

**Plainfield Township
Environmental Advisory Council Meeting
July 8, 2019**

The Plainfield Township Environmental Advisory Council meeting was held on Monday, July 8, 2019 at 7:00 pm in the Plainfield Township Municipal Building, 6292 Sullivan Trail, Nazareth, PA 18064.

Those in attendance were:

Terry Kleintop, EAC Chairman	Robert Cornman – EAC Member
Robin Dingle – EAC Member	Don Moore – EAC Member late 7:42pm
Bruce Rabenold – EAC Member	Robert Simpson – EAC Vice-Chairman
Jane Mellert, EAC Secretary and Member	Tom Petrucci – Plainfield Twp. Manager

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by EAC Chairman Terry Kleintop and the pledge of allegiance was performed.

Also in attendance –

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion – June 3, 2019 Minutes - A motion was made by Bob Simpson to approve the June 3, 2019 minutes. The motion was seconded by Robin Dingle.

Vote: 5 Yes - Bob Cornman abstained since he was not in attendance at the June 3rd meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

PA DEP Growing Greener Plus Grant deadline December 31, 2019 - Little Bushkill Creek: Hanover Engineering Associates, Inc. are the hired Consultants to conduct the study

- Jason Smith gave a presentation of the Little Bushkill Creek Study to the Board of Supervisors on June 10, 2019.
- The Board of Supervisors and EAC have Hanover’s study and now it is time to determine how to move forward with recommendations.
- The restoration projects for the Achenbach and Stuber properties has been rebid. The bids are due on Wednesday, July 10, 2019. Tom Petrucci expects to get at least one bid for the project. If the project cost is too high then the Board of Supervisors will have to decide whether to re-bid the project or have the Township Road Department conduct the work. The project has been bid five times at this point. The money for the project is from the Environmental Fund and grant funding. Robin Dingle noted Stuber was not the ideal location for the improvements, with more time other properties would have been placed as a higher priority. Improvements at the Taylor property would be a much higher priority to show improvements in the water quality of the Little Bushkill Creek. Any exclusion, fencing and riparian buffer repair projects is an improvement, however, some areas would have a higher probability of stream water quality impact.
- Wind Gap does not currently have plans to pick up and do water testing.
- How is Plainfield Township going to move forward? Will it be under the MS4? Terry Kleintop asked if the Environmental Fund can be utilized for the continued sampling? Robin Dingle noted there are areas that can be concentrated on to investigate the bad spots based on the knowledge of the watershed. Terry Kleintop noted the EAC should come up with recommendations. Jane Mellert noted the Township hired Entech to update the Act 537 Plan

which will include looking at septic and Tom Petrucci is also in the process of moving forward with the MS4 program. Both of the Act 537 and MS4 programs should help with concerns regarding the Little Bushkill Creek. There are known septic problem areas within the Township. Stockertown is in the process of moving forward with connecting their sewer lines through Forks Township to Easton. The Little Bushkill Creek Study information should help with the Act 537 plan. Entech is subcontracting with Ott Consulting Engineers and our current SEO's. ***Tom Petrucci and Entech representatives (Act 537 update cost \$102,000) are in the process of setting up a meeting with the PA DEP in order to start proceeding with the project.*** Ott Consulting is working on the MS4 requirements. Ott could work with Wildlands in order to provide plantings, etc. Jane Mellert asked if the PA DEP was continuing to test the stream. At this time we do not know how much or when the DEP is testing the stream. Terry Kleintop believes that 70 to 80 percent of the testing that has taken place in the Lehigh Valley has been done by volunteers. Plainfield Township is seven (7) years into studies and sampling of the Little Bushkill. Robin suggested a summary of the Act 537 and MS4 programs being tied into the recommendations section of our report regarding moving forward. Between the Act 537 and MS4 work then the EAC will be able to determine how to bridge the small gaps. The EAC has time to make recommendations regarding moving forward with the continued sampling of the Little Bushkill Creek.

- Project East Branch - Develop water sampling plans for Browntown, Benders Church, Heimer and Delabole Roads.
- The East Branch in the area of the Grand Central Woods headwaters will need the consideration of an easement. Tom Petrucci is conducting follow up.
- Project West Branch – Develop water sampling plans from Williams pipeline to Wendy's/Arby's/Wind Gap Municipal border
- Wind Gap was sent an invitation to attend. Tom Petrucci will send the Borough a copy of report.

