

**EASTTOWN TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, January 27, 2022

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Chairperson Cara Rash. Environmental Advisory Councilmembers in attendance were Kathryn Goddard Doms, Gary Ellis, Heather Hill, Cara Rash, and Radha Pyati. Also attending were Supervisor Michael Wacey; and Eugene Briggs, Township Manager.

Election of Officers.

Each of the following officers was nominated, with a motion and a second, and elected to their position with a 5-0 vote.

Cara Rash – Chairperson

Gary Ellis – Vice Chair

Radha Pyati – Secretary

The EAC reached consensus that Cara Rash will serve as Board of Supervisors (BOS) liaison, Gary Ellis will serve as Planning Commission liaison, and Heather Hill will serve as Parks and Recreation liaison.

Consideration of December 23, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes.

The December minutes, with a friendly amendment, were approved 5-0 with a motion and second.

Consideration of Draft Single-use Plastic Bag Ordinance and Chester County Solid Waste Authority Grant.

The EAC discussed the draft single-use plastic bag ordinance in advance of presenting it to the BOS. The EAC made the following edits:

- Section 1-B. Findings. Strike all of item 4 regarding one hundred billion single-use bags.
- Section 2. Definitions. Commercial Establishment – strike all text after “...Township of Easttown.”
- Section 2. Definitions. Compliant Bag. B.1. strike all text after “...machine-washable fabric”
- Section 2. Definitions. Compliant Bag. B.2. strike all text after “a polypropylene bag”
- Renumber items as appropriate.

The EAC voted, with a motion and second, to approve the draft and send it to the BOS for their consideration. The earliest the BOS can take it up is at their February 22 meeting. The EAC package should include the ordinance draft, findings of the business survey conducted by the EAC, as well as the draft of the Chester County Solid Waste Authority Grant proposal, intended to defray some costs of the ordinance such as purchase and printing of reusable bags. It was suggested that the EAC ask a business owner to speak in support of the ordinance. Before this, the draft ordinance can be presented to the Twp solicitor to estimate how costs may be covered if the grant does not come through.

Consideration of 2022 Goals and Projects.

The EAC identified the following list of goals and projects for the Council’s work in 2022.

- Natural resources and open space plan
- Educational workshops, including a native plant seed swap
- Plastic bag ordinance – proceeding to next steps and implementation

- Compost swap
- Recognizing storefronts with good environmental practices
- Rain garden projects

Aspects of several goals were discussed. For the natural resources and open space plan, the creation of a task force was proposed, with membership from each Twp commission (EAC, P&R, and Planning), a Supervisor, a Twp staff member, and members of the public. Any proposal from a potential consultant on the project would likely include public participation and workshops in the proposal's statement of work. EAC members were encouraged to start discussion with the other commissions.

Expansion of the rain garden program was discussed, to include another workshop and possibly a rain barrel workshop, as well as potential applications for grant funding from the PA DEP and the Growing Greener program. Other municipalities, such as Tredyffrin, Upper Darby, and Havertown, are doing larger scale rain garden programs. Planning the EAC effort during 2022 would be useful during 2022 to decide what and where to expand.

The outfalls screening project that supports the Twp's MS4 permit was discussed as a followup to EAC interest in this project during 2021. Public Works Director Don Curley is working on it, and Manager Briggs will let him know that the EAC is still interested. The LED streetlights project discussed by the EAC in 2021 is being handled by the Twp and does not require EAC action.

The EAC was encouraged to plan the 2023 goals and projects during 2022 so that an appropriate budget request can be made in 2022.

Discussion on Draft Easttown/Tredyffrin Environmental Advisory Council E-newsletter.

Chairperson Rash solicited feedback on the draft e-newsletter circulated with the agenda. EAC members liked the draft. It will be sent to Manager Briggs and later distributed as a PDF that is placed on the Twp website and Facebook change and that is emailed to the Twp distribution list.

Discussion on InCommunity Magazine Replacement.

The EAC discussed alternatives to the InCommunity publication, because InCommunity has halted the Easttown/Tredyffrin magazine. Twp staff are reviewing alternatives, such as Franklin Maps, which produces the Tredyffrin Twp newsletter, prior to consideration by the BOS. It is hoped that an alternative will be in place by summer 2022.

Discussion on Republic Services' Recycling Workshop.

Chairperson Rash and Councilmember Doms spoke with Dominic Fulginiti of Republic. He expressed willingness to do an educational workshop for the EAC, Twp staff, and the public. A good timeframe would be May 2022, perhaps a Thursday evening at the Easttown Library and Information Center. Chairperson Rash will follow up with Mr. Fulginiti and the library.

Liaison Report – Board of Supervisors.

