

**Plainfield Township
Environmental Advisory Council Meeting
March 7, 2016**

The regular monthly meeting of the Plainfield Township Environmental Advisory Council was held on Monday, March 7, 2016 at 7:00 pm at the Plainfield Township Municipal Building, 6292 Sullivan Trail, Nazareth, PA 18064.

Those in attendance were:

Terry Kleintop, EAC Chairman	Robert Cornman – Vice Chairman
Robin Dingle – EAC Member (absent)	Don Moore – EAC Member arrived at 7:09 pm
Bruce Rabenold – EAC Member	Robert Simpson – EAC Member arrived at 7:06 pm
Jane Mellert, EAC Secretary and Member	Tom Petrucci – Plainfield Twp. Manager

Terry Kleintop called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

The pledge of allegiance was performed.

MINUTES

Chairman Terry Kleintop asked for a motion to approve the February 8, 2016 minutes.

Motion-February 8, 2016 Minutes – A motion was made by Bob Cornman and seconded by Bruce Rabenold to approve the February 8, 2016 minutes. The motion carried by a vote of 3 Yes and 1 Abstention. Terry Kleintop abstained due to not being in attendance at the February 8th meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

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

- Tom Petrucci met with Ron Yablonsky at the DEP office regarding the changes to the 2014 Growing Greener Grant. The grant revisions were submitted to the DEP. Ron was OK with the improvements that would be done on the farms. If the grant needs to be revised it will be OK if there is justification for the revisions. The language was changed and noted that an environmental consultant is to be determined.
- A letter of commitment was previously received from Wind Gap regarding their participation and contribution for water sampling.
- Robin Dingle and Tom Petrucci revised the RFP to hire an environmental consultant. Permit information is included, the Evaluation Criteria was revised. The requirement to utilize Benchmark for the water sampling tests was removed. The following process is proposed.
- The Stuber and Achenbach properties are included in the grant for fencing and improvements. The Taylor’s are not interested at this time.

- The EAC reviewed the content of the RFP and discussed the following:
 - How to streamline the interview process for the environmental consultant applicants. It was noted that the applicants should take the time to review the existing documents from the prior studies.
 - Sampling locations
 - Should the budget or a ballpark amount be included in the RFP?
 - It was noted the fencing, stone, etc. for the cattle crossings will be expensive.
 - The target date to issue the RFP is March 16, 2016
 - Penn Bid will be utilized for the advertising of the RFP
 - The proposals will be due on April 15, 2016
 - Interviews will be held the week of April 25, 2016
 - Projected contract award May, 2016
 - Meeting #1 with the Board of Supervisors and EAC – May 26, 2016
 - Meeting #2 with the Board of Supervisors and EAC – August 1, 2016
 - Meeting #3 Board of Supervisors and EAC to review and compile all comments – September 22, 2016
- The draft RFP will be reviewed by the Supervisors at the March 9, 2016 Board meeting.

Little Bushkill Creek Study RFP – A motion was made by Bob Cornman and seconded by Don Moore to recommend the RFP document to the Board of Supervisors for approval and advertising. The RFP is to hire an Environmental Consultant for the continuance of the study of the Little Bushkill Creek. Advertising is to be in place by March 16, 2016. Vote 6-0

2016 Growing Greener Grants- The application process for the grant will not open until the Pennsylvania State Budget is approved.

Northampton County Conservation Winter Newsletter – Terry Kleintop mentioned a workshop on manure management planning which are typically held annually. The newsletter notes for more information, contact Agricultural Technician, Nate Pritchard.

2016 Northampton County Farmland Preservation Applicants

No new information at this time.

Jane Mellert spoke to Maria Bentzoni on February 26th at the Renew LV “Save It or Pave It” discussion on farmland preservation. Maria will send an update as new information becomes available.

EIT Fund Collection for Open Space

The Board of Supervisors authorized the study of the EIT Funding for Open Space preservation. Tom Petrucci reviewed the process to repeal the collection of the EIT collection. A couple of the members of the Board of Supervisors requested the information. In order to place a question on the ballot to repeal the tax it must be applied for thirteen Tuesdays prior to the election. When the EIT referendum was passed in 2007 several of the current provisions, such as, the partnership program, ACT #13 of 2013 were not in place. After the EIT referendum passed the Township then developed the Open Space Plan which is for more than just farmland preservation.

Township Manager Tom Petrucci emailed the following documents to the EAC members for their review:

- Plainfield Township Open Space Plan adopted March 10, 2010
- Lehigh Valley Return on Environment (LVPC, 2014)
- Pennsylvania Act 115 of 2013
- Ordinance #332 Imposing An Additional .25% Earned Income Tax for Open Space Funding adopted December 26, 2007
- Heritage Conservancy - Leaders in the Field Report 2009
- Heritage Conservancy – Leaders in the Field Report Update 2014
- Pennsylvania Act #143 Agricultural Security District – List of Parcels in Plainfield Township
- Plainfield Township List of Preserved Farmland

Jane Mellert and Bruce Rabenold attended the Renew Lehigh Valley presentation “Save It or Pave It” on Friday, February 26th. The programs were on farmland preservation. Jane Mellert requested the three power point presentations that were shown at the event. Joyce Marin from Renew LV offered to attend a meeting with a presentation. Maria Bentzoni will let the EAC know if the power point that she presented can be sent to the Township.

The EAC Members noted that the EIT study is involved and will take longer than a month or two. It cannot effectively be completed by May of 2016. The Board should be looking at 2017 instead of the 2016 election. A reasonable study cannot be done within the next two months. Realistically the EAC should have until December.

Because of the way the Northampton County is now handling the Farmland Preservation program funding, the Township needs to consider continuing the EIT collection in order to continue with farmland preservation. One of the questions that the Supervisors are asking is what the burden on the residents of Plainfield Township. The real estate taxes on the preserved parcels are being frozen in the year the property is preserved. It was noted that the Act 4 millage freeze can be revised and then the Township would not lose revenue from the tax. The members would like to invite the Board members to the EAC meeting in order to ask questions as to why they are considering repealing the EIT collection.

The EAC voted to send a letter to the Board of Supervisors requesting the following:

Motion - Earned Income Tax Collection for Open Space Preservation – A motion was made by Bob Cornman and seconded by Don Moore to send a letter to the Board of Supervisors requesting a meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the future of EIT collections and the Open Space Preservation program. The following dates were suggested for the meeting: March 24th Board of Supervisors Workshop or the April 4th EAC meeting. Vote 6-0

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

- Tom Petrucci is working on draft revisions to Ordinance #357 and will submit the information back to the EAC for review.
- **The revisions for the ordinance will be submitted to the EAC for the April 2016 meeting.**

Official Map – Future agenda item

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion for Meeting Adjournment – A motion was made by Bob Simpson and seconded by Bob Cornman to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. Vote 6-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Mellert, Secretary
Plainfield Township EAC