

Minutes of Lower Providence Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) Meeting, March 21, 2022

The meeting began a few minutes after 6:00 PM.

Prior to review of the Agenda, Chair Erin McCool announced that Patrick Duffy had submitted his resignation from the EAC. Chair McCool thanked Mr. Duffy for his service in setting up and Chairing the EAC in the previous year with the general assent of the other members. Township Manager E.J. Mentry advised that he will discuss solicitation for and appointment of a new EAC member with the Board of Supervisors.

Chair Erin McCool and members Joseph Lulis, Douglas White, John Zollers, and Irene Bijou were in attendance. Member Charlie Wang was absent.

1. Approval of Minutes

Douglas White made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2022 EAC meeting. Joseph Lulis second the motion, and the motion passed 4-0.

2. Old Business

- a. Douglas White made a motion to approve Madison Roeger as a student member of the EAC, which was seconded by John Zollers. Motion passed 4-0.
- b. Chair Erin McCool summarized the proposed sub-committees as discussed and revised at previous meetings, which consist of:
 1. Stormwater / MS4
 2. Green Energy
 3. Built Environment
 4. Education and Outreach

John Zollers asked which category would include sidewalks, bike trails and public transit. After some discussion these were agreed to belong under Built Environment.

Douglas White volunteered to lead the Green Energy sub-committee and recommended that the EAC seek out associate members from the community at-large.

Madison Roeger offered to speak with Methacton High School club leaders to seek community input and offered to assist with the Education and Outreach sub-committee.

John Zollers offered to be involved in both the Stormwater / MS4 and Built Environment sub-committees. Joseph Lulis offered to be involved in the Built Environment sub-committee as well, and after some discussion Mr. Lulis and Mr. Zollers were appointed co-leads.

Douglas White made a motion to approved the sub-committee list, seconded by John Zollers, and the motion carried 4-0.

- c. Joseph Lulis provided an update on the Comprehensive Plan, which is in the process of discussing planning approaches, data analysis, and assigning focus areas. Mr. Lulis indicated there would be a public engagement event in the first half of May.

John Zollers asked if that would be the time to bring up questions about walkability of the Ridge Pike corridor, to which Mr. Lulis replied in the affirmative. Mr. Lulis also agreed to

send draft information from the Comprehensive Plan to members Irene Bijou, Charlie Wang, and Madison Roeger who had not previously received this material.

- d. John Zollers noted his intention to meet with Township Manager E.J. Mentry later this week to discuss how Township crews approach winter storm roadway treatments in preparation for further plans to reduce salt use.
- e. Chair Erin McCool asked if any of the other members wished to take ownership of the reusable bag initiative, formerly headed by Patrick Duffy. Madison Roeger offered to look into past efforts to distribute reusable bags and suggest a path forward.
- f. Chair Erin McCool asked if any of the other members wished to take ownership of the Township Sustainability Awards program formerly headed by Patrick Duffy. Joseph Lulis volunteered to push this forward and reach out to Mr. Duffy for the materials that had already been prepared.
- g. The EAC discussed the Communication Plan and reached a number of conclusions:
 - 1. Chair McCool will write an introductory article on the EAC to be published in the summer edition of the Township newsletter, while Joseph Lulis will write a second article on home energy efficiency for the summer newsletter. John Zollers will write an article for the fall newsletter about impacts of deicing salt use.
 - 2. Chair McCool asked the other members to contribute content to the EAC's social media postings. John Zollers offered to provide timely updates on local phenological happenings, such as invasive species in bloom, etc.
 - 3. There was considerable discussion of setting up and feeding an EAC Instagram account to go along with Facebook and Twitter accounts. This effort to be spearheaded by Madison Roeger and Irene Bijou. Ms. Roeger suggested this could be particularly useful for finding student and parent volunteers for events.
- h. Chair McCool updated the EAC on Earth Day Planning, summarized a number of events the EAC can take part in.
 - 1. Mill Grove is planning an earth day event from 10-3 April 23. The EAC was invited to set up a table and partake in various events (invasive species walk, a canoe trip, etc).
 - 2. The EAC discussed supporting cleanup of a property the Township is in the process of acquiring through FEMA, to be revisited at the April EAC meeting and tentatively planned for May 2022.
 - 3. The Ambler EAC is having an event on April 30, and the Lower Providence EAC could potentially set up a table. Douglas White will be partaking in the event and will provide transportation.
 - 4. Perkiomen Watershed at Green Lane
 - 5. Madison Roeger suggested posting a daily environmental goal for Township residents in the time preceding Earth Day.
- i. Township Manager E.J. Mentry outlined two approaches to performing a Township energy audit:
 - 1. Essentially an info dump from the utilities. In progress now, as it is straightforward to obtain.
 - 2. Hire a consultant to go through the data. This is more involved and comes with a cost. Mr. Mentry will explore the options further, and Douglas White offered to assist.

- j. Chair McCool asked if there were any updates to the EAC Workplan and noted the EAC had discussion reviewed the workplan periodically during the year. As the Workplan had been thoroughly discussed in recent meetings, no updates were offered.

3. New Business

Jean Akers (member of the Parks and Recreation Board and Open Space Committee) provided an overview of the recently adopted Township Open Space Plan. In addition to this presentation, Ms. Akers emphasized the following opportunities for EAC involvement with implementing the plan:

1. Development of an Official Map identifying and documenting areas of potential land preservation, areas of interest, connections, etc. This will be helpful when evaluating the potential impact of other proposed projects on Township plans.
2. Developing detailed plans and identifying funding for improvements to tree canopy, stormwater management and landscaping in parks, preserving open land, and creating connections (sidewalks, trails, etc) between open spaces.
3. Regular meetings between EAC and Parks & Recreation Board members, particularly the respective chairs Erin McCool and Amy Johnston Smith.
4. Douglas White suggested establishing a heritage tree program to preserve and protect old and valuable trees on private property and reiterated past discussions regarding EAC review of development plans.

4. Comments and Other Business

- a. Chair McCool reminded the EAC members to send comments on the draft Comprehensive Plan to Joseph Lulis.
- b. Chair McCool reminded the EAC members to provide signed Ethics Policy Forms to Township Manager E.J. Mentry if they have not already done so.
- c. Chair McCool discussed creation of a volunteer liability waiver form for events where volunteers are needed. John Zollers noted that such a form exists on file with the Parks and Recreation Department, and has been used for several years on the Eagleville Park Restoration project. Two versions of the form exist; one for minors and one for adults.

5. Courtesy of the Floor

No public comments were offered.

6. Adjournment

Joseph Lulis made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Douglas White. Motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:15 PM.