

The Plainfield Township EAC meeting was held on Monday, January 11, 2016 at 7:00 pm in the Plainfield Township Municipal Building. Those in attendance were:

Terry Kleintop, EAC Chairman (7:05pm arrival)	Robin Dingle – EAC Member
Jane Mellert, EAC Secretary and Member	Don Moore – EAC Member
Bruce Rabenold – EAC Member	Robert Simpson – EAC Member
Robert Cornman – EAC Member - absent	Tom Petrucci – Plainfield Twp Manager

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

EAC Chairman – Bob Simpson made a motion to nominate Terry Kleintop
Terry Kleintop nominated Robin Dingle – Robin Dingle declined the nomination due to work commitments.

Bob Simpson made a motion to nominate Terry Kleintop for Chairman of the EAC. Robin Dingle seconded the motion. The vote passed with five members voting yes. Terry Kleintop abstained from the vote.

Vice Chairperson – Robin Dingle nominated Bob Cornman for the Vice Chairperson position. The motion was seconded by Bruce Rabenold. The vote passed by unanimous vote. Prior to the vote being taken the EAC members discussed whether they should approve a member of the EAC for the Vice Chairman position without them being asked first and present at the meeting. Bob Cornman will be contacted to ask if he will accept the Vice-Chairman position.

MINUTES

Terry Kleintop asked for a motion to approve the December 3, 2015 minutes. The minutes were taken by Township Manager Tom Petrucci.

Bob Simpson made a motion to approve the draft December 3, 2015 EAC minutes. Don Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

2014 PA DEP Growing Greener Plus Grant Update – Little Bushkill Creek

- Terry Kleintop, Robin Dingle and Tom Petrucci will meet with the Stuber's, Taylor's and Achenbach's on Saturday January 16th. The weather report is calling for inclement weather for this Saturday so the meetings may not be completed on that date.
- Terry spoke to Pete Zakanyycz the USDA District Conservationist. Pete will provide information for fencing from an Amish business. Terry would like to have Pete involved in the Butch Lieberman and Kessler projects. The Snowbirds and Magnolia farming area should also be addressed.
- Robin Dingle is not sure if the RFP will be complete in time for the February 1st EAC meeting. The RFP will be scheduled to be reviewed at the February 25th Board of Supervisors Workshop meeting. The Board will need to approve the grant budget.
- The revisions are due to the PA DEP by the extended deadline of February 26th.

2016 Watershed/Environmental Restoration Projects

An email was received on December 30, 2015 from Jim Wilson. The email was addressed to Northampton County Community Watershed Organization Leaders and Conservation Partners.

The email notes the following:

- Bryan Cope the Northampton County Open Space Coordinator met with Nate Pritchard the new Northampton County Watershed Specialist. Bryan provided an overview of the Northampton County Open Space Program and explained that some of the money for Open Space may be allocated for environmental restoration projects.
- The email requests an update on restoration projects and funding needs. Bryan is requesting the information and asks if the Township has watershed restoration projects and if money is needed toward the projects.
- The request is for planned 2016 projects and projects planned for the next couple of years.

The EAC would like to have the following information regarding the request:

- The amount of money available for projects.
- What are the match requirements for the funds?
- What types of projects will be eligible?
- Is there a cap on funding per project?

Robin Dingle made a motion to have Township Manager Tom Petrucci contact Bryan Cope in order to get the following information:

- **The amount of money available for projects.**
- **What are the match requirements for the funds?**
- **What types of projects will be eligible?**
- **Is there a cap on funding per project?**

Don Moore seconded the motion and it was passed by unanimous vote.

The EAC will determine how to move forward with the request after the additional information is obtained.

2016 Northampton County Farmland Preservation Applicants– Terry Kleintop reported that three (3) applications have been submitted to Northampton County Farmland Preservation office from Plainfield Township property owners. There are approximately 19 applicants for the 2016 application process. The Plainfield Township applicants are as follows:

- 28 acres – Lock on Capp Rd
- 72 acres – Fiorentes on Getz Rd
- 39 acres - Witmer on LaFevre Rd

2015 Northampton County Farmland Preservation

- There were eight applications for the 2015 process.
- Two of the applicants did not move forward with the process.
- When all of the land is finalized there will be 429.92 acres preserved for 2015.

Plainfield Township Open Space Funds – Report by Terry Kleintop

- Treasurer Katelyn Kopach submitted a reconciliation report for the Plainfield Township Open Space fund. Terry Kleintop reviewed the data on the report. Terry estimated that the Township will have approximately \$839,700.70 left in the account that was not put forward to the County for matching.
- Due to Northampton County not funding new money in the budget for the 2016 Farmland Preservation process, the Township may have to pay the majority of the money out of EIT Open Space Funds to preserve farms in 2016.
- The Township has roughly \$1,100,000 that has never been matched by the State of PA.

