

**Easttown Township Environmental Advisory Council
2021 Annual Report
February 2022**

This report describes the 2021 activities of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) of Easttown Township, Pennsylvania, established in January 2021. The following Easttown Twp residents were appointed to the EAC by the Board of Supervisors in January 2021: Kathryn Goddard Doms, Gary Ellis, Heather Hill, Radha Pyati, and Cara Rash. The EAC has worked effectively in its first year to define its purpose and enact its goals. Township objectives in service of its citizenry, in terms of advising the Twp on environmental issues and providing a community environmental program, have been achieved by the actions described in the below report. Public expenditures have been minimal this year.

Establishment of EAC Practices and Identification of 2021 goals.

In March 2021 the EAC adopted a charter and a set of rules and regulations and elected the following officers and liaisons.

Chair: Cara Rash Vice Chair: Gary Ellis Secretary: Radha Pyati	BOS Liaison: Cara Rash Planning Commission: Gary Ellis Parks and Recreation Board: Kate Doms
--	--

The EAC voted in April 2021 on the set of goals below to present to the Twp Board of Supervisors.

Short-Term Goals

- 1) Promotion of the EAC through written publications, social media, and workshops. Workshop topics of interest include curbside composting, rain gardens/barrels, and others.
- 2) Establishment of a TREC plastic recycling program.
- 3) Organization of a stream or park cleanup.
- 4) Development of a Sustainable Storefronts program in cooperation with local businesses.
- 5) Development of a plan for reduction of single-use plastics, including a potential proposal to the Board of Supervisor for a resolution supporting this reduction.
- 6) Medium-Term Goal. Update of 1993 Recreation, Open Space and Environmental Resources Plan, beginning with a review in 2021 and continuing in 2022.

Progress Made on Goals.

The EAC made progress on several of its goals this year.

Goal 1. Promotion of the EAC through written publications, social media, and workshops. Workshop topics of interest include curbside composting, rain gardens/barrels, and others.

The EAC presented an introduction to itself, as well as short articles, event notices, and invitations to volunteer in the Spring, Summer, and Fall 2021 issues of In Community magazine. Short articles and notices of events were also posted on the Twp’s Facebook page. Late in 2021, the EAC worked to establish a joint E-newsletter with the Tredyffrin Twp EAC. The EAC hosted several educational workshops and events for the public:

- Composting workshop with Mother Compost on June 29, 2021 at the Upper Main Line YMCA
- A table introducing the EAC and its activities at the July 4th Commemoration in Johnson Park

- Workshop “An Introduction to Rain Gardens,” presented by Pam Koch, Earth Care Team Leader, on August 21, 2021 at Trinity Presbyterian Church
- Workshop “Impacts of Single-Use Plastics,” presented by Maurice M. Sampson II, Eastern Pennsylvania Director, Clean Water Action/Fund, on October 6, 2021 at the Easttown Library and Information Center

Goal 2. Establishment of a TREX plastic recycling program. This goal was achieved this year. Trex plastic recycling containers were placed in the Twp building and the library in May 2021, and with BOS approval, the Twp joined the Trex Bench Challenge, which earns the Twp a plastic Trex bench for every 500 pounds of plastic collected. This amount was collected quickly, and the bench is proposed for installation in Hilltop Park in 2022.

Goal 3. Organization of a stream or park cleanup. Accomplishment of this goal was delayed due to event limitations related to the pandemic, but plans to meet this goal were made in late 2021; the cleanup is planned for April 2022 in order to coincide with the Darby Creek Valley Association’s regular April event.

Goal 4. Development of a Sustainable Storefronts program in cooperation with local businesses. This goal was tabled for this year, as the EAC chose to focus on single-use plastics as an impactful effort toward sustainability in local businesses. This goal is being considered for action in 2022.

Goal 5. Development of a plan for reduction of single-use plastics, including a potential proposal to the Board of Supervisors for a resolution supporting this reduction.

