

UWCHLAN TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Working Session Meeting

February 18, 2021

Attending: Laura Obenski, Toni Gorkin, Alexa Manning, Tawnya McCain, Nick Kurtz, Kimberly Mariani; Joe Laird, Parks and Rec Committee; Jackie Pickering, John Neilson, students from Downingtown East High School Environment Club (Sofia Hunt, Vivian Tieu, Izzy John); Sarah Gray (WC University environment class student).

Laura Obenski called the meeting to order at 6:32.

Laura introduced the students from Downingtown East High School Environment Club. They described their Tree-Plenish project to plant donated trees on April 24 to “replenish” the paper used in school.

- **2021 Outreach Event Planning:**

Laura reviewed virtual events are being planned on four categories, including stormwater management for homeowners, native plants/alternatives to lawn, reduce-recycle-reuse, and clean energy.

Native Plants: Toni reported on the events she has been planning. She mentioned an initiative suggested in a recent Northern Chester County EAC conference around making native plants available to the public.

Stormwater Management: Nick and Tawnya will work on a PowerPoint going over MS4, the township’s obligations, and what citizens can do about stormwater and water quality. Tips to homeowners associations could be provided on how to manage basins and help with water quality by limiting pesticides. Discussion ensued about how to support Nick and Tawnya. The EAC has a list of homeowners associations; pictures of local basins would help. Publicity will be done as soon as they set a date; spring was suggested as a target.

Reduce-Reuse-Recycle: Jackie Pickering has done some content for the Township eNewsletter. The Downingtown students were interested in doing recycling projects, but Covid school closings intervened, and students need more training. There was extensive discussion around how much and how truly materials were being recycled in the schools (and elsewhere). The students were interested in an event or focused project that provided an incentive, and it was suggested that a conversation with the School Board would help to open up the topic, and Laura agreed to follow up on that. Other comments included pushing companies not to produce single use plastics, or to ban plastic bags as was done in other states. It was noted that some opportunities exist to recycle special materials like crayons.

Renewable Energy and Ready for 100 Progress: Alexa suggested June as a timeframe

for a public presentation; she and Laura are still attending classes and working on the Township's Energy Transition Plan. She noted a Ready for 100 Schools Group just started, looking for reps from all the school environmental clubs in county. The idea is to promote schools becoming clean energy schools - include solar, thermal, and energy savings in any new or repairs to schools. The presentation could include an update and a walkthrough of a home energy audit.

- **April 22 - Earth Week - theme is Restore Our Earth**

Our EAC will collaborate and help publicize other events rather than run a separate one, but Laura and Alexa suggested incorporating a trash cleanup in the observance, as the recent cleanup generated a lot of enthusiasm. They suggested a friendly contest across teams or neighborhoods, with a trash trophy for the winner. Sofia said the students would be interested in participating.

The Tree-Plenish project planting date is April 24, within Earth Week.

Joe Laird spoke up representing the Parks and Recs committee about trees -- and other opportunities for cross-collaboration between Parks and Recs and the EAC were discussed, such as extending the Heart of Uwchlan efforts beyond the Township park and removing invasives in Township parks.

A special Township eNewsletter issue was suggested. That raised the question about whether there should be a separate EAC monthly newsletter. Kimmy is working on infographics for EAC issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Gorkin, Secretary