

To: LMT Board of Supervisors and Township Manager

January 16, 2023

From: LMT EAC

Subject: 2022 Year End Review

The EAC in LMT plays an important role in enhancing the quality of life for all citizens of our township. Accordingly, it is deemed important for us to prepare a Year End Review for the citizens and leaders of our community so that they may more properly assess the value we add to the quality of life in LMT. This review will also briefly discuss the projects we intend to pursue in 2023.

Sound environmental practices equate to a sound economic policy. We feel strongly that our efforts have not only resulted in LMT becoming a 'better place to live' and 'a standout environmental community', but by doing so, we have also improved home values and the quality of life in the township.

The EAC's 2022 activities include the following:

1. **Township Ordinances** – The EAC participated and commented on several environmentally related revisions to the existing LMT ordinances.
  - a. Landscape and Open Lands Requirements (Sections 80, 81, and 82 of Ch. 178) – The EAC worked with the Township to update the Township's Ordinance related to Native Plants. The update consisted of revising the allowable tree caliper sizes, adding a clause allowing up to 20% non-native plants, changing some buffer language, and adding additional plant species which are native to the region. The EAC strongly opposed adding non-native trees and shrubs to the acceptable plant list. The proposed revision of the ordinance was never approved.
  - b. Revisions to the Stormwater Management Ordinances (Ch. 173 & 174) – In order to meet NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit obligations, LMT was required to amend its stormwater ordinances to be consistent with DEP's 2022 Model Stormwater Management Ordinance Amendments. After being asked to comment, the EAC submitted a July 7, 2022 letter to the Township with suggestions on how to improve our ordinances based on the 2022 Model Ordinance. The EAC recommended several of the optional requirements be enacted because of the Township's growing local flooding problem due to increased development and increased frequency of heavy precipitation events.
  - c. Brush, Grass and Weeds (Ch. 84) – The EAC continues to work with the Jim Majewski (Community Development Director) to update the township ordinance related to invasive species and grass height limits. The EAC is interested in changing this ordinance to allow for more naturalized, environmentally beneficial yards.
  - d. Required Open Space for Residential Developments (Ch. 200) – A proposed revision to the Zoning Ordinance would require at least 25 percent of residential development land in the R-RP, R-1, R-2 and R-3 zoning districts be designated as open space. While the EAC strongly supports the concept of this ordinance, we have been working with the Township and Planning Commission to further improve and clarify the proposed amendments.

2. **Land Use Reviews** – The EAC is designated a land use review board for the Township. In 2022, the EAC reviewed four proposed developments and when necessary provided comments:
  - a. 1566 LLC Subdivision - 21.7 acre parcel located near the intersection of Yardley-Newtown Road and Creamery Road, proposal for six new houses. EAC submitted comment letters dated February 12, 2021 and July 7, 2022 on the Preliminary Plan.
  - b. Boehm School – 7,845 square feet addition on the corner of the school building, EAC review found no environmental issues.
  - c. 1101 Big Oak Road – 5.75 acre site near Bohm Middle School, proposal to remove one existing house and build 5 new homes. The EAC submitted an August 10, 2022 comment letter on the preliminary plan.
  - d. Quarry Road and Lindenhurst Road – 3 acre site with an existing house, proposal to repair the existing house and add two new houses. EAC review found no environmental issues.
  
3. **Styrofoam+ Recycling Events** – The EAC hosted three very successful recycling events at the Township Building’s parking lot on January 8th, May 21st and October 29th. In addition to Styrofoam; wine corks, household batteries, and prescription pill containers were collected. After the event the EAC transported the Styrofoam to Ray-Bob Packaging in Tullytown PA for reuse in packaging. With the help of the Pennsbury High School Environmental Club, the collected prescription pill bottles are cleaned then mailed to an organization for re-use as medical supplies in developing countries. The corks are reused in construction or as artwork. The batteries are taken to a local battery recycler where the metals are recovered.

The three 2022 recycling events in total collected 62 cubic yards of Styrofoam, 33 lbs. of corks, 400 lbs of batteries, and 641 prescription pill bottles.
  
4. **Other Recycling Efforts** – The EAC conducted a trial effort of collecting political signs after the 2022 general election. We were able to successfully recycle the plastic signs and metal posts from over 100 signs. This effort will be expanded in 2023. Also, boxes for the collection and recycling Halloween candy wrappers were placed in the Township Building and Community Center.
  
5. **Trash and Recycling in LMT’s Parks** – The EAC worked with Parks & Recreation to better address trash and recycling issues in LMT’s parks. EAC comments and suggestion were made on the Parks and Rec document “Pathway to Zero Waste” plan. The EAC’s suggestion that a carry in/carry out concept be applied in the parks was made part of the Pathway to Zero Waste recommendations. With carry in/carry out, there will be no trash or recycling receptacles, all trash and recyclables generated by park visitors will be carried out by the visitors. Carry in/carry out will begin in many of the LMT parks in 2023.
  
