



New Britain Township

Environmental Advisory Council

Kathleen Davis, Chair	John Granger, NBT Manager
Brooke Newborn, Vice-Chair	MaryBeth McCabe, NBT Supervisor
Mary Margaret Briggs, Secretary	
Kathleen Dutil, Member	
Jaime Walker, Member*	

Minutes – March 28, 2024

Attended: K. Davis, B. Newborn, M. Briggs, M. McCabe, J. Granger

***Regrets:** J. Walker, K. Dutil

Meeting was called to order by K. Davis @ 7:00 pm.

Discussion:

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes - Upon motion by B. Newborn, seconded by M. Briggs, the council unanimously approved the February 22, 2024 minutes.
3. Announcements –
 - K. Davis summarized the EAC table at the NBT Easter Egg Hunt was well received. M. Briggs and K. Davis manned the table – thank you to Bill May (NBT) for setting up our table for us, and to Kirstyn Gudknecht from Peace Valley Nature Center (PVNC) for the flyer help and nice handouts.
 - K. Davis noted good attendance at the March 7th “Got mud?” workshop (presented by PVNC and Bucks County Conservation District (BCCD)).
 - E-Recycling is planned for Saturday, May 4, 9 am to 1 pm at 207 Park Avenue, Chalfont
 - Spring yard waste collection drop off is planned Tuesday, May 7 to Friday, May 10 from 730 am to 230 pm and Saturday, May 11 from 8 am to 12 noon at 207 Park Avenue, Chalfont.
4. At the next EAC meeting (April 25), K. Jones will present regarding ongoing NBT planting projects (Veterans Park, Marshall Circle, Circle Drive, West Branch Park). K. Davis noted that it would be good if the EAC sponsor/co-sponsored these types of projects in the future. Ken had been coordinating with NBT Public Works and volunteers.
5. B. Newborn announced she would be participating as a member on the Parks & Recreation Commission; her resignation on the EAC will be effective, after new EAC member is appointed.



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6. K. Davis, M. Briggs, and B. Newborn provided a brief report on the EAC's March 14th meeting with Amanda Sandor, Bucks County Conservation District. B. Newborn noted identifying information had been redacted from the plans Ms. Sandor shared with EAC members. Ms. Sandor pointed out to the EAC members how grading, tree removal, protection of trees not to be removed, and stormwater management were laid out in the plans. Ms. Sandor is responsible for inspecting development sites and approving progress during the construction process. Fines can be levied if plans are not appropriately implemented.
7. Recommendations to Board of Supervisors regarding Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance amendments were discussed. Discussion will continue at the April 25 meeting.
 - Woodlands
 - K. Davis explained the zoning ordinance requires no more than 20% of trees can be removed in woodlands located in districts CR, WS, RR, SR-1 & SR-2. and no more than 50% in other districts. If more than 20% of trees in the latter are removed, corrective options are for trees to be replaced or a fee in lieu option may be offered by the developer, provided the Board of Supervisors approves. It was noted there is no legal requirement for NBT to offer a fee in lieu option to developers. The current ordinance offering a fee in lieu was implemented in 2002, per M. McCabe. Many neighboring communities do not offer fee in lieu.
 - J. Coleman (NBT resident) questioned the length of tree guarantee by developers. M. McCabe noted there were many dead trees at the new Wawa and suggested the EAC could send a note to Wawa Corporate headquarters, on behalf of the township, to make them aware of the dead trees. T. Young (NBT resident) asked when the clock started regarding tree guarantees. J. Granger stated that trees are guaranteed for 18 months and the clock starts after the BOS accepted dedication of the project. M. Briggs suggested perhaps the time frame for tree longevity guarantees could be extended. K. Davis noted trees with 3½ inch calipers take more care and regular watering, to keep them alive.
 - K. Davis noted the BOS can engage an independent professional planner (at the developer's expense), to review how the developer has laid out the property and the removal/replacement of trees. The planner can work with the developer to achieve an acceptable plan.
 - Traffic Impact Study
 - Current amendment requires a traffic study for residential developments of 50 or more units. M. Briggs noted this may not capture the traffic expected (e.g. traffic volume from fifty 1-br. units vs. traffic from fifty 4-br. units will be different). She suggested traffic studies be required based on planned parking spaces.
 - Parking Amendment has not been discussed, at this EAC meeting.
 - M. Briggs suggested SALDO §22-714 (Lighting) be updated, as it has not been updated since 2002. Environmental lighting concerns have changed in the last 22 years.
 - M. Briggs suggested SALDO §22-722 (Butler Overlay District) be updated to coordinate with other zoning and SALDO updates (e.g. native planting list). K. Davis noted Toll Bros



