

**Plainfield Township
Environmental Advisory Council Meeting
April 4, 2016**

The regular monthly meeting of the Plainfield Township Environmental Advisory Council was held on Monday, April 4, 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 arrived at 7:08 pm	Robert Cornman – Vice Chairman
Robin Dingle – EAC Member absent	Don Moore – EAC Member arrived at 7:07 pm
Bruce Rabenold – EAC Member	Robert Simpson – EAC Member
Jane Mellert, EAC Secretary and Member	Tom Petrucci – Plainfield Twp. Manager

Also in attendance – Joyce Lambert

Terry Kleintop called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm.

The pledge of allegiance was performed.

MINUTES

Chairman Terry Kleintop asked for a motion to approve the March 7, 2016 minutes.

Motion-March 7, 2016 Minutes – A motion was made by Bob Cornman and seconded by Bob Simpson to approve the March 7, 2016 minutes. The motion carried by a vote of **6 Yes**.

OLD BUSINESS

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

- The draft RFP was approved for advertising at the March 9, 2016 Board of Supervisors meeting.
- The EAC reviewed the content of the RFP and discussed the following:

Water Testing

- A water sample testing rate sheet was received from MEA, Inc. MEA does subcontract some of the work to QC Laboratories located in Wind Gap. The labs are DEP certified.
- Terry Kleintop made a call to Benchmark. The samples are now taken to two other locations for testing. The testing is still done within their own company. The lab was fined in the past. A water sample testing rate sheet will be requested from Benchmark.

RFP – Little Bushkill Creek Study

- The target date of March 16, 2016 to issue the RFP was met and the RFP was advertised on Penn Bid
- The proposals will be due on April 15, 2016
- Tom Petrucci reported that Penn Bid goes out to all environmental firms. To date there were 20 inquires. Terry Kleintop noted he was contacted by one of the firms and asked some questions. Terry responded that this is a substantial grant.
- A tentative date of April 27th RFP was set to review and interview the applicants. The date will be advertised.
- The projected contract award will be in May, 2016 if everything falls into place.
- 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
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2016 Northampton County Farmland Preservation Applicants

The Township has not received the rankings for the farmland submitted for 2016. The Farmland Preservation Board will be meeting on April 5, 2016. Maria will send an update as new information becomes available.

EIT Fund Collection for Open Space Study

Terry Kleintop asked Joyce Lambert if the Board of Supervisors plans on putting the question on the ballot in 2017. Joyce responded that they do want to put it on the ballot.

The Board of Supervisors met with the EAC at the March 24, 2016 Workshop meeting. The Board will address the EAC's request to extend the deadline for the study of the EIT Funding for Open Space preservation until the end of 2016. Tom Petrucci placed this matter on the April 13th Board meeting agenda.

Don Moore suggested taking inventory, and looking at the Zoning to see if revisions are necessary.

Information was stored on the EAC computer. The EAC computer is currently being updated.

Bob Simpson suggested the EAC members review all of the documents that were handed out at the March EAC meeting. This will enable everyone to discuss the contents at the May meeting. All EAC members should write down what information needs to be accumulated and then tasks will be assigned. The study done by the student (Andrew O'Brien in 2013) at Lafayette College should be included in the review.

Bruce Rabenold suggested having additional information on the tax revenue changes when land is preserved. Terry Kleintop noted farms can be preserved without the tax millage being frozen. The school district, County and Township all currently freeze the tax on the preserved parcels at the time of preservation. The excluded area is not included in the tax freeze. Bob Cornman wants the amount of revenue lost from the land that has been preserved for the study.

Terry wants to see what the tax coming from the homestead (excluded area) and what was the tax being collected on the preserved remaining land in comparison to the amount that would be paid under the current tax millage.

Lafayette College Professor John Wilson assisted with the 2013 Economics of Farmland Preservation in Plainfield Township that was compiled by Andrew O'Brien. Northampton County Farmland Preservation Administrator, Maria Bentzoni, was interested in the results shown in the report.

It was noted that status reports need to be given to the Board of Supervisors on an ongoing basis. At the next EAC meeting the members will assign tasks with deadlines.

The study should include some of the following information:

Tax Ramifications of land being preserved

Should Real Estate Taxes continue to be frozen?

Benefits of Preserving Farmland

How farms are ranked

How soils are ranked

Grand Central Sanitary Landfill Air Quality Permit – Revised Air Quality Permit

Township Manager Tom Petrucci sent the air quality permit packet to the Landfill Inspector for his review and comment. The Township received a letter regarding the permit on March 10th. The public comment period is for 30 days. The Township has received complaints regarding odors in the last few months. The odors were investigated and the odors were coming from various sources including some of the trucks and the drilling of new methane wells. The open wells increased the odor into the atmosphere.

The landfill has another 90 feet in height to go.

Terry noted that when the last expansion was approved the paperwork showed that Plainfield Township was going to get \$250,000; however, the municipality did not receive the benefit that was noted.

Tom suggested the Landfill Inspector will be contacted to inquire about any comments and Tom will compile a response to the permit revision.

Grand Central is holding an Earth Day event on April 30th.

Ordinance #357 Tree Protection and Timber Harvest Management

- **The revisions for the draft ordinance #357 were emailed to the EAC members for review.**
- Reasons for the revisions include inconsistent language, expanding the buffer along the recreation trail, include clearances with the permitting. List the State requirements and make part of the application.
- The State Law allows timber harvesting under the Municipalities Planning Code
- The Township will require the submission of a map
- The \$500 value of the timber products (wholesale) removed that is noted with the revision, will need to be studied and re-evaluated
- Clean up after tree removal would be required
- 11. Violations c. may need to be expanded to explain what causes immediate harm to the environment

Ordinance #342 Maintenance and Preservation of Riparian Buffers and Open Space

The Ordinance will be reviewed at a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Water Well Testing

Jane Mellert reported that the Township website has information on regarding water wells and septic maintenance. Information has also been included in the Township newsletter in the past. In light of the various news reports on contaminated water sources it is important to continue to advise residents that their wells should be tested on a regular basis. Well water testing can be expensive and may be up to \$500 for a full set of tests. If a problem is evident then measures, such as a whole house filtration may need to be installed. Filtration systems can be costly. Low to moderate income residents may need assistance with testing and filtration system costs. Grant opportunities from the EPA, DEP, and USDA will be researched. Tom provided information regarding the current low to moderate income area in Plainfield Township other areas would be to have surveys done in order to determine eligibility.

An article will be written for the website and residents will be informed that water test kits are available at various home centers.

The Conservation Fund Letter Dated March 28, 2016

The Conservation Fund is applying for a DCNR grant for the purchase of 4,600 acres in Monroe and Northampton Counties in which 600 acres are located in Plainfield Township. The Conservation Fund wants to purchase the land using a combination of private, local and federal funding, and ultimately transfer the property to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be managed as part of the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge. They are requesting a letter of support from Plainfield Township.

Motion - The Conservation Fund Grant Application - A motion was made by Don Moore and seconded by Bob Simpson to approve a letter of support for the Conservation Funds application for a DCNR grant in order to purchase land for preservation. The motion carried by a vote of 6 Yes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion for Meeting Adjournment – A motion was made by Bob Cornman and seconded by Don Moore to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 pm. Vote 6-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Mellert, Secretary
Plainfield Township EAC