

**Salisbury Township
Environmental Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
August 16, 2017**

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: Kreg Ulery, Rodney Conn, Jane Benning, Mary Anne Stinner, Karen El Chaar, Commissioner Joanne Ackerman, BOC liaison, and Cynthia Sopka, Secretary to the EAC. Task Force member Katherine Velekei.

Mr. Ulery called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Mrs. Sopka announced that all sessions of the Salisbury Township Environmental Advisory Council (STEAC) regular meetings are electronically recorded as required by the By-laws and for the purpose of taking the Minutes.

Approval of the Minutes

On motion by Mrs. Benning, seconded by Mr. Conn, the Environmental Advisory Council approved the May 17, 2017 meeting minutes as submitted.

Report of officers and committees (including BOC, PC, Manager and /or Planning/Zoning):

Ms. Sopka highlighted the Zoning, Planning and Board of Commissioners meetings for the month of July 2017. The Zoning Hearing Board had one appeal for 87 Chestnut Hill Road which has steep slopes and would be developed by the applicant. The project was continued to September 5th, 2017. The Planning Commission reviewed the Minor Lot Subdivision and Lot Consolidation between 2860 Lindberg Avenue and Salisbury Township, and they reviewed the proposed final Subdivision and Lot Consolidation Plan between 3120 Douglas Road and 2736 W. Rock Road. In addition to the reviews, the Planning Commission reviewed several chapters of the SALDO. All projects were approved however the property of 87 Chestnut Hill Road is continued.

The Board of Commissioners meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Old Business

Ms. Sopka stated that the EAC needs volunteers to help remove some of the invasive Japanese knotwood as it is starting to regrow. She states that she tries to stay on top of it. She stated the basin needs more native plants to be planted along top of the basin. Volunteers are needed.

New Business

The EAC will continue to have the opportunity for the public to discuss **storm water issues (MS4)**. Please contact Mr. Nicolo, MS4 Coordinator, with any questions or concerns at 610-797-4000.

The EAC had a brief discussion on the continued street tree removal and the issue of residents not interested in replanting them. Ms. Sopka stated that the EAC should advocate the value of Street Trees and their impact on Stormwater(MS4) as well as incorporating the utilization of native plants and include how native plants support natural environments by providing shelter,

food source, and insects into the environment to help support birds, bees, butterflies, mammals, etc. The BOC has asked the township to readdress the ordinance of street tree or shade tree removal. Ms. Sopka stated that she has started a draft and will pass this information along via email. It is a draft. It is a creation of a municipal shade tree commission. A report would be provided to the BOC. At this time the Township has an appeal process however the BOC wants to make it more user friendly and convey the responsibility of street tree removal to a section of the EAC that would be specific for Street Tree issues. A majority of trees have been altered due to PPL lines encroaching into the tree canopy, along with the impact to trees from diseases like bacterial wilt, Verticillium wilt that starts in the soil, enters through the roots of trees and causes a blight to the tree. Losses to street tree are susceptible to several various diseases or blight which might constitute the damage to "A Street Tree". In addition older land developments utilized Norway Maple as a street tree however they are currently starting to die off limb by limb.

Part of the street tree issue is to include native plantings since they act as a habitat for many species. I have started working on a list that would help property owners find some comfort with a tree that will not get too large but we also need to identify the value of native plants as a host for many insects and birds along with mammals.

Joann Ackerman indicated many of the trees were planted several years previous. The tree has extensive roots most of the root remains. Another component is the fact that underground utilities play a portion of the tree removal so it would be wise to come to a consensus on how to handle items such as underground utilities that may often interfere with the placement of a street tree. Mrs. Ackerman indicated the current process is not cost effective since it incurs a loss of money to the Township. The BOC has agreed to allow another process to be generated to address the issue of street trees while also providing a venue through the EAC to develop a more residential friendly process.

On motion of Mrs. Benning, seconded by Mrs. Stinner, the EAC will accept the street tree report. All in favor.

Ms. Sopka stated that the EAC did not receive the Enviroscape Grant funding. Mr. Ulery inquired if that was part of the budget if we did not get the grant. Ms. Sopka stated there is a budget for purchase of it. Ms. El Char stated that she is trying to get the Grant for the Enviroscape and is still working on it.

Mr. Ulery and Ms. Sopka held a meeting with Lehigh County Representative Mr. Robert Stiffler; Ms. Lindsay Taylor, Parks Director of the City of Allentown regarding illegal dumping that occurs at Walking Purchase Park. The group shared that the STEAC should move forward with the development of the Illegal Dumping Ordinance to be shared with the Salisbury Township BOC and include the City of Allentown and Lehigh County. It was agreed to view other municipalities such as Heidelberg Township and get some guidance relative to the fines, etc.

Mr. Ulery will provide a presentation to the Board of Commissioners (BOC). Mr. Stiffler made recommendation that the EAC make a presentation to the City of Allentown and the Lehigh County relative to illegal dumping at Walking Purchase Park. The recommendation is to provide a presentation to the owners of Walking Purchase Park and address the issue of Illegal Dumping that prevails in the park.

Mr. Ulery stated that the presentation to the BOC and encourage them to start a more strict illegal dumping Ordinance. Mr. Ulery stated there are people to help us but until an Ordinance is in place there is not much that can be done. Mrs. Ackerman stated to incorporate as much information and certain things so the Board understands what the EAC wants and needs.

Ms. Sopka spoke of street trees and native trees and they are specific on what they support. Discussion on educational component of the detention basin such as identifying the types of native plants and the value they provide to the pollinators, bird species and other wildlife. Ms. Sopka stated she has been monitoring the basin. The honey bees that utilize the water source, the tadpoles are gone but there are a few frogs in the basin.

Discussion continued regarding bringing in more seeds to include into the basin inclusive of swamp milk weed and bee balm. We also need to get some volunteers to help with the removal of the invasive plants along with trying to address all the tall weeds and cut them down.

Ms. Ackerman inquired if there is a grant or funding for street trees, especially the one's that are diseased or in bad shape. She inquired if there are street tree grants. Ms. Sopka discussed street trees throughout the township and how they promote nature and other species.

Announcements - None

Adjournment

The EAC meeting was adjourned. All in favor.