Northampton County Farmland Preservation – County/Municipal Partnership – 2019

- Terry reported that the farm listed as #6 in Plainfield Township which is located on Capp Road has a high probability of being funded for preservation without municipal funds being contributed.
- One (1) landowner withdrew from the program. Number #9 and # 8 rejected the offer. Three (3) out of the original eighteen (18) are out of the process
- Since the program is working on number eleven (11) on the list, the Northampton County Farmland Preservation Board approved moving forward with twelve through seventeen (12-17). Three (3) farms on the list were to be municipal purchases. There should now be enough money to make offers to all on the 2019 list. If some of the landowners reject the offers then there may be money to carryover to next year.
- Numbers fourteen, sixteen and eighteen (14, 16 18) can be municipal purchases. The land did not meet the County and State criteria for preservation.

It was noted that there are currently some farms for sale in Plainfield Township. There is a farm in Bushkill Township that is going through the preservation process. Moore Township has preserved two (2) this year. In the past Moore Township bought farmland, preserved the land and then sold the land back to a farmer.

Jane Mellert discussed the difficulties of farming and noted there could be a shortage of farmers to farm the land in the future. This was discussed at the Slate Belt Plan meeting held by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission. The topic was brought up by a farmer located in Plainfield Township.

**Pollution Control Measures for Water Impaired by Pathogens – MS4 Pollution Reduction Plan
Deadline September 30, 2023**

- The RFP for the PCM (pollution control measures) may not be necessary.
- Discussion - Plainfield Township farms that are not preserved but under Act 319/515 real estate tax status. Does the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office in Bethlehem monitor Conservation Plans in order to minimize water run-off during storm events? A current conservation plan is a requirement in order to farm and to qualify for the purchase of crop insurance. It was noted during the discussion that landowners with preserved farmland are required to have Conservation Plans in place and inspections for compliance are done by the Northampton County Farmland Preservation Office on an annual basis. Landowners with land in Act 319 or 515 Clean and Green Programs that do not own preserved land are not monitored by Northampton County. There are regulations for farmers who produce agricultural commodities on land identified as highly erodible. The landowners are required to farm such land in accordance with a conservation plan or system that is approved by NRCS and it is designed to substantially reduce soil loss. A major run-off event happened on Engler Road during the month of June. The heavy rains washed out fields. The top soil and water washed onto a neighboring property owner. The amount of soil washing off of the fields could have been reduced if proper measures had been taken to reduce soil loss.

Motion - Bob Cornman made a motion to request the Board of Supervisors to write a letter to Austin Drager at the NRCS office incorporating the following comments:

- **Are conservation plans being monitored to minimize water run-off issues?**
- **Request recommendations to incorporate into our watershed management plan and information to educate our landowners as issues arise.**
- **Ask if any of the conservation plans are being updated to include and incorporate protection of High-Quality streams such as the Waltz Creek and Little Bushkill.**

The motion was seconded by Bob Simpson and passed by voice vote. Vote: 7 yes

Regional EAC Meeting – Terry Kleintop was contacted by Brooks Mountcastle regarding holding a regional EAC meeting during the month of August. Tom Petrucci noted he was contacted by Brooks and he advised him that August was already booked.

Pennsylvania Land Trust Association – Update the EAC handbook send info on the successful projects. Send a copy of the (2018 Year End Report)

Plastic Bag Recycling - Terry Kleintop noted he received an email regarding Bethlehem plastic bag recycling.

Timber Harvest – The revised regulations were pulled out of the Appalachian Trail Ordinance in order to move the Ordinance forward for adoption.

Tom Petrucci noted that legal letters were received by the Township from Waste Management. Waste Management is opposed to the new regulations. This concern has not resolved. Charlie Schmehl made new revisions. The Board of Supervisors has not reviewed and approved this matter to come back to the EAC for review at this time.

Terry Kleintop is concerned that the current timber harvesting ordinance which is active allowed for concerning timber harvesting to occur two or three years ago and he is concerned that another event could occur.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Plainfield Township Conservation by Design Development Ordinance Proposed Revisions

1. The short-term revisions will be reviewed at the July 15, 2019 Planning Commission meeting. Long term revisions will be addressed in the future if they are needed.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion - Meeting Adjournment – A motion was made by Bob Cornman and seconded by Bob Simpson to adjourn the EAC meeting at 9:02 pm.

Vote: 7 Yes

The next EAC meeting is scheduled for August 5, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Mellert, Secretary
Plainfield Township EAC