences to inform and educate the public about the project and it's potential. They were held on August 16, 2008 at the Charles Chrin Community Center in Palmer Township and on

February 25, 2009 at the Northampton County Community College Southside Campus Fowler Family Center in Bethlehem.

- TreeCycle LLC is a wood pellet plant scheduled to be operational by late March of 2009. A public informational meeting was held in October of 2008, to review the proposal and the corresponding environmental concerns such as noise, air pollution, and increased traffic. The plant will operate twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. It is located on Engler Road.
- Quarterly regional EAC meetings were established beginning in December of 2007 by the EAC members from Bushkill, Lower Mount Bethel, Plainfield and Upper Mount Bethel Townships in conjunction with the Bushkill Stream Conservancy and the Martins-Jacoby Watershed Association (MJWA).
- The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, located at 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, PA 18109 hosts three meetings per year that are attended by members of the twenty-one EACs in the Lehigh Valley.

Associate EAC Members Needed

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” ~ Dr. Suess, The Lorax

Are You Ready to Make a Difference? Become proactive, not reactive to how your community is being planned. The Plainfield Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) is currently giving consideration to adding Associate EAC Members to the Council. Associate members do not vote but may participate in all other council activities and serve on standing and special committees. Any interested candidates should submit a letter of interest to: Plainfield Township EAC, 6292 Sullivan Trail, Nazareth, PA 18064

Grants

Plainfield Township applied for grants from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Funding is provided by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Environmental Stewardship Fund administered by the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D & L NHC). This project is part of the Lehigh Valley Greenways implementation block grant Phase V. The following grants have been awarded and will be able to be used for the following projects over the next three years.

Special Purpose Study Grants	DCNR Lehigh Valley Greenways Block Grant	Plainfield Township	Total
Natural Resource Protections Ordinances	\$7,400.00	\$7,400.00	\$14,800.00
Public Education	\$4,400.00	\$4,400.00	\$ 8,800.00
Official Map	\$5,400.00	\$5,400.00	\$10,800.00
GIS and Staff Support	\$5,550.00	\$5,550.00	\$11,100.00
Open Space Plan	\$4,950.00	\$4,950.00	\$ 9,900.00
Total	\$27,700.00	\$27,700.00	\$55,400.00
Grant Award	\$27,700.00		

Implementation Project Grants	DCNR Lehigh Valley Greenways Block Grant	Plainfield Township	Total
Trail Erosion and Stormwater Repair	\$14,750.00	\$14,750.00	\$29,500.00
Trail Message Centers	\$ 3,800.00	\$ 3,800.00	\$ 7,600.00
Trail Mileage Markers and Intersecting Road Signs	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 4,200.00
Trail Picnic Tables	\$ 6,900.00	\$ 6,900.00	\$ 13,800.00
Trail Benches	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 11,200.00
Total	\$33,150.00	\$33,150.00	\$66,300.00
Grant Award	\$20,000.00		

During 2007 Plainfield Township was awarded a grant from the Pennsylvania Environmental Council in the amount of \$5,000. The funds were used to purchase computer equipment and Geographic Information System (GIS) software.

Tidbits of Interest

Twelve Municipalities in Northampton County and eleven Municipalities in Lehigh County currently have Environmental Advisory Councils.

Did you know?

The waters of both branches of the Little Bushkill as well as the Little Bushkill are being tested at multiple locations on a monthly basis within Plainfield Township.