

Upper Makefield *Township*

Environmental Advisory Council Meeting

January 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The January 12, 2021 virtual public meeting of the Upper Makefield Township Environmental Advisory Council was called to order by Chair Bud Baldwin at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were the following members of the Environmental Advisory Council: Chair Bud Baldwin, Vice Chair Keith Miller, Member Harry Barfoot, Member Kathryn Benson and Member Cathy Magliocchetti. Also in attendance were Board of Supervisors Liaison Ed Ford, Guest Presenter Christina Groves ISO/CRS Specialist for the Community Rating System and Planning and Zoning Administrator Denise Burmester.

Confirmation of Quorum: Mr. Baldwin confirmed a quorum.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- A. December 8, 2020:** A motion was made by Mr. Barfoot to approve the December 8, 2020 minutes with no amendments. The motion was seconded by Mr. Miller and carried by a unanimous vote.

Discussion Items:

- A. 2021 Reorganization:** A motion was made that Mr. Baldwin remain Chair by Mr. Barfoot and was seconded by Ms. Magliocchetti. The motion carried with a unanimous vote. A motion was made for Keith Miller to remain Vice Chair by Mr. Baldwin and seconded by Ms. Magliocchetti. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

B. Christina Groves ISO/CRS Specialist for the Community Rating System:

Ms. Groves mentioned that last week she discussed in depth the current Upper Makefield Township CRS program with Ms. Burmester and Mr. Kuhns and that it will take a lot of work to grow the program. She explained that the premise of the CRS program is to reduce the cost of flood insurance premiums for policy holders provided the Township practices regulatory standards above and beyond the minimums. By promoting public safety and overall flood awareness and continuity in the program, the risk is less and premiums can therefore be reduced. Since Upper Makefield would like a higher CRS rating to receive larger discounts, Ms. Groves made suggestions to achieve additional credits through public outreach, probably at no cost to the Township. She noted the following:

- New flood maps must be verified.
- Current hazard mitigation plan is set to expire in October 2021. Since update will probably not be ready at the time of expiration, it's important that verification is filed early in order to take advantage of the plan before it expires, avoiding non-compliance.
- Buildings in flood plains need to be recounted.
- A new program manual (SDRS - 2021 Addendum) has been adopted, which changed the CRS manual requirements for this year. Upper Makefield Township will need to meet the new prerequisites in addition to the ones already existing in the old manual.

- In addition to complying with the new requirements, UMT plans to work towards a class improvement. A task list was created of items to be done prior to the official verification visit at which time the points are calculated.

Questions followed by the EAC members:

- What is meant by “no cost” outreach? Ms. Groves explained that some of her other jurisdictions utilize closed circuit channels or a community information cable channel to promote directive flood safety messages, specifically by text messages across the screen. Cable services do not usually charge for this. Messages would be composed specific to Upper Makefield Township and scheduled to achieve maximum points. Ms. Magliocchetti suggested using slides about flood safety on the UMT channel.
- Does the Emergency Management Coordinator come into play? Ms. Groves said that flood warning procedures definitely count towards points but there are a specific number and type of requirements that need to be met in order to get credits.
- Does the stretch of property from Solebury to Lower Makefield count towards open space since it will remain the same with no future development? Ms. Groves asked specific questions about this particular property and said it could possibly be added to the open space calculations. She mentioned that Mr. Kuhns is working on recalculating new acreage, verifying properties that were already credited, and see if there are any that can be added.
- Would adding communication to the Police Department Facebook page create additional points? Ms. Groves said that social media use can absolutely add credits.
- What are the biggest avenues for additional credits? Ms. Groves identified some areas that can bring the current 724 points to the 1,000 point goal. For example, 166 additional points can be earned by Community Outreach without even establishing a PPI. She will make other suggestions along the way as well as evaluate 10 acre lots per Mr. Baldwin’s comments.