6. **Tree Planting in the Township** – The EAC sent a February 4, 2022 letter recommending seven possible locations in the Township for planting trees in 2022. 24 trees were planted at one of the recommended sites, the Kids Kingdom playground near the LMT pool. The other tree planting this year was at the Memorial Park Arboretum. Two trees that had been planted in 2016 had died and were replaced.

7. **Open Space** – Encouraging the Township to preserve and protect LMT’s remaining open space is one of the EAC’s principal efforts. To that end, the EAC sent an August 19, 2022 letter to the Supervisors identifying six highly desirable open space properties the Township could protect through conservation easement or purchase. Unfortunately, as has been the case since 2017, no additional open space in the township was purchased or preserved in 2022.
8. **Community Outreach** - Reaching out to LMT residents is an important EAC goal. This goal is achieved in several different ways

**Environmental Lecture Series and Outreach** – The following EAC Environmental lectures were held in 2022:

- a. *Beautiful Backyards with Native Plants* lecture was held on April 29<sup>th</sup> at the Community Center. Four LMT residents discussed their experiences with planting and growing native plants and their benefits to the environment. Over 50 people attended.
- b. *How Electricity Gets from the Generator to the House* lecture was held on September 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. Lee Pededowski, an LMT resident with expertise on the electrical generation industry, gave two very informational talks on the generation and transmission of electricity.

**Newsletter** – The EAC Newsletter is published on an as needed basis with special announcements for events such as Recycling Events and EAC lectures and information on various environmental topics. It is sent to over 300 LMT and 300 non-LMT residents on our e-mail lists.

9. **Environmental Stewardship Award** – The Environmental Stewardship Award Program is an EAC initiative that started in 2008. It has not only recognized the merit of our citizens, but has resulted in very favorable publicity for LMT as well. The 2022 award was given to the Friends of the Delaware Canal, an independent, non-profit group organized in 1982. It works to restore, preserve and improve the canal and its surroundings. The improvements they have initiated along the 60 mile long canal (including almost 6 miles in Lower Makefield Township) have enhanced the lives of our residents by offering a wide-range of activities such as fishing, biking, birding, jogging and hiking. The award ceremony will be held at a BOS Meeting in Feb. 2023.
10. **Participation in Outside Committees** – EAC members have joined a number of outside committees that requested the EAC’s input. These committees include the Macclesfield Park Steering Committee, the Ad Hoc Property/Patterson Farm Master Plan Committee, and the Pennsbury School District’s Sustainability Committees.
11. **Recommendations on Spending the Sewer System Sale Proceeds** – The EAC sent a March 7, 2022 letter to the Supervisors with six recommendations on how to use excess sewer funds to Improve the Township and its environment. None of the recommendations have been acted upon.

The following is a list of projects that the EAC intends to pursue in 2023:

- 1) Environmental Lecture Series – The EAC is hoping to have lectures regarding invasive species (“What’s Bugging Our Trees in Pennsylvania”) by Penn State Master Gardener Colleen Michaels and also the Use of Rain Barrels by LMT residents. There is a good possibility we will add another lecture as well.
- 2) Implement the Township’s 2016 Long Range Tree Planting Plan at as many of the remaining unplanted sites as possible.
- 3) Propose additional Tree Planting sites in the Township beyond the 2016 plan. Organize at least one volunteer tree planting event.
- 4) Tree Bank Payments by Developers – The EAC will continue to ensure money owed to the Township’s Tree Bank is paid on a timely basis.
- 5) Strengthen the Township’s Basin Naturalization Program
- 6) Recycling Collection Events – As in the past, have three Styrofoam/battery/ prescription bottle/cork collection events in 2023. One is scheduled on Jan. 14, 2023.
- 7) Collect political signs after the 2023 primary and general election and recycle the plastic and metal posts.
- 8) Expansion of EAC informational and outreach to LMT residents, particularly concerning rain barrels.
- 9) Implementation of past LMT commitments to clean power purchasing.
- 10) Create opportunities for township residents and local organizations to volunteer to support local environmental improvements.

It is our steadfast opinion that the EAC’s projects translate not only to a better environment in the Township, but also, to economic savings for the citizens of LMT. As always, it is both a privilege and a pleasure to serve the people of Lower Makefield Township.

Sincerely,

The LMT EAC: Linda Salvati – Co-Chair; Alan Dresser – Co-Chair; Kevin Gallen – Member; Jim Bray, Member; Paul Roden, Member; Soumya Dharmavaram, Member; Matt Farrell, Member