

**Abington Township
Environmental Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2024**

Call to Order: 7:03 pm

Attendees:

Members: Mitch Gertz (MG), Karin McGarry-Rosen (KMR), Mike Melchiorre (MM), Susan Myerov (SM), Andrea Soo (AS), John Sorrentino (JSO)

Associate Members: Peaches Cooper (PC), Cakky Evans (CE), Meryl Hyatt (MH, resident/volunteer), Elena Jadach (EJ), Nancy O'Neill (NO), Jenn Sherwood (JSh), Jim Webb (JW)

Others Present: Andrew Christy (AC, STC), Lora Lehmann (LL, resident), Nathan Vasserman (AT Technology Officer)

1. **Approval of Minutes** – November 2024 minutes were approved with motion.
2. **Treasurer's Report** – Nothing to report.
3. **Amendments to the Agenda:** 221 Morton Rd development plan, EAC hats/polos, 1M grant, Jan volunteer events, 2025 fiscal year budget (CE), Practical Energy Solutions
4. **Active Business**
 - A. **Single-Use Plastic (SUP) Ban Ordinance (Karin)** – KMR reported EAC is not on the BOC December agenda, but it may be related to the Dec working session being canceled.
 - B. **Composting Coalition Update (John)** – Nothing to report.
 - C. **Recycling Program Outreach (EJ)** – EJ did a presentation about reducing/eliminating SUP at Rydal Park retirement facility during the week of Thanksgiving and plans to present about sustainable practices at Abington Library's Winterfest.
 - D. **Climate Action Plan Draft Completion, ICLEI Membership, and technical assistance (CE)** – Nothing to report.
 - E. **Bird Town updates (JSH)** – JSH will send an email to EAC members to request summaries of volunteer work and hours for the annual report, due in Jan. Wyncote Audubon Society is now Liberty Bird Alliance – still a chapter of National Audubon Society. CBC bird town bird count is scheduled for this Saturday.
 - F. **Abington School District Collaboration (CE/Peaches/Nancy)** – Abington School District sent an email to stakeholders with a survey and tax calculator to estimate tax implications for the four potential options to renovate the school building. The BOC may recommend one option in January. Social media, mail, and calls will be used for public outreach.
 - G. **Sustainability Checklist** – Nothing to report.
5. **New Business**
 - A. **EAC Membership/Renewals** – AS will resign as EAC member/Secretary at the end of this year. NO will renew her term.
 - B. **Officer Elections:**

Chair – KMR has one year remaining
Vice Chair – SM has one year remaining
Treasurer – JSO has one year remaining
Secretary – Motion approved for NO to assume officer position in Jan 2025
 - C. **221 Moredon Rd** – This is a 5-acre lot where a 4-home residential subdivision with a cul-de-sac is planned. Approximately 178 trees are planned for removal; SM said they need to provide info on tree removals and replacement (356 tree replacements). EAC will need to check if developers meet steep slope and stormwater

requirements. Andrew Christy reported that the Township now has a consulting arborist (John Hasbrouck) and will connect EAC with him. EAC and STC will collaborate on a comment letter which is due by 12/30.

- D. **STC update (AC)** – AC shared about a contractor-led Roslyn Park native plant/garden pilot project which they hope to expand to the larger township area. AC is asking for 20K for the contractor to manage a township-wide invasive plant management program. The program will survey public spaces, identify major invasive areas and replant with native plant species. The Natural Land Trust provided a thumbnail sketch to share with the BOC which will be used to get implementation grants potentially from DCNR or other conservation organizations. Three request-for-proposals (RFP) will be sent over the next year to do the work.
- E. **EAC hats/polos** – Motion was approved for JSO to order polo shirts and hats. He will email individually to request shirt sizes.
- F. **People's Garden Initiative** – MH shared about the People's Garden initiative which is a USDA Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovation initiative that awards 30-40 grants per year for any organization/school to establish/maintain a garden that promotes/teaches about local, resilient food systems and sustainable practices that benefit humans and wildlife. Applications to register as a People's Garden are due by Jan 30, 2025. JSH recommended partnering with Redeemer Valley Farm (has full-time grant writer, Rachel McNeil) or Fox Chase Farm (Philly SD) as both locations have a lot of land and natural space.
- G. **Abington Friends School** – Service opportunity for Friday, Jan 17 (MLK Day), from 1:15-2:30 pm. JSH recommended contacting Ryan Neumann of TTFWP.
- H. **Township budget** – CE asked EAC members to get more engaged with the budget request. EAC members reported that the online township budget is difficult to navigate and understand. SM will connect with AM.
- I. **Energy Solutions** – Nothing to report. CE is working on getting AT to consider the proposal from Practical Energy Solutions (PES) to support the Township's energy benchmarking and CAP completion.
6. **Citizens' Comments and Responses** – Lora Lehmann (resident) said the following:
- **Online budget** – Agrees with EAC on asking AT to improve their online budget visibility.
 - **2241 Welsh Rd** – Reported on a 6-7 acre development plan with 6-7 new houses at Cedar Rd/Mine Rd. LL is concerned about who will maintain/do inspections for collection basins under the road as residents may be held responsible.
 - **1514 Robinson Ave** – Reported large home development is proposed in flood plain area. Owner is proposing to build new homes which will impact wetlands and stormwater runoff.
7. Meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.
Next meeting – **January 8, 2025 ([Virtual](#)) at 7 PM**

Acronym Key:

AT – Abington Township

BOC – Board of Commissioners

BT – PA Bird Town

CAP – Climate Action Plan

CBC – Christmas Bird Count

CP – Comprehensive Plan

DCNR – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

EAC – Environmental Advisory Council

EV – Electric vehicle

GHG – Greenhouse gas

LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

RFP – Request for Proposal

SD – School District

STC – Shade Tree Commission

SUP – Single-Use Plastics

TTFWP – Tookany-Tacony Frankford Watershed Partnership

USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture

USGBC – U.S. Green Building Council