

**Salisbury Township  
Environmental Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 20, 2009**

A Public meeting was held on the above date at the Salisbury Township Municipal building located at 2900 South Pike Avenue, Allentown, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. The meeting was brought to order at 7:00 P.M. Committee members in attendance: Ms. Jane Benning, Mr. Louis Cinquino, Mr. Bruce Burchard, Mr. Richard Niesenbaum, Commissioner James Brown, Joseph Hebelka, Planning Commission representative; Ms. Cynthia Sopka, Director of Planning and Zoning; and Mr. Randy Soriano, Township Manager.

**Introduction of committee members and their environmental concerns and interests for the Township.**

**Bruce Burchard** – Worked for Environmental Demolition and Remediation Company for 13 years. His concerns are impacts on the environment, future development of buildings, multi-family buildings and the impact on traffic.

**Louis Cinquino** – Resident of Salisbury for the last four years noted his concerns are from the standpoint of a homeowner. His concerns are how we conserve the Township's open space, watershed effects, and protection of wildlife as it relates to wooded areas, streams, ponds, etc.

**Jane Benning** – Worked as a teacher for 35 years. Environment is her biggest concern, and hoped she interested her students in caring for the environment. Her interest is to be of assistance with respect to environmental impacts to the Township. She feels there are many complications and concerns in development and how it impacts the streams, wetlands, and also the residents' way of life.

**Joseph Hebelka** – Professional Geologist with the PA DEP, Bureau of Watershed Management and Source Water Protection Program. His interest is keeping the EAC informed about what is going on in the Planning Commission and maintaining consistency.

**Cynthia Sopka** – Planning and Zoning Director for Salisbury Township. She has a Masters of Science Degree in Environmental Science. Her main focus is on impacted streams and wetlands, typically from massive mine drainage. Formal training is on aquatic ecosystems which she has strong feelings for, as they are very vulnerable. Feels privileged to be part of this team and has strong concerns for the environment.

**James Brown** – Commissioner for the 4th Ward, also the Liaison between the Committee and the Board of Commissioners. Offered his concerns for the environment and hopes to learn more through his experience on the committee.

**Richard Niesenbaum** – Chair of the Biology Department at Muhlenberg College, and Director of Sustained Abilities of Study Program. Training is in ecology and conservation biology. Performed research on native plant and insect interactions. He served on the Lehigh Valley

Planning Commission for three years. He is a Salisbury resident for the last three years and concerned with the Township.

**Ms. Sopka went over the Agenda, and asked for suggestions from the EAC.**

- 1. Establish a regular meeting date, tentatively set for the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00PM.*
- 2. Go over the draft Bylaws.*
- 3. To vote for Officers.*

Mr. Hebelka suggested holding off on the **voting of Officers** until all members are present, as we need to check into the 148 requirement with Mr. Soriano. Mr. Hebelka noted that this council falls under the Sunshine Law and there are certain requirements to follow such as public notice and having an agenda. Mr. Soriano advised all decisions must be made at a public meeting.

Ms. Sopka provided each member with a draft of the **Environmental Advisory Council Bylaws of Salisbury Township** that will eventually be formalized and welcomed any suggestions. Mr. Hebelka commented that he had reviewed the draft and that it is somewhat of a standard template, and suggested minor revisions can be made based upon his review of other EAC bylaws. He asked the other members to go online to research bylaws of other municipalities. Mr. Hebelka advised Ms. Sopka he could provide her with suggestions within two weeks, which could be incorporated into the Bylaws for review and comment.

Ms. Sopka addressed the Municipal Planning code which gives recommendations on the requirements of the **Comprehensive Plan**. Ms. Sopka indicated that revising the Comprehensive Plan is considered a priority to the Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners. Since the last revision occurred in 1992, the Comprehensive Plan is basically an outdated document. Both the BOC and Planning Commission recognize that the Comprehensive Plan is a guiding light for Zoning, SALDO, and additional Ordinances. The Comprehensive Plan basically lays out the goals and visions of the Municipality for the next 10-15 years, where we are now, where we want to go, and how do we get there.

Ms. Sopka also suggested that the EAC look into the **establishment of a Natural Resource Inventory**. Having a natural inventory assessed provides identification of environmentally sensitive areas in the Township and can guide you with management of the resources. She noted that other Municipalities were able to adopt Ordinances in response to the inventory.

Ms. Sopka advised that she is part of the **Pennsylvania EAC Link** and will make this information available to the committee where potential funding sources such as the Growing Greener Grant are listed.

Mr. Soriano commented that moving forward with the **Comprehensive Plan** update should be the main focus. This will then lead to the implementation of changes to the SALDO and Zoning Ordinances. It is anticipated that a professional consultant should also be hired to guide the EAC

and be part of the Plan's modifications. He also feels that the other main focus of EAC should be the inventory of natural resources to find out what we have.

Mr. Soriano stated that for the next EAC meeting, the Committee should confirm the **meeting dates** and Ms. Sopka should prepare the agenda which should then be reviewed by the Chairperson, advertise the public meeting, and start the process. Consideration should also be made on setting up a subcommittee and review the Sunshine Law.

Mr. Hebelka suggested locating the PA Guide online at the EAC Link. He noted that it refers to items such as land use issues, comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances. Also, there is information on other EACs that have established programs such as **environmental clean-ups**. He suggested that this is something to look at and plan for possibly next year.

Mr. Burchard and Commissioner Brown discussed the percentage rate of **open space** in the Lehigh Valley. It was noted that the Lehigh Valley must be able to retain open space. Ms. Benning commented that she is concerned with not just open space, but also watershed. Her main concern is whether the Township is going to have clean water for the future.

Meeting was adjourned.