

**RADNOR TOWNSHIP  
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

The February meeting of the Radnor Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) was called to order by Josh Hilbert at 6:00 P.M. on February 26, 2015 at the Radnor Township Municipal Building, Radnorshire Room, 301 Iven Avenue, Wayne, Pennsylvania.

Those present were:

Josh Hilbert, Chairperson  
Sloan Walker, Vice Chairperson  
Skip Kunda, Planning Commission Representative  
Luke Clark, Parks and Recreation Representative  
Daniel Meier  
Matthew Holtman

Those not present were:

Sally Mattison  
Anne Poulin  
Stephen Elliot

**CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mr. Hilbert called the group to order.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Upon motions made and seconded, Mr. Hilbert was re-elected Chairperson and Mr. Walker was re-elected Vice Chairperson of the EAC.

**REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes of the January 22, 2015 EAC meeting were unanimously approved.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The following upcoming events were announced:

- Skunk Hollow Community Garden workshop March 8 ‘understanding your soil,’ [www.radnor.com](http://www.radnor.com)
- Delaware County Household Hazardous Waste Darby PA April 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Lower Merion Conservancy & St. Joseph’s University: Stewarding the Future of Clean Water (stormwater management projects, with community & municipal engagement)
- Chester County Citizens for Climate Protection nuclear power update. John Nagel will

discuss the state of the industry.

- State Rep Greg Vitale will host a hearing of the House Democratic Policy Committee Monday March 2 at 10:00am to discuss global warming. At the state Capitol building. Open to public but questions limited to members of the committee.

Mr. Hilbert also noted that the new Pennsylvania Environmental Council website is dramatically improved and includes lots of interesting new content.

## **DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS RELATED TO ARTIFICIAL TURF**

A discussion was held with Radnor Township School District Director of Operations Leo Bernabei about the plan to update the artificial turf field at Encke Park. EAC had reviewed environmental issues around artificial turf fields in 2008. Mr. Bernabei noted that Encke Field's turf field was installed 2003. The surface now needs to be replaced. Mr. Bernabei invited the EAC to share with him any new findings or concerns that would preclude renewing and slightly expanding the field.

Mr. Bernabei noted that he has evaluated the current fields and their use and benefits and has examined the water recharge system and effluent control systems and the potential for migration of rubber into local tributaries. There was an intensive review in 2008 of environmental and health impacts. The use of crumb rubber in particular has been of concern to many. Mr. Bernabei noted that there is no perfect surface, including grass (which requires use of pesticides and fertilizers). On balance, rubber aggregate appears to be the best in terms of impact resistance and playability. Most athletes would prefer grass, but you only get 20-30 plays per year from them. This makes sports more inclusive when you use artificial turf – you don't have to cut as many players.

There have been a number of studies on heat stress. Radnor uses the National Athletic Trainers' Association guidelines on heat and illness. They evaluate practice intensity & timing and conduct player assessment, etc. relative to temperatures. Rest breaks and water are required for all athletes. They also measure players for concussion and impact injuries. All players must participate in a concussion impact management program.

Mr. Bernabei noted that the township will obtain lead-free certification on the new fields.

Mr. Walker asked what alternatives were explored. Cork and bamboo and sand were investigated (sand raises silica concerns). Migration of rubber into the waystream is a common concern. Mr. Bernabei has inspected the effluent systems and does not see evidence of that. The Nike Grind product is found to be less wholesome than advertised, and engineered inert polymer products are very expensive – they can add several hundred thousand dollars to a field.

Mr. Kunda asked whether both the surface and the infill would be updated. Mr. Bernabei said that only the surface would be replaced; the infill will be re-used. The township budgeted for 10 years of use; the manufacturer warrants 8, and the current fields lasted 13 years. The increased field will be less than 1/3 larger than the current field; an increase of 95 linear feet would be the maximum.

Mr. Hilbert asked about the water collection system. It is similar to underground recharge systems, but shallower. A stone bed is used that includes about 30 inches of clean aggregate sandwiched by geotextile fabric and herringbone pipe. The system takes any surcharge that can't percolate into an effluent pipe into a storm box and then directs it to a tributary. Anything that gets into the box can sink to the bottom. Anything that floats would go out. But township staff checked the effluent into the stream and saw nothing but silt. There was no tire crumb at all. It's possible that some crumb is floating along the top. But it is filtered by the geotextile because the mesh is quite fine. Mr. Walker suggested a trial to see if a filter on the outlet pipe would be worthwhile.

