

**Plainfield Township
Environmental Advisory Council Meeting
March 2, 2020**

The Plainfield Township Environmental Advisory Council meeting was held on Monday, March 2, 2020 at 7:00 pm in the Plainfield Township Municipal Building, 6292 Sullivan Trail, Nazareth, PA 18064.

Those in attendance were:

Terry Kleintop, EAC Chairperson	Robert Cornman – EAC Member
Robin Dingle – EAC Vice Chairperson	Robert Simpson – EAC Member absent
Bruce Rabenold – EAC Member	Stan Shelosky – EAC Member
Jane Mellert, EAC Secretary and Member	Tom Petrucci – Plainfield Twp. Manager

Also in attendance – Jason Smith, Hanover Engineering

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm and the pledge of allegiance was performed.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion – February 3, 2020 Minutes - A motion was made by Bob Cornman to approve the February 3, 2020 minutes. *Prior to the motion being seconded, Stan Shelosky requested an addition to the wording under The Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape Mini Grant on page 4. The last sentence will be revised to the grant could be utilized to fund the creation of a clean fill ordinance.* The motion was seconded by Stan Shelosky

Vote: 6 Yes

MEETING BUSINESS

Little Bushkill Creek – 2020 Activities

- **Review of the letter from the Board of Supervisors to the EAC - Thomas Petrucci, Manager.**
- Tom Petrucci noted the Board of Supervisors would like to see tangible results. The Little Bushkill Creek plan should be revised to scale down the testing schedule and plan for improvements. The Board would like to see the allotted funding of \$60,000 to \$80,000 spent on long term results such as restoration projects with the funds used for stream testing scaled back.
- Robin Dingle noted that recommendations in the plan are related to septic problems and getting cattle out of the stream. The next step can be pairing down the sampling and prioritizing some of the projects, riparian buffers, and setbacks for people that mow up to the side of the stream. If the sampling is paired down then some of the corrective measures could be going to another agency.
- Tom Petrucci noted that there are areas that can be explored. When storms show considerable sediment going into the stream then action should be taken. It may be possible to send Jim Clauser the Agricultural Conservation Specialist at the Northampton County Conservation District, out to the area where cattle are in the stream. On the Taylor property there have been testing, offers for restoration measures, and Township representatives have spoken to him in order to attempt to get him to comply and remove the cattle from the stream. The attempts have not been successful, but the ground work has been done.

- The Board of Supervisors is amenable to utilizing the current Environmental Engineering Firm for the scaled down water testing. The plan will be revised to scale down testing, address septic issues and existing known problem areas where corrective measures could be implemented.
- Jason Smith suggested cutting the testing for Grand Central Woods. Terry Kleintop suggested cutting the West Branch. Tom Petrucci noted there are septic problems in the Glass Street and Buss Street area. The lots are small in that area. The noted areas will be explored by the sub-committee.
- The 2020 Funding Budget needs to designate a specific amount toward testing and a specific amount for addressing the problem areas. Reasons should be stated for addressing each area.
- The EAC LBC Sub-Committee will meet to revise the 2020 LBC Study. They will
Revisit – Revise – List Priorities – List Reasons
Identify Properties – Plan for future grant applications
and Education measures for the public will be considered

The EAC Sub-Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet on March 30th at 4 pm. The Sub-Committee will submit the revised recommendation to the Board of Supervisors before April 23rd .

- **An anticipated schedule and needs from EAC moving forward will be reviewed.**

Northampton County Conservation District

- **NCCD Staffing** - A letter was sent from the Board of Supervisors to Northampton County Council Member Tara Zrinski requesting a review of adequate staffing at the Northampton County Conservation District
- **Educational Workshop for Agricultural Operators/Property Owners Letter**
Tom Petrucci submitted a draft letter addressed to the Plainfield Township landowners. The EAC members reviewed the letter and revisions were suggested. Tom Petrucci will incorporate the suggestions into the letter and will eliminate #3. It was noted that all of the plans listed are required of agricultural operators/property owners. It would be good to have Brian Fulmer and John Mauser help with advocating for the farmers to attend the workshop.

