

**Plainfield Township
Environmental Advisory Council Meeting
June 5, 2017**

The Plainfield Township Environmental Advisory Council meeting was held on Monday, June 5, 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- ABSENT	Don Moore – EAC Member
Bruce Rabenold – EAC Member	Robert Simpson – EAC Member
Jane Mellert, EAC Secretary and Member- ABSENT	Tom Petrucci – Plainfield Twp. Manager

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – May 1st, 2017 minutes

Motion – May 1st, 2017 Minutes - A motion was made by Bruce Rabenold and seconded by Robert Cornman to approve the May 1st, 2017 minutes. **Vote: 6 Yes**

OLD BUSINESS

PA DEP Growing Greener Plus Grant- Little Bushkill Creek

Terry Kleintop, Robin Dingle, Jason Smith, and Tom Petrucci are recommending that the Township conduct an additional round of source tracking sampling and testing. Mr. Kleintop has spoken with Gary Walter of the PA DEP, and Mr. Walter had indicated that the DEP would pay for the lab analyzing costs. Plainfield Township would pay the consultant, Jason Smith, to collect the samples. Mr. Walter also recommends that the samples be collected in August at the base flow conditions. Tom Petrucci, Township Manager, recommended the EAC to proceed with the second round of source tracking sampling and testing based on last year’s results and in accordance with Mr. Walter’s recommendations. The grant budget will also be revised.

A motion was made by Robert Simpson and seconded by Robert Cornman to send a letter to the Board of Supervisors that recommends proceeding with the second round of source tracking sampling, and testing. **Vote: 6 Yes**

West Branch of Little Bushkill Creek- PA Fish and Boat Commission July 2017 Meeting

Mr. Terry Kleintop, EAC Chairman, reported that the West Branch of the Little Bushkill Creek is finally scheduled to be designated/approved as a wild trout stream (brown trout) by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission at their July, 2017, meeting. This designation will provide additional protection for the West Branch of the Little Bushkill Creek that currently does not exist. The fish survey, that provided the science/justification to support the application for the wild trout stream designation was conducted in July, 2017, by a team lead by Kathleen Lavelle, Field

Technician, from the Eastern Abandoned Mine Program & Pennsylvania Eastern Brook Trout Habitat Initiative.

Mr. Kleintop mentioned to bring up the matter during the next Board of Supervisors meeting. Tom Petrucci, Township Manager, asked if there were any current issues that would hinder the West Branch of the Little Bushkill Creek getting approved as a Class A Wild Trout either with or without a written letter from the Board of Supervisors noting the time constraints. Mr. Kleintop responded by saying that the issue seems to be fine with or without a letter from the Board of Supervisors but it is in the hands of the PA Fish and Boat Commission in terms of the final ruling.

Plainfield Township Zoning Ordinance and Farmland Preservation Regulation Revision– Ordinance #307 Update on the Revisions

Township Manager, Tom Petrucci, had nearly a four hour meeting with Maria Bentzoni on Monday, June 5th, 2017 in order to discuss the current issues in regards to the Farmland Preservation guidelines. Ms. Bentzoni provided insight to Mr. Petrucci on the issues presented. They went over multiple case studies to review different scenarios concerning individuals in the Farmland Preservation Act and their corresponding land. It was noted that each individual farm is unique with its own set of circumstances. Currently, members of the Farmland Preservation can build one house on the land with the exception that the individual who will be in the additional dwelling must be working on the farm full-time.

It was noted that the Zoning of Plainfield Township does not always align with the provisions of the Farmland Preservation Program. EAC Member, Robert Simpson, mentioned that this can be a quick fix based on the issues presented. In the Zoning for the Township, there should be a list of things that can be done to a property that has been entered into the Farmland Preservation. He recommended that the legality of allowing for the exclusion areas to be subdivided should be explored.

EAC Member, Robert Cornman, noted that the Township Zoning ordinance is not permanent and it was originally made to flourish along with the Northampton County program. The EAC will need to figure out a way to accommodate the landowners, allow variances, and provide education for the individuals in the Farmland Preservation Program and for potential individuals as well. The second step to this process of revising the Farmland Preservation Regulations is to have a follow up conversation with Maria Bentzoni, Solicitor David Backenstoe, and Township Manager, Tom Petrucci after gathering more information and investigating such concerns. The third step will be to recommend a solution to the Board of Supervisors.

Northampton County Farmland Preservation- County Municipal Partnership Program 2016 and 2017 Northampton County Farmland Preservation Easement Purchase Update

Township Manager, Tom Petrucci, received a letter from Maria Bentzoni on May 25th, 2017. The sole easement purchase of the Township will be covered by either the State or Northampton County, therefore no local EIT Open Space Funds will be required from the Township.

Mini-Grant- Appalachian Trail Conservancy Assessment and Evaluation of Plainfield Township's SALDO and Zoning Ordinances - \$17,500 Grant, Matching Funds of \$3,500.00

There were three proposals that were received from Gilmore and Associates (\$29,493.75), Theurkeuf (\$26,100.00), and URDC (\$16,900.00). Mr. Petrucci stated that URDC stayed under the grant budget. The EAC does not foresee any reasoning for URDC to go out of pocket for anything within their proposal. They are very knowledgeable of the content and did very well.

A motion was made by Robert Cornman and seconded by Don Moore to recommend that the Board of Supervisors award the Professional Services Contract to URDC in order to complete the scope of work relative to the 2016 Appalachian Trail Conservancy Mini- Grant that was awarded to Plainfield Township. **Vote: 6 Yes**

Ordinance #357 Tree Protection and Timber Harvest Management Ordinance Revisions

A proposed draft Timber Harvesting Management Regulations Ordinance as drafted by the Township Manager and forwarded to the EAC members, there was some information that was altered or added in order to make the ordinance comply with state laws and regulations. Such changes included revisions and alternate definitions of words that are currently contained within Ordinance #357.

Terry Kleintop, EAC Chairman, stated that Tim Dugan, DCNR Forester, would be willing to go over the content as he has done previously. The Attorney General's letter stated that an individual has the right to timber anywhere as long as the rules are followed and the individual is in compliance with such applicable state regulations.

Towship Manager, Tom Petrucci, will contact the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) in order to ascertain if the LVPC is working on a revision to the woodlands regulation ordinance. Many members of the EAC noted that a timeline for revision should be received from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) in order to guide the EAC on how the ordinance should be changed in order to be compliant with the state laws and regulations identified by the Attorney General.

Ordinance #342 Maintenance and Preservation of Riparian Buffers and Open Space Revisions

The Township Manager is currently evaluating possible revisions to Ordinance #342 and will advise the members of the EAC upon the receipt of additional information.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion - Meeting Adjournment – A motion was made by Robert Cornman and seconded by Don Moore to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 pm. **Vote: 6 Yes**

Respectfully Submitted,

Paige Gerstenberg, Administrative Assistant
Plainfield Township

