

**RADNOR TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

MINUTES

The October meeting of the Radnor Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) was called to order by Josh Hilbert at 6:00 P.M. on October 22, 2015 at the Radnor Township Municipal Building, Radnorshire Room, 301 Iven Avenue, Wayne, Pennsylvania.

Those present were:

Josh Hilbert, Chairperson
Skip Kunda, Planning Commission Representative
Sally Mattison
Matthew Holtman
Daniel Meier
Sloan Walker, Vice Chairperson

Those not present were:

Luke Clark, Parks and Recreation Representative
Anne Poulin

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Hilbert called the group to order. The minutes from the September 24, 2015 meeting were approved.

FENIMORE WOODS POND – DISCUSSION OF WEED/ALGAE PROBLEM

Some concerned citizens have raised the question of the algae problem at the pond at Fenimore Woods Park. Remediation works best in the spring, so a discussion was held for information gathering and planning purposes.

The pond at Fenimore Woods is an artificial pond. It has some man-made inlets that the EAC had some involvement in creating many years ago.

Mr. Paul Bazik provided background information on the pond. The lily pads, some of the grasses, and the duckweed are invasive species. The duckweed chokes the pond and clogs the motors for the fountains. A man named John Monroe used to cut back the duckweed on a regular basis. He was a part-time employee of the Parks Department. But he is no longer available to do this. He probably didn't use any chemical treatments. The Parks Department used to treat the pond regularly with algaecide, but this was probably before Mr. Monroe's involvement. There might have been a pump in the pond at one point.

A company called Weeds Inc. came in and measured out the pond to identify the right mix of chemicals to apply. They cannot do anything until the DEP and Fish Commission sign off. Treatment was supposed to start in July but the permitting process took so long. They initially began treatment around the edges. The initial cost was \$450 for treating the duckweed, water lilies and algae.

Mr. Hilbert asked about the reed beds. Mr. Bazik wasn't involved in the initial construction, but explained that the shell is a rectangle made of blacktop, covered with sand and gravel, with PVC pipe running through it. It appears that the reed beds were designed to capture and filter runoff from Chamounix Road. The inflow includes a 6-inch pipe from the creek; the outflow at the end isn't huge. Mr. Bazik suggested putting in a slightly bigger pipe on the front to try to keep the water fresh, as it is currently stagnant. Mr. Walker noted that the Mill Dam pond is fed directly by a stream and doesn't have nearly as big an algae problem.

Mr. Meier also examined the pond and noted that the intake pipe isn't obvious, and wonders if it is clogged with silt. Ms. Mattison wondered if a fountain would help. Mr. Hilbert asked to see any existing engineering drawings for the reed bed. Whatever water the pond is taking in, it doesn't seem to be enough to offset evaporation, as there is no outflow on the other side.

Mr. Kunda lived near Mill Pond for many years and noted that they didn't seem to treat it regularly, but the flow was strong enough that algae was never a problem. A substantially larger pipe (say, 12 inches) might make a difference at Fenimore.

Mr. Walker asked whether the algae treatment at the Willows had been effective and whether there were any adverse effects. Mr. Bazik believes it was effective with no ill effects. Mr. Walker suggested putting signs up to warn residents about the chemicals including some safety rules regarding how soon people can go fishing after treatment.

Ms. Mattison asked about geese in the pond. Is the presence of geese contributing to the algae? Do we maybe need to let more grass grow around the edge? Mr. Bazik doesn't believe higher grass makes much difference. Mr. Walker noted that Mill Pond is better, partly because there are duck decoys and a low fence around strategically chosen parts of the pond to discourage geese. Mr. Kunda noted that the caretaker has 2 dogs that also help.

Mr. Hilbert stated that the EAC is supportive of efforts to improve the pond. Because it is an artificial structure, our assumption is that the concrete structure was designed as a feed system. He suggests that like any engineered structure, it needs appropriate maintenance and repair (at least as a precursor to chemical treatment). Mr. Bazik agreed this would be a good step.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Hilbert made the following announcement. From PA Environmental Council website: PEC and Villanova held an Urban Stormwater workshop.

