

Abington Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC)

Meeting Minutes

Date: August 13, 2025

Attendees:

Members: Karin McGarry-Rosen (KMR), Mike Melchiorre (MM), Susan Myerov (SM), John Sorrentino (JSO), Peaches Cooper (PC)

Associate Members: Jennifer Sherwood (JSH)

Others Present: Grace Sekelewski (GS), Abington Township Communications Manager, Meryl Hyatt (MH), Jeremy Rosenbaum, Jane Straub, Robin Eisman, Andrew Christy (AC)

Call to Order: 7:02 pm

Approval of the minutes: Minutes from the July 2025 meeting were approved with one small edit provided by JSO.		
Treasurer's report: JSO shared the treasurer's report.		
Amendments to the Agenda: CDP, PennTAP, SPS Update		
Active Business Topic:	Discussion points:	Action Items/Follow-Ups:
Single Use Plastic Bag Ordinance - (KMR/AS)	KMR reported the plastic bag ordinance went into effect on 8/12/2025. Acme has been using paper bags. Giant and Target switched as well, PC reported that folks were pleased that there was no charge for the bags. If a business is not in compliance with the ordinance, someone can submit a Service Request under Code Enforcement on the Abington Township website.	N/A
Composting Coalition Update (JSO)	JSO sent the full report to the Compost Coalition, which had several townships involved, and requested next steps. Two responses were received, who expressed interest. JSO included Rachael Razzi from Redeemer Valley Farm, and she said she was very interested in helping. Redeemer Valley has room for an in-vessel composter since they have a lot of open space. Abington is looking for a private contractor since they are unable to spare the resources for this project.	JSO will follow-up with Rachael from Redeemer Valley Farm
Recycling Program Outreach – update (EJ and JJ)	JJ and EJ were not available for the meeting and did not provide an update.	N/A
Climate Action Plan draft completion and ICLEI Membership and technical assistance (MM/MG)	MG reported that the township is going with COSTARS for the next electricity contract, Ashley is moving ahead with it. MG sent a note to Ashley that the EAC approved the PES Energy Audit Solar Feasibility Analysis Proposal as well.	N/A
RISE (PennTAP) (CE)	CE reported looking for grant opportunities through PennTAP.	Meeting scheduled with representative on 8/15/2025 CE, MG and SM will try to attend.

CDP (CE)	CDP is due September 15th; CE is requesting assistance from AC regarding adaptation from STC. CE will need assistance completing it after September 7 th . Including green infrastructure that the township enforces assists in the adaptation portion of the CDP. CE requests assistance with the narrative for this. SM spoke about making the electric grid more resilient and the work being done at the wastewater treatment plant for more intense storms. SM suggested that George Wrigley from the Wastewater Treatment plant attend one of our meetings.	CE will forward the documentation from last year. CE will send George Wrigley an email asking if there is anything that should be documented in the CDP regarding the wastewater treatment plant.
Bird Town Updates (JSH)	JSH reported the Native Plant sale will be September 27 th at Abington Library. JSH will put together a volunteer sign up for that is September. Monthly bird walks continue at Lorimer and Bethayres dates/times are on the township website on the EAC page under Bird Town. Fox Chase Farm is also doing walks every Monday morning. JSH circulated an email with upcoming webinars that might be of interest to everyone: September 4 th (Return on Environment) and September 25 th (Native Plant Ordinances). KMR asked if a Native Plant Ordinance is something that we should be pursuing. JSH said that she has not investigation into it, with the Zoning Rewrite effort that there were some recommended species list that were updated which included mostly native plants. SM mentioned that she can assist, still waiting for the township to make updates to Zoning recommended two years ago. AC mentioned that one of the provisions for trees related rewrites in the SALDO and Zoning Ordinance would place a native tree requirement for development and taking down a native tree with another native tree. Additionally, a certain percentage of trees planted must be native as well as shrubbery. AC mentioned that the changes have been with the solicitor for the last few months. The township manager said that he was interested in putting it in front of the BOC. A new native plant garden is planned at the Abington Township library to the left of the front entrance. AC and another STC put together a conceptual “master plan” for the areas around the library. AC is requesting \$1500 for the project; the library will be picking up the remainder of the \$2131 plant budget. The plan was to do the planting on Sunday, 9/14/2025 with a rain date of 9/20-21/2025 as a backup. Motion was made and approved. AC also mentioned that he worked with the library to apply for a grant opportunity through Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and the Giant Corporation to plant trees and was awarded \$2900 in October/early November. SM asked about signage for Native Plants at the plantings, AC signs have been placed at the various locations. JSH mentioned that signs could be placed at the north and south ends of the parking lots.	JSH said she will do some background investigation into Native Plant Ordinances.

