

**Plainfield Township  
Environmental Advisory Council Meeting  
May 7, 2018**

The Plainfield Township Environmental Advisory Council meeting was held on Monday, May 7, 2018, 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 Comman – EAC Vice Chairman
Robin Dingle – EAC Member	Don Moore – EAC Member late
Bruce Rabenold – EAC Member	Robert Simpson – EAC Member
Jane Mellert, EAC Secretary and Member	Tom Petrucci – Plainfield Twp. Manager

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

The pledge of allegiance was performed.

**Also in attendance** – Resident Gail Weber

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**Motion – April 2, 2018 Minutes** - A motion was made by Bob Simpson and seconded by Bob Comman to approve the April 2, 2018 minutes. **Vote: 6 Yes**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Mini-Grant Appalachian Trail Conservancy Assessment and Evaluation of Plainfield Township’s SALDO and Zoning Ordinances** - \$17,500 Grant, Plainfield Township Matching Funds \$3,500.00. On June 14, 2017 the Board of Supervisors awarded the Professional Services Contract to URDC in the bid award amount of \$16,900. Charlie Schmehl, Vice President of URDC attended previous meetings in order to review the proposed revisions with the EAC.

On March 12, 2018 the EAC voted to send the draft ordinance revisions to the Plainfield Township Planning Commission and then to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for review. Tom Petrucci spoke to representatives from the DCNR and Natural Lands. Terry Kleintop noted the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission is only an advisor. He was surprised to see in the LVPC response letter that the LVPC took content out of the East Nantmeal ordinance to use for Plainfield Township. Tom Petrucci and Charlie Schmehl would like to confirm the information with the LVPC. Terry Kleintop will forward the information to all of the EAC members. David Backenstoe will be consulted regarding the LVPC review. David Backenstoe will comment at the May Planning Commission meeting. He knows the acre regulations well. Tom Petrucci noted that Dave Backenstoe is aware of the East Nantmeal Ordinance. ACT 515 and 319 regulations are not addressed.

**Northampton County Farmland Preservation and County/Municipal Partnership Program**

- There was no communication from the Northampton County Farmland Preservation office to Moore Township or Plainfield Township regarding State matching funds.
- Kathryn Benn property – The Board of Supervisors approved a letter to Washington Township regarding funds to preserve the Kathryn Benn property. Tom spoke to Maria and the cost to Washington Township would be approximately \$85,000 or more. Tom Petrucci spoke to Gail Putvinski, the Washington Township Secretary/Treasurer. Due to funds not being budgeted for farmland preservation in 2018, she does not think it will be looked at this year.

## **PA DEP Growing Greener Plus Grant – Little Bushkill Creek**

Tom Petrucci previously emailed the Stuber and Achenbach plans for our review.

- Tom Petrucci, Terry Kleintop and Jane Mellert met with Jason Smith on Monday, April 9, 2018 at 6 pm. Results of the source testing for the Little Bushkill Creek and progress on the Stuber and Achenbach plans were discussed.
- The plans for both the Stuber and Achenbach farms need the specifications written in order to bid out. Tom Petrucci noted Achenbach signed the paperwork.
- Fact sheets and dates for deliverables should be obtained.
- The information should be reviewed for compliance with the RFP and contract.
- Tom Petrucci will contact Jason Smith regarding any additional updates and a deadline for a report submittal. The contract has requirements for submittal of information, updating and reports.
- The grant work must be completed before the end of 2018.

## **Pennsylvania Power and Light (PPL) – Vegetation Management Map**

Tom Petrucci received a call from a PPL representative. PPL will be doing tree trimming on their easement near Glass Street and Buss Street. The PPL easement is near the waste management portion of the trail. Tom Petrucci noted according to the representative chemicals will not be utilized. Terry Kleintop asked why it is necessary to cut down vegetation in the area. The area is approximately 80 ft. to 100 ft. wide. The trimming could look dramatic.

Tom Petrucci will follow up with PPL during the process and request a copy of the PPL operations manual regarding vegetation management.

## **Conservation by Design – Tom Petrucci**

Tom Petrucci submitted options that he researched. The EAC reviewed the options. It was noted that the SALDO is not designed to handle this type of use. Tom Petrucci made that recommendation to remove all references to “preserved land” and replace it with “greenway land”.

Greenway Land is a parcel or parcels of land and/or water, within a Conservation Development, set aside for the protection of natural and cultural resources. Greenway land is permanently restricted against future development.

The SALDO needs to be revised. Tom Petrucci noted that after researching and reading several documents he believes that the Township needs to overhaul the regulations.

The information presented gives several options. The revision will move the current ordinance from a one size fits all approach to giving options. The options presented would allow for differing densities.

A discussion took place regarding whether it was the intent of the Conservation by Design ordinance to have the Township take ownership of the conserved piece of land and whether the Township would then try and have the parcel farmed.

One of the current subdivisions submitted (on Mill Road) under the conservation by design regulations looks at the lessor the density the better but it may hinder the equity of the landowner.

Don Moore asked how setbacks would affect the subdivision that was submitted. Terry Kleintop noted that the (Mill Road subdivision) has perc problems. Three or four lots were lost due to the land not passing perc tests. The landowner may not be willing to spend money on infrastructure and that makes development of the parcel more difficult.

It was noted by Terry Kleintop that SALDO changes will not fix land that doesn't perc well.

Robin Dingle questioned whether the regulations being reviewed were from municipalities with the potential for sewer and water services. She questioned whether studies have ever been conducted on the aquifers. How many wells can the land handle? The Township is not aware of any tests that were conducted.

