

Lower Makefield Township  
Environmental Advisory Council  
February 11, 2015  
Meeting Minutes

Present: Alan Dresser, Chairman  
Mark Bortman, Vice Chairman  
Jeff Benedetto, Supervisor Liaison, left after 1-hour  
James J. Bray, Member

Also present were the following LMT residents, in attendance to discuss the bamboo issue: Patrick Frain, Phyllis McGuire, Beverly Mikuriya, Tom Parker, Salome Prickett, Jill Wilhelm, Bob Winn

Mr. Dresser called the February 11, 2015 meeting of the EAC to order at 7:00PM.

**Approval of January 14, 2015 Meeting Minutes** – The January 2015 EAC meeting minutes were approved, with revision.

**Running Bamboo Ordinance Update** – Mr. Dresser provided an overview of the discussion on bamboo that was held during the February 2<sup>nd</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting. At that meeting, Mr. Dresser, Mr. Bray and Ms. McGuire spoke to the BOS about their concerns about bamboo in the Township; Ms. McGuire talked about the encroachment into her yard from a neighbor's bamboo. The outcome of that discussion was that, as a first step, the Supervisors will review the ordinances from other municipalities that have been collected by the EAC.

To open the discussion at the EAC meeting, Mr. Bray shared what he has learned about bamboo and what he knows about invasive plants in general and acknowledged that there is not, at present, a clear picture of the magnitude of the LMT bamboo problem. He indicated that the EAC supports an ordinance of some kind, but how broad it is would have to be determined in the future. Based on the EAC analysis, there seems to be little consistency among the ordinances from other municipalities. Mr. Bray then suggested that it would be helpful to hear from the residents in attendance about what had brought them to the meeting.

Some of the seven attendees told stories about their personal experiences with running bamboo. Two were stories of encroachment into their own yards, from their neighbors', with the neighbor also being in attendance in one case; one was of bamboo in the neighborhood, beginning to come up under the road; and one spoke about bamboo moving toward the Makefield Highlands Golf Course. Other attendees were there for information and to learn more about the problem.

To summarize some of the major points of the discussion:

- A question was asked about whether running bamboo roots could create a safety hazard by wrapping around the underground roots of a very large tree, which could then fall over in a storm. Mr. Bray said it probably could happen, though it would take years, not months.
- In response to a question about whether there is any Township legislation that could support the residents who are victims of bamboo encroachment, Mr. Benedetto said that the law in LMT says that, if a neighbor encroaches on you, you can bring a civil suit against that neighbor.
- Ms. McGuire was there to advocate for an ordinance. The rest of the attendees, except for one who was there for information only, agreed that there is a need for some type of ordinance. Ms. McGuire and Ms. Wilhelm, both of whom have bamboo in their yards from their neighbors, expressed that they would rather not handle the problem by suing their neighbors but would prefer a strongly worded ordinance to resolve existing, and also prevent future, problems.
- Mr. Dresser expressed that the EAC is in favor of an ordinance, and noted that a lot of other municipalities have taken steps to deal with the problem. Mr. Benedetto is very opposed to an ordinance, and believes that residents should handle it on their own, by suing when necessary.

**LMT Community Center LEED Certification Update** – Mr. Dresser has been trying to schedule a meeting on this project, to include the architects, the group doing the mechanical work, and Lisa Grayson and himself. He has not heard back from Mr. Fedorchak.

**PA-American Water Co. Grant for Basin Naturalization or Rainbarrel Seminar** – The last date to apply for the \$10,000 grant, to naturalize a basin on West Ferry Road, is March 13<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Bortman will follow up on this with Megan Rogalus of the Bucks County Conservation District.

**Open Space Update** –

**BOS Application for County O.S. Funds** – Mr. Dresser will follow up with David Johnson, from the Bucks County Planning Commission, regarding LMT's application.

**Legal Aspects of Municipalities Selling Open Space** - Mr. Conley was not in attendance to provide an update.

**EAC Lecture Series** – Mr. Bray suggested that Jessica Lenker, from the PA Department of Agriculture, be invited to lecture on the subject of invasive plants, highlighting bamboo, at the end of April on a Saturday morning.

**Patterson Farm Tree Plaque** – There is no new information on the plaque.

**Land Use Reviews** –

**St. Ignatius** – The BOS gave this project preliminary approval in January. They are awaiting final approval. Mr. Dresser believes it might be appropriate to have the large red oak tree on the St. Ignatius property

be evaluated by an ISA certified tree expert that also has a certification in tree risk assessment. Mr. Proietti of SavATree the tree didn't look too bad but suggested that LMT hire Matt Wiebel, SavATree's arborist with extensive risk assessment experience, conduct a complete evaluation of the tree. The cost would be \$700, which Mr. Dresser thinks should come from the \$140,000 owed by St. Ignatius for replacement trees.

Elm and Maplewood Two Home Development/Zoning Board – After Mr. Dresser and others made the Zoning Board aware of the stream running through this property, Mr. Toadvine put the project on hold until he can visit the site.

**Odds and Ends** –

- The Tracy wall has been removed.
- PA Department of Protection denied the proposed Elcon Hazardous Waste Treatment Plant in Falls Township.
- There is nothing new on the PECO power line tree ordinance.
- Mr. Dresser will attend a Penn Future MS4 Class on February 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Mr. Bray suggested having Mr. Roden send an e-mail to the EAC contact list regarding the BHWP Land Ethics Symposium, which will be held in March.

With no further business to discuss, the February 11, 2015 meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council was adjourned at 9:15PM. The next meeting of the EAC will be held on March 11, 2015, at 7PM, at the LMT municipal building.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alan Dresser, Chairman