Abington School District Collaboration (PC and NO)	PC reported that she got in touch with Allie Alter who is the Communications Director. PC was unable to attend the 6/24 or 8/12 School Board meeting as it officially entered into a contract with ICS for the professional program management, design and construction for the new Middle School and also for the demolition and relocation of the athletic field. They are working on establishing a process to obtain community input but once the School Board decides on process, they will send out a communication through the Community ListServe. PC and NO will get together and will send an email to Dr. Fletcher and the consultants to discuss how the EAC can be involved in the design process. PC, NO and CE met before and discussed the plan. School Board is meeting on September 9 th and 30 th and PC and NO want to have something prepared by then. KMR asked if PC or NO are planning on presenting at the meeting and PC said yes.	PC and/or NO will send out an email to the EAC members with their presentation for any suggestions and have something approved prior to presenting.
Invasive Plant Management Plan (JSH and NO)	AC reported that there was a joint EAC/STC meeting on July 28 th on the Invasive Plant Management Plan which was well attended with Natural Lands. Folks from Natural Lands was pleased with the amount of engagement that came out of the meeting and they have been doing site visits at parks. Invasive Management Plan will come out later this year and there will be another opportunity for public engagement to comment on the draft plan. Jane asked if Natural Lands will be doing a site visit at Roychester Park—AC said that they will be doing a site visit at Roychester. Jane mentioned that she spoke to her commissioner who said that trees may need to be taken down in order to get to the invasives. AC mentioned that Natural Lands is just making recommendations but not actually doing any work to remove the invasives. The idea is after this plan is provided that the township could apply for grants to do the work. If any trees need to be taken down as part of the Army Corp of Engineers that they would be replaced.	N/A
New Business Topic:	Discussion points:	Action Items/Follow-Ups:
2026 Budget	KMR shared the 2025 Budget and talked about additions to the budget for 2026. One item discussed on a prior call was a salt management program: feasibility study to reduce salt. MG said that we should put in for a best management practices plan: salt storage, alternatives to salt, how the salt alternatives applied. CE would like an RFP to complete the Climate Action Plan. CE mentioned that a feasibility study is underway for a solar canopy on the municipal parking lot. Addition to the 2026 Budget is if the solar canopy is feasible, to request an RPF for an engineering design package proposal to implement the solar canopy. Adjustments were made to the proposed 2026 budget.	KMR will reach out to Ashley MG will put a draft request for proposal together for the development of a salt management plan CE will send an email to Diane who is doing the solar canopy feasibility study to provide an approximate estimate for

		an RFP for a solar engineering design package
Pre-Night Out	SM thanked everyone for coming out with the two booths and participating. JSH asked what was popular with the crowd, SM mentioned the kiddie pool game was popular. SM and PC mentioned that the Invasive Plant management was a big draw.	N/A
SPS Fire (AS)	SM stated that AS provided an update regarding SPS who was unable to attend tonight. The above grade demo should be mostly complete by Fall 2025, for safety reasons, Highland Ave will be closed for 2 weeks starting around 8/18. Commissioner Vahey had mentioned in his recent newsletter that SPS is interested in rebuilding and he and the township staff are discussing the development process with SPS leadership. If SPS proceeds at the existing site, the structure will have a smaller footprint and will have more modern standards however SPS has not submitted any plans for consideration.	N/A
Citizens' Comments & Responses:	Discussion points:	Action Items/Follow-Ups:
Jeremy	Jeremy mentioned that he just wanted to be informed and appreciated all of the work the EAC has been doing.	N/A

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm

Next Meeting: September 10, 2025 @ 7:00 pm - VIRTUAL

Acronym Key:

AT – Abington Township

ASD – Abington School District

BOC – Board of Commissioners

FB - Facebook

ICLEI - International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives

SUP – Single-Use Plastics

STC – Shade Tree Commission