Resident Gail Weber noted that she lives on Sullivan Trail and enjoys seeing the turkeys and bear that go across the fields in the back of her property.

Due to the age of many of the Township farmers land will need to change ownership in the future.

Bob Simpson noted that the Township changed to the Conservation by Design regulations in order to conserve land. There were a lot of subdivisions in the early 2000's. The goal was to reduce development. The economy and the Conservation by Design ordinance did reduce development.

The potential revisions for the subdivision process were discussed and the following points were noted:

- Would defining the greenway first cost too much for the landowner and then will the landowner still not know the lot count?
- Should the lot count calculation come before the greenway being defined?
- Can the greenway area continue to be farmed?
- It will be difficult to have small greenway areas all over the Township that need to be farmed and/or maintained.
- Who will own the greenway area a resident, the developer or the Township?
- It was noted that larger lot requirements put a greater real estate tax burden on the homeowner. Some homes are being charged nine to ten thousand dollars for property taxes Township, County, and School).
- Faust – A previous subdivision on Jones Hill Road was discussed. A majority of the land was preserved as farmland instead of being developed. When a subdivision was proposed for the property, everything going down toward Smith's house left a large tract of land for open space property. In nine or ten cases depending on the layout of the land this concept could be difficult to duplicate.
- Options – 1. Go back to 1 ½ acre lots 2. Do nothing 3. Revise Conservation by Design which would be a band aid 4. Completely overhaul Zoning and SALDO 5. Plug up the holes in the Conservation by Design and revise the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

The EAC will make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. The overarching decision is whether Plainfield Township is moving forward with revising the Conservation by Design and SALDO. Review of this is more of a Planning Commission item. Tom Petrucci recommends starting at the EAC level.

The EAC members discussed which options to pursue. Robin Dingle thinks we should pursue options 3 and 4 but would like additional time to review the documents that Tom Petrucci provided.

**Motion – Robin Dingle made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to approve the EAC and Planning Commission work on the following:**

1. A revision of the current Conservation by Design Ordinance in order to address the areas where the ordinance is incompatible with farmland preservation, make the requirements easier to utilize during development, and address concerns about future maintenance and ownership of the conserved area. The first step is a short term solution until the long term revisions are completed.

2. A long term solution addressing both the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance provisions and Zoning regulations. The estimated time frame to completion is six months.

**Bob Cornman seconded the motion Vote: 7 Yes**

The ultimate goal is to end up with Conservation by Design ordinance that will address all of the issues.

Terry Kleintop noted that the Monroe Dairy is taking milk. This could be due to area farmers going out of the dairy business.

**Earned Income Tax Funds - Recommendations to the Board of Supervisors** – Terry Kleintop noted that if we look around and are proactive then there will be plenty of land to preserve and utilize the EIT funding. Terry Kleintop sent out newspaper articles on Township's that have been proactive and they are preserving land.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Resident Gail Weber** got involved in the Synagro controversy. She went to a meeting in East Penn Township regarding Synagro and bio solids. When she went to college in the 1970's sludge was spread on neighboring fields. She got an email from the Dept. of Ag regarding the potential contaminants. The only study that they have been doing is on the water run off that can go to the streams. She spoke to the President of Synagro regarding farms in the Township. She noted that farmers that she spoke to do not want to utilize the bio solids. She was told by Synagro representatives that farmers in Plainfield Township have been using it but we just are not aware of the use. She wants to know where the bio solids are being used. Does the Township have an ordinance for application for Class A or Class B bio solids? East Penn Township has an ordinance. She is concerned about the streams and about the people in the Township. Terry Kleintop noted that the Township does have an ordinance it is probably 25 years old outdated and is not enforced. Due to State Regulations, Tom Petrucci noted that the Township cannot regulate bio solids. Terry Kleintop stated there are buffers that have to be upheld according to the Department of Environmental Protection regulations. DEP must be notified to utilize Class A. Class B application is regulated by DEP. Terry Kleintop noted they are only required to test for nine metals in the bio solids.

Bruce Rabenold – Is there going to be a direct distribution center for Class A? Terry Kleintop responded that there will be a number of trucks coming in and going out per day, but there will not be a distribution center on site. Bob Cornman explained that the bio solids will go to a wholesaler that Synagro has contracts with to distribute.

## **GRANTS pull info from the agenda**

**CIPP Grants** – Applications will be accepted starting May 14<sup>th</sup> for 2018 Northampton County Community Investment Partnership Program Grants. The grants are funded from Northampton County's share of table games revenue under the Pennsylvania Race Horse Development and Gaming Act. Grants can be used to support the county's aging communities to improve quality of life for older citizens and to create opportunities to stimulate, attract and sustain economic development. Tom Petrucci noted that he already has a recommendation for the grant application.

**Northern Trail Feasibility Study** - Northampton County, with consulting partners Gilmore & Associates and Campbell Thomas & Co., will hold the final meeting for the 30-plus mile Northern Tier Trail Feasibility Study at 7:00 P.M. on May 14<sup>th</sup> at the Walnutport Canal Association pavilion 416 Lehigh Street.

**NEW BUSINESS - None**

**PUBLIC COMMENT -None**

**MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion - Meeting Adjournment** – A motion was made by Don Moore and seconded by Bob Simpson to adjourn the meeting at 9:38 pm. **Vote 7 Yes**

The next EAC meeting will be held on June 4, 2018.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Mellert, Secretary  
Plainfield Township EAC