

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Notes by Sam Bryant
February 10th, 2015

I:\Sam\Special Projects Coordinator\E A C\Minutes and Agendas\Minutes 2015\MinutesFebruary2015.doc

In Attendance: EAC Members: Ray Hendrick (Chairman), Don Richardson (Vice Chairman), Jeannine Mitchell, Sean Sablosky, Dr. Tanya Casas; Supervisors: Ken Snyder (Liaison); Township Staff: Sam Bryant (Special Projects Coordinator); Guests: Kathy Salisbury (Penn State Extension Horticulturalist), Cecil Balizet

Welcome to New Member and Guests

Dr. Tanya Casas is the newest EAC member, and with her appointment, the EAC is now at full capacity. Ms. Salisbury and Ms. Balizet were also welcomed to the meeting.

Mr. Hendrick gave a brief overview of the EAC History and Goals presented at the Supervisor's meeting to educate the new member and guests, and thanked the Board of Supervisors for their support of the EAC and its activities.

Minutes Approval

Motion by Mr. Sablosky, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell; unanimous approval.

Group Photo

The group photo was taken at the end of the meeting.

Plan Review

Buckingham Properties

This project plan is located at Ferry Road and Route 313. It calls for a Wawa with a fueling station and a Rite Aid pharmacy.

Mr. Hendrick asked members to review the plan and create a recommendation at the March EAC meeting. Mr. Snyder noted that this plan will not go before the Planning Commission until February 23rd, allowing plenty of time for review.

Mr. Richardson requested to review the plan outside of the meeting, and was given the EAC's copy. He stated he would not be at the March EAC Meeting but would bring the plan and his recommendations to Mr. Bryant before then. He also recommended that Mr. Bryant reach out to EAC Member Mr. Martin Brooks for his thoughts on the plan.

EAC Hour Update

Mr. Hendrick and Mr. Bryant reported that they received some excellent videos from the Bucks County Conservation District that they reviewed. The videos were about soils, stormwater, and dragonflies.

The other EAC members were encouraged to review the videos by contacting Mr. Bryant, who will seek approval from the Township Manager and Telecommunications Advisory Board to add these programs to the Government Access Channel.

EAC Summit

Mr. Bryant obtained some dates in May from Parks and Recreation Director Karen Sweeney that include Friday evenings, May 18, May 19, May 21, and May 25. As none of these dates were acceptable to the

EAC, Mr. Bryant was asked to select a date in early June for the EAC Summit.

Mr. Hendrick is exploring options for a speaker. Ms. Salisbury said that if necessary, she would be willing to speak at the EAC Summit.

Arbor Day 2015

The EAC approved April 25th for Arbor Day. While the Spring Birdwalk is that morning that Mr. Hendrick will lead, other discussed dates had more impactful issues.

Mr. Bryant reported that the TreeVitalize grant received would be used for this project. The Environmental Education Center plantings must be completed by August 2015 and the Bridge Point Park plantings by November 2015.

Mr. Bryant will arrange a meeting with Mr. Richard John, Township Director of Operations, Mr. Dietrich Froelich, Township Parks Superintendent, Mr. Hendrick, and Mrs. Mitchell to plan what plants to order for this day, and where to plant them. Mr. Brooks should also provide input on the siting plan.

Possible volunteer groups for this day would include the Boy Scouts, high school students, PECO volunteers, and Del Val Students. Dr. Casas mentioned that she could recruit Del Val students.

There was a discussion of giving a plant to participating volunteers, but was ultimately decided this event was not appropriate for such a gift, as the number of volunteers was unknown, as well as what type of plant (if any) these volunteers would want.

Central Park Signage Update

Mr. Bryant reported that the ship date for the replacement signage for Central Park is February 11th. The signage is expected to be installed by the end of March.

Electronics Recycling

Mr. Bryant provided an overview of electronics recycling programs provided by Responsible Recycling Services and the Big Green Box.

Mr. Sablosky noted in August 2014 that the EAC had several concerns with the Big Green Box that led to a discontinuation of that program. He mentioned the importance of the EAC discussing recycling, as it not only benefits the environment, but can lessen resident trash bills.

In discussion of Responsible Recycling Services, a main concern was where the electronics would be stored until pickup. Mr. Bryant noted the EAC was budgeted \$2,000 for the purpose of recycling programs this year, which could be used for a storage device or for pickup of items that have a charge.

The EAC recommended that Mr. Bryant get the opinion of Township staff on the matter, while the EAC members would think on this issue and make a decision at the March meeting.

Recap of EAC Presentation at February 3rd Board of Supervisors Meeting

Mr. Hendrick noted he has received permission to move forward with a program to put up Kestrel boxes as part of a program with the American Kestrel Partnership. Hawk Mountain has worked on similar programs with great success. He will be meeting with Parks Superintendent Butch Froelich on Friday, February 13th to locate areas to place poles and install these boxes. A project in Upper Bucks and Berks counties where 85 kestrel boxes have been installed also has shown promise.

Mr. Hendrick then gave an update on a Trout Unlimited meeting. This group is working on a few projects in the area near Watson's Creek, Aqueton Park, and Cook's Run to reintroduce trout to the area.

Mr. Hendrick presented to the Board of Supervisors at their last meeting about the EAC's activities in 2014 and goals in 2015. Overall the Supervisors were pleased with the EAC's efforts, and were attentive during the presentation.

Great Backyard Bird Count

Mrs. Mitchell show the EAC the Bird Town activity log, which the EAC will need to complete for any activity relating to Bird Town, in order to get appropriate credit for awards from Audubon PA. This would include the Kestrel box activity Mr. Hendrick is working on.

Mrs. Mitchell gave a presentation to 2nd graders at Kutz Elementary about how to bird count and provided them with a worksheet to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count from February 13th through February 16th. In May 2015, Mrs. Mitchell will lead a Bird Walk for Kutz students, and will use a bird identifying device and loaner kits provided by Bird Town. It was noted that the Township also has three sets of binoculars that are used during Mr. Hendrick's bird walks.

Mrs. Mitchell then passed around pledge cards from Audubon PA that Township residents can complete to pledge to have a healthy yard. Residents wishing to go even further can complete a habitat network application, and receive a sign for their yard. Mrs. Mitchell gave a sign to Mr. Bryant to have placed at the Bird Blind in the Environmental Education Area.

Mrs. Mitchell attended New Britain Borough's Bird Town meeting to give advice on how to run a Bird Town.

Mrs. Mitchell also provided some updates on the Native Demonstration Garden. An Eagle Scout will be completing his decorative path in this area prior to May. There will be a cleanup day in this area in March, and additional planting in April. The EAC will need to find volunteers for the cleanup and planting. Mrs. Mitchell requested Mr. Bryant take action on a previous request for a water line to run from the nearby water fountain to the bird blind, which would end up on blind side of bird blind. It would be acceptable to skirt the edge of the Native Demonstration Garden to make this possible. Mr. Bryant said he would contact the Parks Superintendent about this matter, and would report on the cost to the EAC.

Looking at the flyer for the Great Backyard Bird Count, Mr. Hendrick noted it shows Staghorn Sumac, which is an important plant to encourage the growth of in the area. Unfortunately, this plant usually cannot be obtained at nurseries.

Riparian Buffers

Mrs. Mitchell discussed her desire for the Township to be able to provide residents with a street/parcel map that would have an overlay of what properties have a riparian buffer.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Sablosky; seconded by Mr. Richardson; unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned at 8:47PM.