
PRESENT

Casey LaLonde	<i>Township Manager</i>	Henry Alexander	<i>Vice Chair</i>
Ashley Gagne	<i>Township Supervisor</i>	Natalie Caruso	<i>Member</i>
John Hellmann	<i>Township Supervisor</i>	Susan Charkes	<i>Member</i>
		Cynthia Sheikh	<i>Member</i>
		Tinamarie Smith	<i>Member</i>
		Dorothy Verdon	<i>Secretary</i>
		Melanie Vile	<i>Chair</i>

The monthly meeting of the West Goshen Township (WGT) Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC) convened virtually via GoToMeeting was called to order by Chair Melanie Vile (MV) at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 26, 2021. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Henry Alexander (HA) and seconded by Tinamarie Smith (TS) to approve the December 22, 2020 meeting minutes. All were in favor and the motion carried.

2. UPDATE ON ITEMS FROM DECEMBER 22 MEETING

- A. **Tree City certification.** Susan Charkes (SC) volunteered to lead the effort. On January 6, 2021, the board of supervisors (BOS) approved the SAC initiative to apply for entry and participate in the Tree City USA program. The Township Park & Recreation Board and the Historical Commission participate in the program as well. The goal is to reach Tree City status in 2021.

Committee discussion ensued, focusing on next steps. Consensus was reached to use Arbor Day as the occasion to honor historic trees, specifically the 300-year-old weeping beech (around 700 Old Fern Hill Road). Because the tree is on private property, we must first obtain the owner's permission. If approved, the April 23 outdoor ceremony would be limited to 300 people. SC will draft a history of the tree to present at the ceremony. She also suggested that we include information about the tree on the SAC webpage.

3. WGT FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER SAC ARTICLE AND LOGO

- A. MV requested approval of the final draft for the quarterly newsletter, scheduled for distribution on February 9. She also asked if Dorothy Verdon (DV) would be interested in generating future articles. DV stated she would be happy to work with MV and other committee members to do so.
- B. Casey LaLond (CL) confirmed that the SAC may generate a unique logo, to be reviewed and approved by the BOS. DV volunteered to develop designs for the committee's review at the February meeting.

4. COMMUNITY GARDEN

- A. SAC discussion was centered on the location of the park. Ashley Gagne (AG), who had attended the most recent Parks & Rec Department meeting, spoke about plans to relocate the existing Robert E. Lambert dogpark on Pottstown Pike, which would free up that space for a community garden. She cited the benefits of the site: fenced, sunny, with available water. Because the dog park was funded by grants from the county and state, approvals for the new use could take time.
- B. AG suggested forming an ad hoc committee to work with Parks & Rec on planning for the new use. MV and TS volunteered to serve on the committee.

4. COMMUNITY GARDEN (Cont'd.)

- C. AG will ask Ken Lehr to add this topic to the Parks & Rec board meeting on February 17, 2021.
- D. There was additional discussion about establishing a theme for the garden, where the food would go, and community engagement extending to Greystone Elementary School.

6. PLASTIC BAG INITIATIVE

- A. Pennsylvania lawmakers used a budget-related bill to extend the current moratorium on such bans for at least a year. The new provision, inserted into the fiscal code (HB1083), prohibits municipalities from enacting any fees or restrictions on all single-use plastics such as bags, utensils or Styrofoam containers.
- B. To overcome the constraints of HB1083, TS suggested a two-phase approach. The first phase is to convince the two major grocery stores in WGT (Acme and Shop-Rite) to either ban plastic bags or charge \$.05 for each, with half of the revenue donated to the township set aside for actions relevant to sustainability. The second is for WGT to enact a plastic bag ban. CL commented that the township cannot enact any ordinance or law unless specifically allowed to do so by the state, and it must first be written into the Second Class Township Code. The SAC will invite the township solicitor's representative to provide information about the feasibility of doing this.
- C. CL suggested the SAC and township work with Acme, Shop-Rite and Wawa to persuade them to voluntarily adopt a plastic bag ban. DV commented that Costco does not provide bags and it does not seem to have hurt business.

7. DIRECTION OF THE SAC

- A. TS asked whether committee members will work together on an initiative or keep forming ad hoc committees. AG responded that the SAC should pick three goals to work on together. HA and SC agree that there will be issues that we can work on together as a committee. MV talked about the strengths of some of the members. TS envisions the SAC working as a team on the plastic bag ban, sustainability messaging, and tree planting.

8. RIPARIAN BUFFER

- A. SC brought to the SAC's attention an issue regarding stream bank erosion at Barker Park noticed by the Goshen Tree Tenders and suggested that it is a good candidate for live stake planting. The sustainability goal would be to reduce erosion and improve stream flow. CL provided background about site: the stream runs through the park and past the Falcon Road sewer pump station. He suggested addition of this topic to the Sewer Authority's teleconference meeting on February 11. CL also recommended that the Tree Tenders work with HRG, the Sewer Authority's engineer, to devise a stream preservation plan and mentioned that past improvements using J-hooks had failed. He then noted that the pump station is scheduled for upgrades and major stream bank erosion repair will be worked into that project.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

10. MOTION TO ADJOURN

A motion was made by HA to adjourn at approximately 8:00 p.m. It was seconded by TS and the motion carried.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the SAC is scheduled for Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. All meetings will be virtual until further notice.