C. Arbor Day Tree Distribution:

Mr. Baldwin mentioned that 2021 Arbor Day is the last Friday in April. Ms. Magliocchetti explained that she previously reached out to the Arbor Day Foundation, who established a website for the Township where residents could go in and make tree selections. The order was then tallied and billed to the Township. Trees were dropped off at the Township parking lot and residents came to pick them up. Discussion among the EAC members continued:

- Mr. Baldwin stated that last time there were about 100 trees ordered at a cost of approximately \$5,000.
- Per Ms. Magliocchetti, resident notification was through announcements at meetings as well as part of a direct mailing that was already being done by the Township.
- There was only one issue last time – the remaining trees that were not picked up.
- Very little work was needed by the EAC other than handing out trees and checking them off the list. The Arbor Day Foundation took care of everything else.
- Mr. Barfoot summarized, stating that most likely, the Arbor Day Foundation can easily update the website and the Township can communicate to residents (website, eNews, direct mail?, other), set up pick up dates, etc. without a whole lot of work. This then becomes an event driven activity done annually until the tree fund is gone.
- The Arbor Day Foundation does require a minimum that must be established up front. Dr. Ford does not think this is an issue, as any remaining trees can be planted on UMT

properties.

- Last time, there may have been a limit of one tree per resident.
- Dr. Ford mentioned there was extensive loss of trees in Washington Crossing, namely of the Ash variety, and that these residents should definitely be notified of this program, perhaps by posters or flyers in the Crossing businesses.

A motion was made to enter into an agreement with Arbor Day Foundation for the minimum number of trees required for an order, not to exceed \$6,000.00 for the minimum order; fees to Arbor Day Foundation to include a website hosted by Arbor Day Foundation to be accessible consecutive years, residents will have the ability to request the trees, with no charge to the resident, from the Arbor Day website, residents will not have a reimbursement available for planting costs; and EAC will arrange for distribution of the trees via a pick-up location, by Mr. Barfoot and was seconded by Mr. Miller. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

D. UMT Tree Grant Modifications:

Mr. Barfoot explained the basics of the current on-going Tree Grant program that allows residents to purchase trees and get reimbursed. Discussion followed:

- PA native species need to be identified.
- The Tree Fund reimbursement amount per tree should be increased.
- Reimbursement currently is for tree purchase only. Planting cost may be an obstacle for participation, so perhaps a planting reimbursement should be added in hopes that a planting reimbursement will increase the amount of trees planted.
- Mr. Barfoot researched costs of both trees and planting. He made suggestions on the fair amounts for reimbursement, etc.
- Concerns arose over the validity of receipts submitted for planting reimbursement.
- Deer protection reimbursement amount should also be raised.
- Including shrubs for reimbursement can be discussed at a later date.
- The Tree Grant program needs to be advertised. Some thoughts to get message to residents are: posters and/or flyers in the Crossing businesses, post on the Township website, put tags on trees at local nurseries, update forms and hand out to local nurseries.
- Perhaps David Library property should be reforested if farming is not continuing.

A motion was made to update the Upper Makefield Tree Grant program to increase the reimbursement to \$50.00 per tree, the addition of a tree planting reimbursement not to exceed \$25.00 per tree, and increasing the deer protection reimbursement to \$6.00 per tree with a maximum yearly Grant reimbursement of \$975.00 per property, by Mr. Barfoot and was seconded by Ms. Benson. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

E. Newtown Area Jointure - Comprehensive Plan Update:

Mr. Baldwin asked to postpone this discussion due to the length of the document. Ms. Burmester explained that the entire plan was included for reference but there is a second shorter document that summarizes the changes. The EAC members will review the shorter document and add to a future agenda.

Liaison Reports:

A. Board of Supervisors – Ed Ford:

Reorganization took place and every remained the same except that Karin Traina took over as Planning and Zoning Liaison.

B. Park & Recreation - Cathy Magliocchetti:

No updates at this time. She is no longer the Chair but will check on updates for the next EAC meeting.

C. Planning and Zoning – Denise Burmester:

Sol Feinstone has submitted their building permit application and plans. A short recap of what was previously approved by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors followed.

D. New Business:

Mr. Barfoot suggested some items that need to be discussed at a future meeting:

- Meadow management programs
- Earth Day
- Trash along streets
- Propane tank screening
- Township beautification event

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Mr. Barfoot and seconded by Mr. Miller to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Approved: February 10, 2021