Mr. Meier noted that the storm box is not likely capturing anything from the surface. The geotextile is likely keeping the crumb out of the box. Mr. Walker asked if a berm would be required to capture the surface debris. Mr. Bernabei noted that once the field has been out and played on a few times, the crumb settles down quickly into the fibers. There will be a curb on the new part as well. Staff can use a deep-tine brush to redistribute any migrated crumb from the grass back to the field.

Mr. Hilbert noted that the EAC has spent considerable time reviewing the research. While we saw quite a few studies mentioning potential adverse health studies, he encouraged us not to pay attention to them as it was not within our current purview. He would strongly suggest review of the health issues by the Board of Health or another body that has relevant expertise. Maya Van Rossum of Delaware Riverkeeper sent us an annotated bibliography. We also rely heavily on research reports from the EPA and the Pennsylvania DEP, as well as studies in respected peer-reviewed journals. The EAC did not see any findings that would prevent us from recommending artificial turf or tire crumb in particular. We acknowledge that there are recent studies suggesting that it is possible there are leach issues, but those studies didn't examine outcomes in the field. For example, it is possible that zinc can get into the leachate and then tributaries at levels higher than allowed in the standards set by DEP.

Mr. Walker noted the science is still emerging. He spoke with the EPA's expert on artificial turf, Dr. Firestone, who said there has been no change in the EPA's view that based on limited study the EPA does not see cause for concern. The state of Connecticut has recently undertaken its own updated study of the same issue and reached the same conclusion – there is no evidence to support the idea that artificial turf is unsafe. This is not the end of the discussion; we would like to continue to have dialogue on this issue. In regard to recent articles raising concerns about a possibly elevated risk of cancer among soccer players – examining this would require an epidemiological study. There appears to be no peer-reviewed science to support that concern.

Mr. Hilbert noted the lead-free certification is a great idea.

#### **DISCUSSION OF RADNOR'S RECYCLING PERFORMANCE WITH RESIDENT CHIP ADDIS**

Postponed to next month.

#### **DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF PA CLEAN POWER RESOLUTION WITH RESIDENT MARK KNIGHT**

Mr. Knight read and provided copies of a revised resolution and read a statement on the EPA's upcoming final ruling on carbon reduction. States are to submit their plans before then, or the

EPA will intervene.

Mr. Walker noted 4 prongs of the plan:

1. Emission reduction for coal plants. Currently the best plants are 15% more efficient than the average plant. Calling for 6% efficiency, as in the plan, isn't a stretch.
2. Transferring from coal to natural gas. Penn Future feels we could go to 90% capacity instead of the target 70%.
3. An increase in the use of renewable energy from the current Pennsylvania requirement of 8.5% to 16%; Maryland and New Jersey have set a higher standard of 20%.
4. Energy efficiency through upgrading of streetlights, etc. EPA is calling for 10% improvement. Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission found that we could more than double that and still save money, using a conservative estimate.

We voted on changing the language in the current proposal to 'meet or exceed' rather than 'exceed.' Mr. Walker agreed to revise the proposal and re-circulate it. Then we'll have BOC member Jim Hagans to look at it and see if he supports it.

## **WORKGROUP REPORTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Radnor Green Team –Electric Purchasing RFP**

The purchase was not approved. The quote has expired. EAC members have requested that township staff member Ben Cooper look at the cost of traditional power to see how much we would save. The proposed green power budget added only a few thousand dollars cost to do the clean power purchase. It's in the greenhouse gas action plan, which was passed by the commission. Would also like to work on solar panels.

### **WREN Grant**

Mr. Meier discussed the location and design of the planned rain garden.

### **Greenways and Open Space**

There was some discussion of tree planting initiatives.

## **COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION/AWARENESS**

There was no comment.

## **LIAISON REPORTS**

Mr. Clark gave an update on the cell tower plan for the 3 parks and on the improvement project at Clem Macrone park. He also noted that the Ardrossen trail plan is coming together. There will be 6 new trails. The designer has proposed a network that he will forward on.

Mr. Kunda provided a Planning Commission update. Yesterday the commission gave input on a planned development that represents the first phase of 4 new dormitories at Villanova University. The updated plan included several improvements, including trees, berms, traffic flow, etc. over

the original plan. It will be addressed again on Monday. The latest iteration of the Biomed plan looks like another office plan. The mixed use approach didn't make any headway. It appears that the project will be developed within the existing zoning.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Hilbert discussed the idea of having a 'recycling list' on the Radnor webpage. He started it, then Mr. Walker forwarded a list on the Delaware county website. It seems fairly comprehensive. It was agreed that we would simply provide a link to the Delaware County site.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, on a motion made and seconded, the meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Holtman