The EAC took several steps to advance this goal. At the April meeting, Kristen McCann of the TE GreenTeam gave a presentation on the Tredyffrin Twp survey of businesses regarding single-use plastic reduction and the subsequent resolution to reduce single-use plastics passed by the Tredyffrin Twp Board of Supervisors. The EAC hosted the aforementioned workshop by Maurice Sampson to raise awareness of single-use plastic impacts. Chairperson Rash drafted a survey to obtain feedback from local businesses on their knowledge and interest in reducing single-use plastics, particularly bags. After BOS approval, she and Councilmember Hill circulated the survey in October to approximately 80 businesses in Berwyn and Devon. Findings of the survey included the following:

- Businesses are aware of single-use plastics’ environmental impact and are likely to make a change.
- Plastic bags are the most impactful item because they are used the most.
- Businesses can use up their current plastic stock in 90 days.
- 56% of businesses surveyed support a Twp ordinance banning single-use plastic bags.

Faran Savitz, Conservation Associate at PennEnvironment, gave an oral presentation to the EAC at its October meeting about single-use plastic ordinances and described their model ordinance and several of its key features. Using this model, Chairperson Rash wrote a draft ordinance banning plastic bags that includes many of these features. The draft ordinance was discussed at length at the December meeting and was ultimately approved in January 2022 to present to the Board of Supervisors.

Goal 6. Update of 1993 Recreation, Open Space and Environmental Resources Plan, beginning with a review in 2021 and continuing in 2022.

The EAC initiated a joint effort with the Planning Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board to update the 1993 Recreation, Open Space, and Environmental Resources Plan, as required by the

Comprehensive Plan. Both the PC and the P&RB approved the plan to proceed. Also, Vice Chair Ellis and Township Manager Gene Briggs acquired a photogrammetric computerized map of the Twp's tree canopy from the Chester County Planning Department, which will move the process forward.

The EAC will propose a joint task force consisting of two members each of the EAC, Planning Commission, and Parks and Recreation Board, and members of the public. This task force will work with a consultant to develop the update to the plan. The consultant fees, estimated at \$100,000, was placed in the EAC's 2022 budget request. The plan is estimated to be a two-year effort and can have multiple touchpoints with the public, including a resident survey and the task force itself.

Other Topics of Discussion and Action at Meetings.

In addition to progress made on specific goals, the EAC took up several issues important to the Twp and its residents during its 2021 meetings.

In August, the EAC discussed the draft beekeeping ordinance amendment to the zoning code, following a request from the Planning Commission to provide input. The discussion touched on several matters including setback, property size, number of hives, proximity to fresh water, and bee habits. The EAC passed a motion with a second with a 4-1 vote to provide the following recommendations on the amendment: 1) the ordinance should include a requirement that adjacent neighbors be notified of the requested permit, that notification is the applicant's responsibility, and that proof of notification is required with the permit application, and 2) the ordinance should include a recommendation that applicants take a beekeeping course such as the Penn State Extension course or an equivalent.

Also in August, the EAC voted 5-0 to present the following 2022 budget request to the Board of Supervisors.

Item	Amount
Incidentals (Trex can liners, etc.)	\$300
Workshop-related expenses (Speaker fees/travel, space and equipment rental, resident hand outs, etc.)	\$2,000
City Planning Consultant to update the 1993 Open Space Plan	\$100,000
Sustainable Storefronts Recognition program	\$500
Total	\$102,800

In September, Public Works Director Don Curley gave a presentation on the Township's MS4 permit. The permit requires several ongoing activities, including an updated map of all outfalls. The possibility of an EAC-organized community volunteer effort to map outfalls was discussed, and Director Curley will update the EAC at a later time.

Also in September, the TE2Renewables Initiative was presented by Conestoga High School students Clara Steege, Aishi Debroy, and Lilly Shui. The initiative is an effort to ask the Tredyffrin-Easttown School District Board to pass a resolution setting goals for the district to move to renewable electricity by 2025, renewable resources in all sectors by 2040, and sustainable construction planning. The Tredyffrin EAC has voted to endorse their effort. The EAC endorsed the TE2Renewables proposed resolution to TESD with a motion and a second that passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Radha Pyati, Easttown EAC Secretary