

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (EAC)
Westtown Municipal Building, 1039 Wilmington Pike, West Chester, PA
Tuesday, November 28, 2023 7:00 PM

Present: EAC members Bob Yeats (Chair), Ray Dandrea (Vice Chair), Russ Hatton, Joe Debes, Paula Kline (remote), and Township Manager Jonathan Altshul.

I. Call to Order

Bob called the meeting to order at 7pm.

II. Approval of Minutes, September 26, 2023 and October 24, 2023

Ray made a motion to approve the minutes of September 26, 2023 as amended. Joe seconded. There was no public comment and the motion passed 4-0 (Paula was not yet present). Joe made a motion to approve the minutes of October 24, 2023. Russ seconded. There was no public comment and the motion passed 4-0.

III. Public Comment (non-agenda items)

None.

IV. Old Business

A. Planning Commission Report – Russ reported that at its last meeting, the Planning Commission had recommended approval of the amended parking ordinance, and had considered a sketch plan of the new bank site at Westtown Marketplace and amendments to the burning ordinance. He added that the final Conditional Use hearing for the Stokes Estate would be held tomorrow.

B. Update on Birdtown USA – Ray recapped his presentation to the Board of Supervisors at the November 20 Workshop about this matter. He noted that Tom Foster had concerns about the initiative and that Dick Pomerantz asked a series of questions about the make-up of the proposed new committee. He added that he would need to repitch the proposal to the Board after the new supervisor is seated in January. Jon explained that once the Board gives the green light to the idea, he would present a resolution to the Board for adoption, and then the committee could be formed. Ray stated that he would reach out to CRC and the Audubon Society to identify people who may be interested in serving on the committee. Jon explained that the proposed Birdtown Committee is an advisory committee to the Board of Supervisors and that its meetings would be subject to the Sunshine Law and that the Board would interview and select committee members. Jon added that he would be soliciting for new Commission volunteers in the next few weeks.

C. Update on Crebilly Acquisition – Jon reported that the Township, in partnership with Natural Lands, was trying to get Crebilly Farm designated for eligibility for funding through the American Battlefield Trust. If this occurs, the Trust has indicated that it may be able to close the \$3 million funding gap. Concern was expressed about whether the funding gap would be closed by the March 31, 2024 deadline.

D. Update on 2024 Budget and Priorities – Bob reported that the advertised 2024 budget included \$2,000 for the EAC, and that the EAC would need to make a recommendation to the Board on how to spend this. Joe expressed support for the managed meadow idea in the Plumly Open Space. Ray expressed support for spending the funds on community composting.

V. New Business

A. Consider Proposal for EAC Virtual Conference Presentation - Ray explained that there had been a request for proposals issued for the EAC Virtual Conference on February 24. Bob indicated that he would respond with a proposal for a presentation about some of the Westtown EAC's early accomplishments.

B. Consider EAC Subcommittees – Bob outlined a number of subcommittees that could be formed to work on the various priorities that the EAC has identified and asked for volunteers. Joe indicated that he would work on the managed meadow and education and outreach, including a sustainability workshop. Ray indicated that he would work on Birdtown USA and composting. Jon suggested that the EAC be more organized and diligent about writing longer articles for the Gazette, the same way the Historical Commission does. There was also discussion around subcommittees for EV charging stations, plastic bags, waterway signs, and electric lawn equipment.

VI. BOS Report – Bob noted that Adam was scheduled to give the departmental report at the December 18 BOS meeting He stated he would follow up with Adam to confirm his planned attendance.

VII. Public Comment – Bill McElhill, 1534 Carmac, raised concerns that the Board would be approving \$50,000 in funding for renovations to the Township building, but wouldn't commit to solar panels and other sustainability initiatives. He encouraged the EAC to be more present and vocal in Board meetings.

VIII. Announcements

None.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business, Bob adjourned the meeting at 8:24pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Altshul, Township Manager