

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

Present: EAC members Bob Yeats (Chair), Ray Dandrea (Vice Chair), Joe Debes and Mike Gioia. Russ Hatton, Meghan Hanney, and Adam Kapp were absent. There was one guest.

I. Call to Order

Bob called the meeting to order at 7:13pm.

II. Approval of Minutes, June 25, 2024

Mike made a motion to approve the minutes of June 25, 2024. Ray seconded. There was no public comment and the motion passed 4-0.

III. Public Comment (non-agenda items)

None.

IV. Old Business

A. Riparian Buffer Restoration Project in Plumly Open Space

Joe provided an update that the Board of Supervisors approved the proposal for stream buffer support of Plumly Open Space by Red Tail Restoration and Land Management, LLC for this year. He explained that Red Tail intend to pull remaining invasives, especially around small native tree saplings, and will dig out, cut and trim or foliar spray the areas where invasive vines and shrubs were previously cut. Joe noted that more money would be needed for any additional work. Bob believed there was not much budget left for this year. Joe also stated that Red Tail visited the site and was impressed with the work done, and recommended against application of heavy herbicides. Ray asked about invasive plants currently in the open space a plan to prevent them from spreading. Joe explained that they were not very high at the moment.

Bob brought up question raised by Supervisors Foster about the reasoning behind choosing this particular open space for restoration, and suggested that this decision was based on environmental benefits and recreational opportunities that this project might bring to the community once it is finished. Joe asked whether the Board provided feedback on what other areas to focus. Mila suggested that the EAC review other open spaces and potentially conduct site visits to evaluate the need for restoration. She also suggested touching base with the Public Works Director, who is the most knowledgeable on the Township's open spaces.

Joe stated that he was planning to submit this project to the PA Outdoor Corp for consideration by their deadline of August 2, 2024 in order to utilize them for invasive removal next year. He expressed his frustration that he was told that he not allowed to do so, and asked for a clearer direction on the Township's approval process. Mila explained that the Board has not reviewed or approved such activities, therefore, such application cannot be submitted. She reminded the EAC that they have an advisory role, and explained that if authorized and directed by the Board, then Township staff

would submit such applications. She suggested getting feedback from the Board with the plan to submit an application next year. Joe noted that it would be too late for activities to occur in 2025. Bob suggested to focus on Red Tail completing the work this year, wait for notification about the Healing the Planet program on the EAC's application for tree planting, and to finalize priorities and budget for next year.

B. Roadside Trash Removal

Mike asked for a feedback on the pictures he provided for potential roadside cleanup opportunities. He recapped that Pam Packard suggested focusing on Township-owned roads, but he was not certain which ones they are. Mila noted that ownership information is on the Township website. Bob Yeats thought that most trash can be found along state-owned Street Road, but questioned logistics in trying to address it. Ray noted that Pam suggested looking into the area under the railroad bridge along Oakbourne Road or along S. Concord Road, but he did not know if it was worth the effort. Mike suggested asking the community if they have an interest in roadside cleanup activities and asked how it could be done via email survey. Ray volunteered to conduct a site visit to the railroad bridge and take some pictures.

C. Westtown Day Participation

Mike suggested several ideas for Westtown Day, including demonstration of composting devices, interactive matching game to identify various birds by sound, give away of soil and seeds in egg cartons, and nature stickers. Mike recommended focusing on how to improve interactions and attract families to visit the EAC table. Bob reminded everyone that the EAC discussed giving away reusable bags with the Township logo, but couldn't remember what the estimated cost was. Ray thought it was \$2,000 for specific number of bags. Bob asked what number would be needed for the event. Joe noted it would be a good idea to include in the next year's budget. Ray suggested looking into the estimated cost of 100 bags. The EAC agreed.

V. New Business

A. Priorities for 2025

Joe suggested several priorities for the next year, including composting related initiatives, assistance with the Crebilly land acquisition, and evaluation of open spaces for restoration projects. Bob added the Bird Town Committee initiatives and environmental impact of developing Crebilly into meadows. Ray felt that community composting was worth continued investigation. Mila suggested they consider hosting educational sessions or workshops on relevant subjects. Bob recapped that the EAC's priorities are still aligned with the survey responses that was completed in 2022. Mike asked who came up with the survey questions and whether any of them were related to water and stream cleanups. Bob explained that he worked with Ray and other EAC members on drafting those. The EAC discussed various topics for the workshops. Mila suggested creating a list to discuss at the next meeting.

B. Budget 2025

Based on priorities discussed at the meeting, the EAC proposed the budget request for 2025 to include work activities in the Plumly Open Space (\$5,000), reusable bags (\$1,000), Bird Town Committee initiatives (\$2,000) and Westtown Day (\$1,000). Bob

noted that the Bird Town Committee will meet to discuss their initiatives and budget, and that more detail is needed on some priority items. He suggested to think about the proposed priorities and budget to finalize at the next meeting. The EAC agreed.

VI. Bird Town Committee Report

Bob recapped that Allyson and Ray were named co-chairs by a vote of the Bird Town committee. Dick Pomerantz requested that his wife Bobbie be included as well. The co-chairs will work on creating a content to a Bird Town PA Westtown website. The Bird Town Committee will meet quarterly at 6:15 prior to EAC meetings with the next meeting scheduled for August 27.

VII. Planning Commission Report

None.

VIII. BOS Report

None.

IX. Public Comment

None.

X. Announcements

None.

XI. Adjournment

There being no further business, Bob adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Liudmila Carter
Township Manager