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agreed to use native list and to implement dark sky lighting in the Birch Run development.

8. Lighting in New Britain Township - A robust discussion with township residents about the environmental impact of lighting began.
 - C. Weston-Young (NBT resident) noted the impact on humans and wildlife, pollinators, etc and that lower levels of light and warm light could be better for the health of residents, neighbors, wildlife and birds.
 - K. Davis noted that interested parties in the community and at the meeting could help by researching how other townships and boroughs improve their lighting ordinances.
 - M. Briggs and K. Davis noted the EAC could begin by educating the public about the benefits of lighting changes, perhaps at the Fall Festival.
 - J. Granger noted that the township engineer could develop a township wide standard (in lumens) that is acceptable, the BOS could implement the change, and old township street lights could be changed (and reduce energy costs), while new developments could be required to use the new standard.
 - J. Coleman noted it is not just lumens but also the light spectrum that is important, to improve lighting.
 - M. McCabe noted the township cannot require individual home owners to change lights, but we could impact change by educating the public.
 - J. Granger noted that sometimes folks with bright lighting are unaware of how they might be affecting their neighbors. Development of a mailing (to residents) with pictures and recommendations was suggested, as well as updates for the township website. J. Granger suggested we take pictures of other townships or communities, with examples where improved and more environmentally friendly lighting programs were successfully implemented. Mr. Granger noted it would be important to note the improved economic impact of using updated lighting.
 - K. Davis noted the importance of consideration of BUG rating (Backlight-Uplight-Glare), as well of the use of "shielded" lights.
 - M. Chalich (NBT resident) noted safety of residents needed to be considered, and K. Davis clarified that shielded lighting provides light for safety concerns, while reducing the excess light from radiating up into the sky. M. Briggs shared a printed example of shielded lighting vs. non-shielded lighting with meeting attendees.
 - M. McCabe suggested the EAC add an educational section to the NBT bi-annual newsletter mailing.
 - T. Young suggested we recruit neighborhood leaders to help educate their neighbors.
 - M. McCabe noted many of the developers have been open to building neighborhoods with more environmentally friendly native planting and lights (best practices). T. Young suggested the EAC publicize Toll Brothers positive impact on the environment, when the development is complete.
 - K. Davis also suggested we also try to educate landscapers about the improper application of "tree volcanos" (building up too much mulch on the root flare of trees).



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9. Update on landscape plans around New Britain Township Building – J. Young (Parks & Rec member, and landscape architect) produced a nice plan for landscaping around the township building with native plants, which is on hold. M. McCabe noted the building plans are still under discussion and could take up to 5 years to implement. She suggested we implement a short-term landscape plan for the front of the building, even though some of the planting might need to be dug up. B. Newborn suggested the plan be coordinated with the Parks & Rec Commission. M. McCabe asked if J. Young could circulate the plan to the BOS and Ms. McCabe.
10. Other business – A survey is being developed to gather information for an update of the NBT Open Space Plan. The plan (and survey) is being developed in coordination with the Bucks County Planning Commission.

K. Davis and M. McCabe discussed the availability of funds for purchase of development rights and conservation easements. T. Young noted an adjoining neighbor to him, was doing a conservation easement on his property.

11. Public comment on non-agenda items - none

12. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by B. Newborn, seconded by M. Briggs. Meeting was adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Davis, Chair

*The Next Meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council of New Britain Township will take place on **Thursday, April 25, 7:00 pm** at the New Britain Township Building, 207 Park Avenue, Chalfont, Pa. Agenda is posted to the Township website prior to the meeting date at www.newbritaintownship.org.*