Quarries

- Terry Kleintop noted that he has made contact with several individuals to get a copy of the new fill requirement standards.
- Tom Petrucci is applying for a \$10,000 Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape Mini Grant due March 6th. The grant has a \$10,000 Township match requirement. The money would be utilized to hire a consultant to develop an Ordinance for clean fill. The grant award notification will be during May 2020.
- It was noted that Pennsylvania standards are not as stringent as neighboring states, such as, New York and New Jersey.
- Nothing in the law notes that the Township is pre-empted. Clean fill regulations can be addressed in a Zoning Ordinance.
- Stan Shelosky mapped out some of the quarries known in Plainfield Township. Robin Dingle noted that there are different priorities for noting the quarries, clean fill, placing on the Official Map, etc.
- The EAC needs to identify some of the requirements we want built into the Ordinance. Robin noted it would be good to have an assessment of the recharge of the aquifer to the quarries.

- Terry Kleintop noted that Monroe County has a one page document on their website titled Clean Fill Requirements from the Monroe County Conservation District. Tom Petrucci will review the document.
- Charlie Schmehl at URDC has worked on ordinances for clean fill for other municipalities.

Open Space / Earned Income Tax

- Terry Kleintop suggested having a meeting with the Board of Supervisors regarding Open Space land preservation. He noted an action plan is needed.
- Tom Petrucci noted that the Board is favorable to considering preservation of environmentally sensitive land and is committed to the Farmland Preservation program.
- Terry Kleintop is looking at 3 or 4 properties that may-do-not not meet the requirements to qualify for the Northampton County or State preservation money. The land could be considered for preservation using the \$863,325.70 Township Open Space funds that are dedicated/designated for the purchase of agricultural easements.
- It was reported that Maria Bentzoni the Northampton County Farmland Preservation Administrator has enough funds to preserve the land on the ranking list. The adequate funding is due to some of the property owners dropping out of the program because the price per acre is low, the County has committed adequate funding, and the State match has been considerable.
- If the Township preserves a farm with Open Space Funds (that applied to the Northampton County Farmland Preservation Program) because-but the land does not meet the County/State program funding criteria, then the Northampton County Farmland Preservation office will monitor the farmland. If the Township preserves purchases farms on their own and preserves as Bushkill Township has -then the Township has to monitor the purchased/preserved land.
- Terry Kleintop asked if Plainfield Township is interested in buying and preserving farms on their own?through the County/State Farmland Preservation Program? Tom Petrucci noted he would have to find out from the Board. Moore Township and Bushkill Township have has purchased farmland, preserved the farm, and then sold them with a monetary loss (shortfall) to the Township;the preserved farm to a buyer that is required to keep the land in agricultural production. Moore Township did not recover the entire purchase price of one farm while utilizing the buy and preserve methodology. The municipalities look at the loss as a cost of preserving the land.
- Tom Petrucci can look at whether the Board wants to start toward purchasing wetlands, and trail corridors.

It was discussed that a list exists regarding farms that have not been preserved and farms that may not qualify for County and or State funding. A letter was sent out in prior years to landowners noting the Township has a program to assist in the preservation of land that may not qualify for the County/State Farmland Preservation pProgram.

Motion - Bruce Rabenold mad a motion to send a letter to the Board of Supervisors as a follow up to the EIT study of 2017. The letter should state that the EAC is in favor of approaching property owners along the stream in order to preserve the stream corridor. Bob Cornman seconded the motion.

Vote: 6 Yes

Northampton County Farmland Preservation update - Terry Kleintop

- It was noted that the farm on Mill Road was purchased but the owner is now in prison. There are five known farms up for sale in the Township.

- 2019: 1 Plainfield Township application for 90.55 acres (on Capp Rd) was ranked #6 and is in the process for preservation.
- 2020: There were 3 Plainfield Township applications for 137 acres. The applicants ranked #2, #8, and #9

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lehigh Valley EAC Introductory EAC Forum

- March 11th, Bethlehem at Illick's Mill, 100 Illick's Mill Road, 7-8 PM

2020 Riparian Buffer Summit (March 11-12) - DCNR and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

- <https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Conservation/Water/RiparianBuffers/Pages/default.aspx>

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion - Meeting Adjournment – A motion was made by Bob Cornman and seconded by Bruce Rabenold to adjourn the EAC meeting at 9:17 pm.

Vote: 6 Yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Mellert, Secretary
Plainfield Township EAC