

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (EAC)
Westtown Municipal Building, 1039 Wilmington Pike, West Chester, PA
Tuesday, January 23, 2024 7:00 PM

Present: EAC members Bob Yeats (Chair), Ray Dandrea (Vice Chair), Russ Hatton, Joe Debes, Adam Kapp, and Meghan Hanney, and Township Manager Jonathan Altshul.

I. Call to Order

Bob called the meeting to order at 7pm.

II. Approval of Minutes, November 28, 2023

Ray made a motion to approve the minutes of November 28, 2023. Russ seconded. There was no public comment and the motion passed 5-0, with Adam abstaining as he was not present.

III. Public Comment (non-agenda items)

None.

IV. Old Business

A. Planning Commission Report – Russ provided a summary of recent Planning Commission activities. He noted that the Board of Supervisors had denied the Conditional Use application for the Stokes Estate, and discussion ensued about what the developer’s next step might be. He also reported that the Board of Supervisors had recommended some changes to the Managed Meadow ordinance to pull it out of the Zoning Ordinance and make it broader than being just about meadows. He also reported that the Planning Commission would be discussing its 2024 priorities with the Board of Supervisors on February 20.

B. Update on Birdtown USA – Ray stated that he hadn’t identified any new volunteers for the proposed Birdtown USA Committee other than Joe’s wife Alison. Joe and Bob both indicated that they’d be happy to serve on it. Ray made a motion for the EAC to recommend that the Board of Supervisors authorize the creation of a Birdtown USA Committee. Bob seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed 6-0.

C. Update on Crebilly Acquisition – Jon provided an update on the recent efforts to amend the battlefield map in order to secure funding from the American Battlefield Trust. He noted that there would be a meeting next week with various stakeholders to discuss next steps. He also reported that earlier in the day he had received a mass email from someone at the Chester County Community Foundation asking residents to contact Senator Casey and Senator Fetterman to encourage them to sponsor and vote for SB3568, a version of which has now cleared the House. Adam made a motion to recommend that the Board of Supervisors sign a letter to Senators Fetterman and Casey to support SB3568 and for the Township to encourage residents to do the same. Meghan seconded. Ray noted that he was scheduled to speak with Representative Houlihan’s office next week. The motion passed 6-0.

D. Update on 2024 Priorities – The EAC agreed to discuss their 2024 priorities with the Board at the March 4th Workshop. Meghan suggested that instead of focusing on planting a managed meadow in the Plumly Open Space, that the EAC focus on streambank restoration and controlling invasives along the tributary to the East Branch of Chester Creek. Jon observed that this was likely to meet with less resistance than a managed meadow and may assist the Township with MS4 credits. The EAC expressed support for Meghan’s proposal.

Ray stated that he would write the article for the spring Gazette about a composting seminar that would be hosted at Joe’s house.

The EAC agreed that its four main priorities for discussion with the Board would be: 1) the acquisition of Crebilly; 2) composting; 3) invasive removal and streambank restoration; and 4) Birdtown USA.

E. Update on Subcommittees—The EAC agreed to defer discussion about the subcommittees until the next meeting in February.

F. Update on 2024 Expo & Community Outreach—Joe offered to coordinate a sustainability expo at Oakbourne Mansion. There was general agreement that this wait until after the summer, as it may take a lot of organization to pull off.

G. Update on Proposal for EAC Virtual Conference Presentation—Meghan, Joe, Ray and Bob all indicated that they would participate in this conference. Bob indicated that the EAC wouldn’t make an actual presentation until the fall conference.

V. New Business

A. Consider Crebilly Letter to Federal Legislative Delegation – This topic was previously discussed during the discussion about the Crebilly update.

B. Consider 2024 Gazette Articles – This topic was previously discussed under the 2024 Priorities Update.

C. Consider Date for Board Workshop – This topic was previously discussed under the 2024 Priorities Update.

D. Consider Departmental Reports – Bob indicated that he would give the February 5 Departmental Report. Jon agreed to draft a schedule for the remainder of the year and send it to the group.

VI. **BOS Report** – None.

VII. **Public Comment** – None.

VIII. **Announcements**

Russ suggested that the EAC develop a file of relevant news clippings about environmental and sustainability issues. Adam suggested that the file be stored on the EAC's Google Drive.

IX. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Ray adjourned the meeting at 8:40pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Altshul, Township Manager

DRAFT