2013 PA Open Space Law – ACT 115 (Amendments)

The amendment was signed by the Governor of Pennsylvania on December 18, 2013. It improves the Open Space Law by providing that in addition to acquiring land and easements, dedicated open space may be used for the following:

- Develop, improve, design, engineer and maintain open space acquired with dedicated open space taxes in order to provide open space benefits (Up to 25% of open space taxes may be used for this purpose)
- Prepare the resources, recreation or land use plan needed to acquire open space under the law.

EAC Chairman sent the Act 115 information to Solicitor Backenstoe for clarification.

Township Manager Tom Petrucci noted that clarification is necessary. Is it 25% of the total open space funds?

Open Space EIT Collections

- Tracking of information is needed in order to compile information for the Board of Supervisors regarding the future of Open Space EIT collections.
- The information should include how the funds will be utilized.
- In December of 2015, Tom Petrucci compiled a draft letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding the future of EIT collections. The letter will be revised prior to it being forwarded to the Board.
- The EAC will think through the different facets of how the money could be used. Examples include trail maintenance, land purchases, water restoration projects, etc.
- Based on the new information in Act 115 of 2013, the next step should be to give the Board a bulleted list of options for consideration.
- This topic will be added to the February EAC Agenda.

Bob Simpson made a motion to review the current draft of the letter (addressing Open Space EIT Collections) to the Board of Supervisors and revise the letter for review at the February 2016 EAC meeting. Don Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

It was noted that the Plainfield Township residents voted for Open Space EIT collections in 2006. Tom Petrucci pulled up the Open Space Ordinance from 2007. The Ordinance and Open Space Plan will need to be amended if the EIT funds are to be utilized for the additional provisions noted in Act 115 of 2013.

Terry Kleintop noted that in 2002 the residents of Northampton County also voted for open Space Preservation.

Appalachian Trail Connection– West Side of Route #33 Trail Head

Bob Simpson does not think that the Board of Supervisors understood the request for the Appalachian Trail connection. Terry Kleintop noted it would only cost \$2,000 to \$4,000 to get the appraisal for the property. Bruce Rabenold was disappointed with the presentation from the Wildlands Conservancy and the outcome. It was noted that the Wildlands Conservancy did not walk and explore the area, they did not speak to the PA Game Commission and they did not want to invest time until after Plainfield Township would make a commitment.

The EAC Members would have liked a more detailed response from the Board of Supervisors as to why the project was turned down. The EAC discussed whether the Board would reconsider the decision in the future. Since the appraisal was not approved the Township will not know what the true cost would have been to acquire the properties

Ordinance #357 Tree Protection and Timber Harvest Management and #342 Maintenance and Preservation of Riparian Buffers and Open Space

Tom Petrucci requested the focus to be on Timber Harvest Management Ordinance #357 due to it allowing clear cutting. Bob Simpson noted that the topic was debated in many meetings. Terry Kleintop noted that it was left open ended for personal use of wood on resident's properties. The State of PA allows clear cutting and we did not want to have regulations that were stricter than the State. After a discussion by the EAC members the following was noted:

- Provisions are needed in order to make sure that Erosion and Sedimentation plans are submitted when required.
- It was noted that the regulations for violations should be considered for revision.
- The Ordinances must be enforced. Plainfield Township has had a timber harvesting Ordinance for over 25 years

There are two examples of clear cutting that have taken place within the Township in 2015. The Curcio property on 8th Street and the Perin property on Route #512. Both of the cuttings appear to be compliant with the current ordinance.

Tom Petrucci will draft revisions to Ordinance #357 and will submit the information back to the EAC for review.

NEW BUSINESS

2016 Project Goals

Not addressed

2015 EAC Year End Report

The EAC members have not reviewed it yet. Robin Dingle noted the Little Bushkill Stream information needed updating. Jane Mellert will email a revised version of the report.

Terry Kleintop made a motion to have the year-end report acted on at the February meeting. Robin Dingle seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

GRANTS

2016 Lehigh Valley Greenways Mini-Grant due February 4, 2016- Rain Garden at the Plainfield Township Municipal Building

Tom Petrucci noted that a Supervisor mentioned there should be a concerted effort to take care of the landscaping at the municipal building.

Tom Petrucci explained his idea to remove the stones and bushes (some the bushes are diseased) around the Plainfield Township Municipal building and replace them with rain gardens consisting of native plants and shrubs/trees.

The Board of Supervisors would need to take action on providing the 50% match to this project at the January 13th meeting. The maximum grant amount is \$10,000.00 with a \$10,000.00 match required through a combination of cash and in-kind labor.

Tom Petrucci requested the EAC support the educational component of the grant requirement. The educational element of the grant is highly recommended. He is also looking for some technical guidance. Bruce Rabenold noted that Tom should contact Kathy Romano for information.

Bob Simpson made a motion to support the conceptual idea of a rain garden and native planting project at the municipal building provided that there are the appropriate procedures and maintenance guidelines established and that he is able to obtain the grant. Don Moore seconded the motion. The vote passed by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Bruce Rabenold made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:51 pm. Robin Dingle seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Mellert, Secretary
Plainfield Township EAC

1st draft – January 12, 2016 jam