Mr. Meier noted that on Nov 17, a forum on stormwater management will be held at the Radnor Memorial Library from 6:30-8:30pm.

Ms. Mattison mentioned several upcoming events:

On October 23 there is a 'green your neighborhood' workshop Ashland (GBDBC.org). On November 9, climatologist Michael Mann will be presenting "The Hockey Stick and the Climate Wars" at 7:00pm at Bonnell Auditorium, Community College of Philadelphia, 17th & Spring Garden.

On Friday 11/13, there will be an all-day Annual Sustainability Conference at PECO, 2301 Market. Speakers will include a professor from Drexel, who will speak about reducing emissions

in Philadelphia by 80% by 2015. <https://www.ecasavesenergy.org/>

WORKGROUP REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Radnor Green Team

Mr. Walker reported that there were good discussions that Melissa Conn set up with the Police Department, Public Works & Community Development. The Police are looking to team up with the Radnor School District to use the new natural gas facility that the School District is putting in place. The committee will follow up with him next week via Lt. Flanagan. They are also considering whether one of the small vehicles would be good hybrid candidate.

Kevin Cochansky at community development has noted that there is not a great need for hybrids, but they are considering a light diesel pickup.

Steve Norcini from public works is considering the largest number of candidate vehicles, mainly pickup trucks. Again, small light diesels get better gas mileage than gas trucks. The Green Team is working with Steve to analyze options. Follow up discussion will take place early next week.

Mr. Kunda noted that there are some additional intangibles to offset the cost premium – diesels have much longer-lasting drivetrains, and maintenance costs may be lower. Biodiesel may also be available, which represents both a green purchase and a savings.

Mr. Hilbert noted that the green purchasing policy requires environmentally friendly alternatives be considered for any purchase. The process is to assess needs and find out whether there's a product that meets the needs for a reasonable cost that's environmentally preferable; then do a cost/benefit analysis before making a decision. This is a great example of what we had in mind. Only a few hours of research were required, and the information can be used over and over again.

Sustainable Parks workgroup

Mr. Meier reported that he talked to PEC's Paul Racette about meadowization grant opportunities. There is a program from the National Fish and Wildlife with a deadline in December. The DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program and the Growing Greener Grants are still available. Those will take place in the spring.

Brian Vadino at Delaware County Conservation District administers mini-grants of \$500, twice per year. Another organization, TreeVitalize, provides grants in the \$4-6k range, up to \$14k, for planting trees in riparian areas.

Mr. Bazik says there's no critical size for a meadow, but what matters is the invasive species nearby. A meadow on a forest edge or against a road works well. He advised getting some flowers in to boost the appeal to residents.

Mr. Hilbert reached out to East Bradford township to ask about their successful meadowization near Brandywine Creek at Shaws Bridge Park. He never heard back but will continue to pursue feedback on costs, headaches, pushback from residents, park utilization, etc.

Mr. Meier raised this issue at recent BirdTown meeting and met someone who has results of a study they can pass.

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION/AWARENESS

Mr. Hilbert reported that the Parent-Teacher Organization at Wayne Elementary School and the Green Committee have implemented a Recycling Ranger program that just started.

LIAISON REPORTS

Clare Girton from Parks and Rec mentioned that meadowization and greenways are active discussions. Grant funding is also under discussion. Tami and Bob Sikowski are working on those things. Clem Macrone is the park they are most focused on currently. Meadowization projects are also underway at Encke park.

Mr. Kunda noted that the Planning Commission's most recent meeting was devoted to work on the new development ordinance. It is not yet ready for a vote. They are getting data from the consultant. They were asked for more concrete numbers on traffic neutrality, which is the most important aspect.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sam Hilbert is a 5th grader at WES. He reported that the Recycling Rangers program hasn't yet started, but the green sashes have been delivered. He is the 'bin guy.'

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There is a vacancy on the EAC. If anyone is interested in joining us for about an hour one evening a month, they should submit a letter of interest to Bob Zienkowski.

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