

Minutes of Lower Providence Environmental Advisory Council Meeting – October 17, 2022

The meeting began at 7:06 PM. Council members Erin McCool, Amber Minnick, Douglas White, John Zollers, and Sameeksha Panda were present, along with Township Supervisor Gary Neights.

1. Approval of Minutes. The minutes from the September 2022 meeting were approved 4-0, Ms. Minnick making the motion for approval and Mr. White seconding. Resident Laura Winslow (?) noted that Jessica Gabell's name is misspelled on the agenda.

2. Old Business

a) Subcommittee Reports

Education / Communication

1. No update on presentation regarding proposed plastic bag ordinance was available. Mr. Zollers presented a reusable plastic bag handed out by a local drug store along with some observations potential drawbacks of the approach. Ms. Panda suggested distribution of free samples of biodegradable bags to businesses as an alternative approach.
2. Ms. McCool noted DEP grants are available through December 9.
3. The sustainability awards will be pushed back with a target of presenting them for Earth Day. Ms. Panda proposed a local contest to achieve a sustainability goal on a community basis, including a variety of proposals at local schools (possibly complicated by local school district crossing municipal borders).

Stormwater

Ms. McCool testified at a watershed policy meeting hosted by state representative Joseph Webster regarding flood conditions on the Perkiomen Creek. Ms. Winslow asked about ideas for use of federal funding to ameliorate flooding. Mr. Neights planned to request more information about the conditions of the funding from Township staff.

Built Infrastructure / Ecological Restoration

Mr. Neights made several comments:

- Three preliminary development plans will be presented at the next Board of Supervisors' meeting on Thursday.
- The proposed development on Church Road will include a link to existing sidewalks at Church Road and Walker Lane.
- Shannondell will construct a portion of the 9/11 trail along Egypt Road
- It may be possible to obtain an electric vehicle "supercharger" for the Township with the help of PECO.

Ms. Minnick is planning to meet with Jean Akers of the Parks & Recreation Board to discuss tree-planting plans

Ms. Winslow noted that a list of properties to be acquired by FEMA can be obtained from the office of State Representative Joseph Webster and that the Upper Providence EAC has been involved in deciding next steps on FEMA properties. Further discussion followed, including a comment from Mr. Zollers that the acquired properties should have an ecological restoration plan prepared. Ms. McCool suggested there may be a role for the Natural Lands Trust in managing the properties, and a possible trail was discussed.

Green Energy

Mr. White proposed an update to the Township's previous sustainability resolution, including funding, a sustainability manager, and more concrete goals.

There was some discussion about opportunities posed by the Township campus update currently under discussion around sustainability, resiliency, and emergency shelter.

Mr. White commented on a proposal to install Level 3 vehicle chargers every 50 miles along Route 422. Mr. Neights proposed that the PECO substation at Trooper Road would be a good place for a fast charger, followed by other prominent locations in the Township. Julia Nakhleh suggested consideration of charging locations for residents of Township apartment complexes.

Ms. Minnick provided an update on her research into tabletop solar chargers, particularly the Sunvolt Sprint, already purchased by West Norriton and Lower Gwynedd townships. With installation the cost for one unit is \$3,250 plus shipping. Ms. Winslow noted this would be useful for the MARA baseball fields, and that organizations like Mascaro and Audubon Land may have interest in contributing towards the costs.

b. Comprehensive Plan Update

Tabled due to the absence of Mr. Lulis

3. New Business.

- a. Ms. McCool reminded the EAC to review and update the workplan for the next meeting.
- b. Mr White proposed that Lower Providence apply to become an Audubon Bird Town.

4. Comments and Other Business. Mr. Zollers commented on the proposed demolition of Audubon School and noted that it would be a shame to see the historic schoolhouse at its core be destroyed. Mr. Neights provided a brief summary of the Township's efforts to lease the school and why they have not been successful to date.

5. Courtesy of the Floor. Ms. Winslow noted her attendance at the EPA information session on the Commodore Business Machines Superfund Site and additional work to be performed there to further cleanup from past spill adjacent to the present cleanup area.

6. Adjournment. Mr. Zollers made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. White, which passed 4-0.