

Upper Makefield *Township*

Environmental Advisory Council Meeting

April 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The April 13, 2021 virtual public meeting of the Upper Makefield Township Environmental Advisory Council was called to order by Chair Bud Baldwin at 7:06 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, Member Nicole Khan, Member Cathy Magliocchetti, and Member Jack Wiseman. Also in attendance were Board of Supervisors Liaison Ed Ford, 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. **March 9, 2021:** A motion was made by Mr. Barfoot to approve the March 9, 2021 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Benson and carried by a unanimous vote.

Discussion Items:

A. **Holly Pond Property Review:** Mr. Baldwin suggested meeting at the Township Building on Saturday, April 24, 2021 at 10:00 AM. All EAC Members agreed with the exception of Ms. Benson, who has a scheduling conflict and will join the group later at the site. Ms. Burmester confirmed that she will advise the property owner and neighbors of the date and time.

B. **Water Issues at Mill Pond and Mt. Eyre:** Ms. Benson and Ms. Khan did a detailed analysis of the area and presented their findings to the EAC to include the following points:

- The native soil does not allow infiltration, creating high run off potential.
- Pictures show there is a constant flow of water because of poor absorption into the soil.
- Basements of homes in this area constantly flood. Sump pumps run regularly not solely from run off of the 18-acre property but from the area's high-water tables.
- Nothing can be done on the 18 acres that will correct the water issues. Trees, for example, would take many years to make any difference.

Discussion continued among the EAC members to include the following points:

- The 18-acre parcel was farmed long before the houses were built.

- Water from sump pumps is due to high water tables in the area and has little or nothing to do with run off from the 18-acre parcel. The houses were built with basements in an area with very high-water tables. No matter what is done on the 18-acre property for run off, it will not solve or even effect the basement water issues.
- In response to resident's complaints of water issues, the Township's Public Works Department attempted resolution by installing a berm in 2010/2011. Modifications to the berm have been on-going but still to no avail.
- The goal is to solve the issue of runoff water from the 18-acre property which will help, but certainly not solve, the basement water problems.
- Reforestation would be a good solution but will take too long to establish. A meadow may be a quicker alternative. Perhaps the best plan moving forward is to improve the existing berm, add a meadow, and plant larger trees.
- Communication with the residents about what will be done is crucial. They need to understand that although the above ground water issues will be corrected, the underground water issues will still exist.

A motion was made by Ms. Magliocchetti to present the Board Of Supervisors a plan for the 18 acres on Mt. Eyre that will consider the three components for improvement: a meadow, reforestation, and modifications to the current berm, after discussion with the Township Engineer. The motion was seconded by Ms. Khan and carried by a unanimous vote.

Dr. Ford will ask Mr. Nyman to add this topic as an agenda item at an upcoming BOS meeting.

- C. Comprehensive Plan Review:** The EAC discussed each item listed under "Newtown Township EAC recommendations" and made the following suggestions:
1. Climate Energy – replace the term "climate emergency" with "effects of climate change".
 2. Smart Growth – further discussion is needed so no decision made at this time. Ms. Burmester will look into deadlines for the Comprehensive Plan review.
 3. Native Plants – add "Promote Meadows".
 4. Watersheds and Stormwater – add UMT Creeks and "Improve Water Quality".
 5. Trees – reference current UMT Tree Program.
 6. Plastic – support as written.
 7. Renewable Energy – in favor of renewable energy however UMT's restrictions on front facing roof solar panels need to be re-examined. Also, Wind Energy should be added.
 8. Open Space – add the development of a Rating System to promote open space.
 9. Bike Paths – support as written.
 10. Electric Vehicles – add the word "Hybrid".
 11. Suggest an additional point: Overall Beautification Strategies.

Ms. Khan pointed out that Newtown Township and Upper Makefield Township are very different areas and not everything applies to both.

Protection of existing agricultural and open space is a priority for Upper Makefield Township.

Liaison Reports:

A. Board of Supervisors – Ed Ford:

Meetings have been short and concise. The Brick property conservation easement was approved. Some basic variances have been reviewed.

B. Park & Recreation - Cathy Magliocchetti:

Ms. Magliocchetti has not been involved in Parks and Rec, so has no update to provide.

C. Planning and Zoning – Denise Burmester:

Nothing new to report.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Mr. Wiseman and seconded by Mr. Barfoot to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Approved: May 11, 2021