Chairperson Rash reported on the Board of Supervisors. Beth D'Antonio is the incoming Chair, Michael Wacey is the Vice Chair, Michael Wacey is the first liaison to the EAC, and Alex Bosco is the second liaison to the EAC. Gary Ellis was reappointed to the EAC. The BOS is hearing matters related to zooming applications and multifamily density in the Village of Berwyn.

Liaison Report – Planning Commission.

Vice Chair Ellis reported on the Planning Commission. Ann Rothman is the incoming Chair and Nick Vara is the Vice Chair. The Zoning Hearing Board is hearing a matter related to a riparian buffer around a pond.

Liaison Report – Parks and Recreation Board.

Vice Chair Ellis attended the Parks and Recreation Board in place of Councilmember Kate Doms. Tom Toscani is the incoming Chair and Margaret DePiano is the Vice Chair. The P&R Board discussed the open space plan, including questions of organization, public participation, and grants.

Finalize Water Quality Workshop.

The water quality workshop featuring Lauren McGrath of Willistown Trust will take place on Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 6:30 pm at the Easttown Library and Information Center. Approximately twenty people have registered for the program.

Darby Creek Cleanup Sponsorships.

The Darby Creek Cleanup plan was discussed in detail, for review and approval by the BOS. Police and Public Works support will be needed for this event. A similar cleanup took place in 2019, led by Marc Heppe.

The planned date is Saturday, April 23, 2022, with Saturday, April 30 as the rain date. The four sites to be cleaned up are all on Township-owned property and are the following:

- Hilltop Park
- Waynesborough
- Sussex, near Daventry Road
- Open space across Newtown Road from Hilltop Park

Starting meeting place is Hilltop Park, and Manager Briggs will reserve the pavilion. Tables will be set up with waivers and wristbands for participants; parents must sign a waiver for any participants who are children. Timeline is as follows:

8ish – cleanup captains will meet and start setup

9:30 – volunteers arrive. A kickoff welcome will likely include a Supervisor, Manager Briggs, and an EAC member.

After welcome, volunteers will take equipment and drive to assigned sites. The event goes until 12 noon, but the cleanup may be completed earlier.

Volunteers will be provided suggestions to wear long sleeves, sunblock, and gloves and to use tick spray on pants. A maximum number of volunteers will be established.

Local businesses will be approached for their interest in supporting snacks and drinks for volunteers.

2021 Annual Report.

Councilmember Pyati will review the enabling ordinance for this report and create a draft report for EAC review.

Chester County Parks and Preservation Grants.

The EAC will hold on submitting a proposal for this grant initiative this year. Vice Chair Ellis will create a calendar of grants.

Homeowner Association Distribution List.

Councilmembers Hill and Pyati have worked to develop a list of HOA contacts with which to share EAC events and news; three HOAs have agreed. The newsletter and other event messages will be sent to them upon the EAC's sending them to Manager Briggs.

Spring Native Plants Workshop.

Councilmember Hill has reached out to her contact on this, and it is in the works.

Compost Swap Program Update.

Councilmember Hill updated the group on the compost swap. Trinity Church's preschool will send it out. Mother Compost is also willing to speak to their group.

Storefront Recognition Program.

The EAC discussed storefront recognition programs to recognize local businesses that are engaging in sustainable practices. Other municipalities, such as Phoenixville and West Chester, have established such programs. Options for businesses include using recycled paper bags, encouraging customers to bring their own bags, and in the case of restaurants, halting the use of plastic utensils and using reusable bags. The recognition usually consists of a window placard and an acknowledgement on the website of the storefront recognition program.

Removal of Large Trees.

Vice Chair Ellis conveyed a resident concern about large trees being cut down and asked if any legislation or guidance existed on this subject. Manager Briggs noted that the Township code includes protection of specimen trees that are 36" in diameter and wooded lots with greater than 25% coverage by viable trees. Vice Chair Ellis invited the resident to speak briefly at the February EAC meeting.

Environmental Rights Amendment.

Vice Chair Ellis made a note about the Pennsylvania Environmental Rights Amendment: the term "duties" is contained in the amendment, but no serious litigation risk is apparent in the language.

Trex Plastic Collection.

Councilmember Hill noted that materials not appropriate for the Trex plastic recycling are being placed in the collection bins. Chairperson Rash indicated that the EAC newsletter can include do's and don'ts for Trex plastic recycling.

Summary of Spring 2022 Events Plan.

February – water quality workshop
March/April – native plant workshop
April – Darby Creek cleanup
May – recycling plant workshop and possible tour

Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

Announcements.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Thursday, February 24, 2022, at 7:00 pm.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Radha Pyati
Secretary, Easttown EAC