

**Salisbury Township
Environmental Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2013**

A Public Meeting was held on the above date at the Salisbury Township Municipal Building located at 2900 South Pike Avenue, Allentown, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. The meeting was brought to order at 7:00 P.M. Committee members in attendance: Kreg Ulery, Jane Benning, Mary Ann Stinner, Joseph Hebelka Planning Commission Representative, Commissioner Joanne Ackerman and Cynthia Sopka, Secretary to the EAC and Randy Soriano Township Manager. Task Force member: Robert Agonis. Committee members not present (excused) Glenn Miller and Sandra Thomas.

Ms. Sopka called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Ms. Sopka announced that all sessions of the Salisbury Township Environmental Advisory Council regular meetings are electronically recorded as required by the By-laws and for the purpose of taking the Minutes.

- **Note:** The electronic recording of the EAC meeting was complicated due to the lack of electronic digital recording and skipping of the cassette tape recording. Therefore, not all decisions were captured in totality.

Minutes – 07/17/13

Motion was made by Mrs. Stinner, seconded by Mrs. Benning, to approve the July 17, 2013 Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes as amended. All in favor.

Report of officers and committees (including BOC, PC, Manager and /or Planning/Zoning:

Ms. Sopka highlighted the Zoning, Planning and Board of Commissioners Meetings for the month.

Old Business

None

New Business

Planning for the Earth Fair Celebration scheduled for 2014.

The **Earth Day Celebration** that took place at Lindberg Park on May 18th was discussed and evaluated. A few ideas were as follows:

- Get the event closer to the April 22, 2014 Earth Day.
- Consider calling it an Earth Fair Celebration.
- Coordinate with the local fire department for fire safety.
- Better publicity.
- More Signage or Banners printed up and post a few weeks prior to event.
- Reach out to the school districts.
- Believed it was well organized event.
- Would like to see more children attend the event as there were many activities and games.

- When event is publicized to put in the time of each presentation.
- Coordinate with a bicycle shop to donate their time, teach kids safety measures and how to take care of their bike properly. Maybe to try and find a sponsor for bike helmets for the kids that attends. If we can combine this with the event, it would be a better draw for families to come together.
- Bring something and take something table.
- Paper shredding.
- Battery collection.

Ms. Sopka stated that Mr. Agonis requested the consideration of **shade/street trees** being removed throughout the Township without necessary replanting be added to the agenda. The recommendation presented to the EAC would be to involve respective members and volunteers in a project of identifying where trees are missing and advocate for replacement.

The advocacy of the EAC would be to provide property owners with suggested/recommended replacement varieties of trees that correspond to those included in the new proposed zoning ordinance, to do additional research regarding situations where underground utilities limit or prohibit tree replacement, and to be able to continue to generally promote residential tree planting, perhaps coupled with other groups to help distribute or plant trees.

It would be on a case-by-case basis to locate trees in areas that may provide grant relief of having to replant. Ms. Sopka believe that when individuals decide to try to replace trees and they do the PA one call they find out there is either gas lines, sewer lines, cable lines or water lines obstructing where they want to plant.

WREN provides street tree grants and tree vitalization grants.

Visitation of the Goals and Objectives referenced in the Salisbury Township EAC annual 2013 report.

Ms. Sopka recommended that the EAC established communication with the Salisbury Township School District to discuss potential environmental awareness projects on school property and/or involving students. An aspect from this project is to coordinate improvements to Trout Creek Stream, a suggestion afforded from the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) to continue environmental awareness efforts to educate township residents. This is another way to raise the profile of Salisbury Township as a critical ecosystem that contributes to the well-being of the Valley related to wildlife habitat, air quality, water quality, and our watershed.

Ms. Sopka stated that in consideration of these goals we could work on initiatives toward attaining these goals which would require monetary resources and grant writing. Therefore she invited, Mr. Joe Hoffman, a grant writer who volunteered to provide us additional guidance regarding potential future grant opportunities. Mr. Hoffman stated that he would donate his time through community service by providing Salisbury Township EAC with grant writing.

Mr. Hoffman stated there are WREN grants for small projects if you already know a priority area and/or planting grants.

Consider trying to secure a planning grant and hire a forester consulted to do inventory of the township as a whole and pick priority places.

There are some grants for the EAC as an educating body, teaching classes, etc.

Ms. Sopka stated that she would contact the school district superintendent and have him designate a point person from the school district to work with the EAC in preparation if a grant becomes available for the schools to get involved with environmental education. We could start formulating a concept and gradually get additional schools involved like the Swain School or St. Thomas More.

Mrs. Stinner stated that a science teacher at St. Thomas More was interested in working with the EAC. She stated that there is no stream near the school but would like to do an outdoor area or open space project such as a rain garden, etc.

Commissioner Ackerman inquired if the schools could part take in Lindberg Park site plan and recommended getting the children involved in community service. They could be proactive and help create habitats for bats and birds, etc. The children could create birdhouses or bat boxes and have them strategically placed in the parks. Mr. Soriano stated that he believes there is an education component in some aspect of the Lindberg Master Site Plan.

In addition, the NRI provided various recommendations to pursue such as the removal of invasive plants and replacements of native plants, education to all forest landowners regarding the development of a Forest Stewardship Plan through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR), to work with power companies and landowners to remove invasive plants and create open meadow habitat along power line easements, educate stream side property owners regarding the value of riparian buffer planting and restoration and resources available for existing or installation of healthy riparian buffers, create a mailer targeted to landowner that are likely to have properties with vernal pools and allow them to list them with the township for future protection, education on composting, a wide storm water retrofit plan to examine and treat uncontrolled runoff, carry out a stream-wide Japanese knotweed control program, develop plans for a stream bank stabilization projects and the planting of native riparian buffers on all the stream segments that rate as “fair” or “poor” in the NRI.

PPL tree cutting that took place over this past year was discussed. Ms. Sopka stated that she contacted PPL and inquired why the Township was not advised of their process for the tree cutting and herbicide spraying. People are very concerned about their wells/drinking water. She also inquired if PPL would set up a dialogue with municipalities and other persons interested in the PPL vegetation management plan and any other alternatives that would use less herbicides but work toward a sustainable program. She stated that when she contacted PPL for this information she was provided a Questions and Answer sheet, nothing more. Ms. Sopka did the research herself to find out what PPL’s process consists of.

Additional Information

Public Comments

None

Agenda for Next Meeting

Earth Day Event

Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Benning, seconded by Mrs. Stinner, the meeting was adjourned. All in favor.