

**Plainfield Township
Environmental Advisory Council Meeting
January 24, 2017**

The Plainfield Township Environmental Advisory Council meeting was held on Tuesday, January 24, 2017, 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 – EAC Vice Chairman
Robin Dingle – EAC Member	Don Moore – EAC Member
Bruce Rabenold – EAC Member	Robert Simpson – EAC Member - absent
Jane Mellert, EAC Secretary and Member	Tom Petrucci – Plainfield Twp. Manager

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

The pledge of allegiance was performed.

Also in attendance: Dottie Petrilak

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – January 9, 2017 minutes

Motion – January 9, 2017 Minutes - A motion was made by Bob Cornman and seconded by Bruce Rabenold to approve the January 9, 2017 minutes. **Vote: 6 Yes**

OLD BUSINESS

PA DEP Growing Greener Plus Grant – Little Bushkill Creek

Jason Smith, PWS at Hanover Engineering met with Robin Dingle, Tom Petrucci, and Terry Kleintop on to review the study information and put together a plan for 2017. In the past the draft reviews were submitted to the Township prior to the reports being submitted to the EAC. At the January 9, 2017 EAC meeting the D. Project Schedule as revised on 12/29/2016 was handed out for review. The following information was reported:

- Terry Kleintop reported that because of the test results a third property will be looked at for restoration measures. The property owner will need to be contacted to ask them for a meeting to discuss the stream test data. Tom Petrucci noted that the third property (Taylor) may be able to be added to the program. This could change the scope of the grant.
- Land owner agreements are needed prior to proceeding.
- The test results were similar to other years. When compared to other tributaries the results are high over all.
- Robin Dingle reported that a report will also be compiled with a letter for Wind Gap. Wind Gap only has one year of sampling results. The recommendations from the meeting are limited at this point. Wind Gap needs to continue to get baseline information compiled. The report is preliminary with locations, results, and data. A copy of the report will be sent to the Wind Gap Municipal Authority. The information can be utilized to apply for grants.

- It was noted it will take a long time for Wind Gap to resolve the problems with grants.
- Jason Smith will have another meeting with Robin Dingle, Terry Kleintop and Tom Petrucci the second week of February.

Northampton County Farmland Preservation Application Process

- Jane Mellert spoke with Maria Bentzoni the Northampton County Farmland Administrator regarding the application process and submission dates. Maria noted that the submission dates are in place due to only having access to one certified appraiser in the area, the farm inspection schedules, and to move the process along so that property owners are not waiting too long to hear if their property qualifies for the program.
- Several EAC Members voiced that they still believe that the application period should be changed in order to allow the County Council and County Executive review time for the Northampton County Budget process. The Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors will review this matter at the January 26, 2017 Board meeting.

Northampton County Farmland Preservation – County/Municipal Partnership Program

- On January 11, 2017 the Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors voted to approve a Resolution to commit Earned Income Tax funds for the 2017 PA State match program in the amount of \$166,666.67 contingent upon the County agreeing that the full match amount received from the State is allocated to the Township.
- The Northampton County Farmland Preservation Board will hold a special meeting this week in order to review the commitments received from Moore Township, Upper Mount Bethel Township and Plainfield Township.

Northampton County Farmland Preservation Update

- The Township has not received a list of the 2016 Farmland Preservation applicants or an update for the farms that will close in 2017.
- The Greggo farm parcels closed last week.

Plainfield Township Earned Income Tax Collection for Open Space Study - Information regarding the study is due to the Board of Supervisors no later than the February 22, 2017 EAC meeting.

The EIT for tax collection study report must be finalized at the February 22nd EAC meeting and presented to the Board for the February 23rd Board of Supervisors Workshop.

The following reports were reviewed:

- Northampton County Revenue Appeals Board – Real Estate Assessment Corrections on Agricultural Easement/Farmland Preservation Parcels
 - Review of data from Kelli Orlando the Northampton County Deputy Assessment Manager
 - Review of data compiled by Tom Petrucci the Plainfield Township Manager after a discussion with Kelli Orlando regarding the corrections. In 2015 the County undertook a project to separate Act 4 millage freeze parcels on preserved farmland/agricultural easement parcels. Entry errors occurred at that time. The errors are now being corrected.

- Three real estate tax bill corrections were sent from Northampton County to the Plainfield Township tax collector for Kroboth, Heimer and Achenbach.
- We do not know if all of the land owners that had questions regarding their assessments have had their property tax bills reviewed for potential errors.
- Matt Glennon had a different issue. The land under his house was being taxed at the regular rate for a parcel of land that is not under Act#319
- The tax impacts of Act#319 will be reviewed. .
- The EAC previously requested the Board review Act #319 and send a letter to Northampton County. The EAC recommends that the Board send a letter to the County that the Township respectfully requests the County to review all of the Plainfield Township properties in Act #319.
- Don Moore noted that we have working maps. The maps are not ready for presentation on February 22nd.
- At the February 6, 2017 EAC meeting the focus will be on putting a draft report together with the maps, spreadsheets, and interviews. The written report along with a presentation will be given to the Board of Supervisors at the February 23, 2017 Workshop meeting.

Terry Kleintop believes from his review that Real Estate taxes are not being lost from Farmland Preservation.

Special reduced assessments are given to the landowners under Act #319 Clean and Green. Act #4 freezes the millage rate at the time that land is preserved.

2016 EAC Year End Report

- Jane Mellert submitted the draft 2016 EAC Year End Report at the December 20, 2016 meeting. Jane asked if there were any changes or revisions. Tom Petrucci gave Jane the minor changes regarding the PA DEP Growing Greener Plus Grant

2016 EAC Year End Report Approval - Motion Bob Cornman to approve the 2016 Year End Report with the correction made by Tom Petrucci. The motion was seconded by Robin Dingle. **Vote: 6 Yes**

NEW BUSINESS

Appalachian Trail Conservancy – Natural Lands Trust

- January 2, 2012 Zoning and SALDO Assessments - The information will be reviewed at a future meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Healthy Farms, Healthy Animals, Healthy Water: Planning for Sustainability 2 Day Workshop - February 4th and 18th 8:30 am to 4:00 pm Terry Kleintop would like the flyers to go out to the property owners. Jane Mellert noted that she had the flyer posted on the Plainfield Township website.

2017 Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference – Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at the Lehigh University STEPS Building

GRANTS AVAILABLE

DCNR Riparian Forest Buffer Grant Program

PUBLIC COMMENT

Township resident Dottie Petrilak attended the meeting. She lives on Briar Road and is very concerned about Synagro. Synagro has not resubmitted at this point or submitted any correspondence. The Township is waiting to hear from the applicant. The Planning Commission meeting will be advertised when the plan is submitted for review.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion - Meeting Adjournment – A motion was made by Bob Cornman and seconded by Don Moore to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 pm. **Vote: 6 Yes**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Mellert, Secretary
Plainfield Township EAC