

Environmental Advisory Council Annual Report for 2016

In 2016, the EAC concentrated on researching and discussing ways to improve the Zoning Ordinances (Z.O.) and the SALDO in West Vincent Township when they referenced natural resources, the environment or historic resources. The full council proposed these changes to our Z.O and SALDO. Highlighted are the suggested recommendations:

Section 2223- Timber Harvesting/Logging

Timber harvesting or logging on any lot or parcel within the Township shall be by selective cut method and in accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Forestry standards and applicable permit requirements with a Forestry Stewardship Plan in place.

Section 2231 Tree Protection

In addition to those trees qualifying as Specimen Trees pursuant to Section 202, Specimen Trees are individual trees determined by a certified arborist (International Society of Arboriculture) to be of special quality as well as those trees that generally fall within the parameters of the table below.

To the SALDO/Land Development/Historic Buildings ordinance, we would like the BOS to add sight line requirements to preserve viewsheds in new developments. We would also like to see that newly planted trees are not on top of newly buried pipelines or too close to utilities lines.

Township Park Maintenance

At the May 2016 meeting a Motion for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors was put forth and approved by all:

Ask the Board of Supervisors and the township manager to instruct David Gottier to mulch trees at 3 inches deep, 3 feet wide and 3 inches from the trunk and to mow the area around the township building and pond at 3 inches in height for April, May and June and at 4 inches for the balance of the year.

Trails

There was discussion about trails being blazed with the new West Vincent Trail logo. The trail at the Fox Hollow subdivision was discussed and it was noted that posts were placed along the trail by Southdown. There was a general agreement that trails should be built in the first phase of development in new subdivisions.

Environmental

Natural Lands Trust's, Rick Trailles, is doing a review of our ordinances, funded by a William Penn Foundation grant. It was suggested that all streams in the township be included in the riparian buffer guidelines. Harriet Stone, with support from the EAC continued to recruit and organize volunteers for amphibian protection along Hollow Road.

Specimen Trees and their designation, including a GIS layer for the township consultants, has been an on-going topic of conversation. In April 2016, Jim Helm presented a very comprehensive overview of what he would like the township to review and adopt. We would like to see an

ordinance change and a letter of understanding with the Public Utility Commission (PUC) that would allow for better oversight. At our July meeting Jane Helm presented a proposal as to why the township should consider a Shade Tree Commission.

At the July meeting a Motion was made and approved by all members to recommend to the Board of Supervisors/Planning Commission:

The SALDO should require a tree inventory of specimen and heritage trees as outlined in the Zoning Ordinance prior to a development of 3 or more dwelling units.

The Historic Resources Committee (HRC) is a sub-committee of the EAC. Activities this year included:

- The group supported West Pikeland on the Chester County Iron and Steel Heritage Tour.
- Signs designating Historic Birchrunville were designed and installed around the village.
- A program was presented at the Hankin Library telling the story of our township's role in the Underground Railroad. It was well attended. The program was later presented at the township building.
- There is ongoing concern about how new property owners and the township handle historic information sharing. The committee continues to work on researching and documenting the Historic resources in West Vincent Township.
- The historic Benner Farm was sold by Toll Brothers and the plan for renovation and additions by the new owner highlighted the snafus in our township ordinance/SALDO regarding HID properties. After a report from the HRC, the Board of Supervisors and the developer came to an agreement regarding the property. See attached.

At the May 2016 meeting a Motion for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors was put forth and approved by all:

When historic properties are involved in any building permit or sub-division/development application the EAC and the HRC should be notified as soon as possible for the purposes of review and oversight in a timely fashion.

At the June 2016 meeting two Motions were put forth and approved by all:

To approve a \$100.00 donation to West Pikeland Township to help defray the cost of the trolley for the summer historic tour.

For the EAC to pay up to \$500.00 to cover the costs of the historic signs.

For 2017, Pieter Ouwerkerk (term expiring 2019) was appointed as the newest member of the EAC and Victoria Laubach's term was renewed (Term expiring 2019) by the Board of Supervisors. At the organizational meeting of the EAC in February 2017, Victoria Laubach was elected chairman and Jane Helm (Term expiring 2018) was elected vice-chairman. Suzanne Roth (term expiring 2018) will serve as secretary. The remaining three members are Don Cook (term Expiring 2018), Jim Diesinger (Term expiring 2017), and Harriet Stone (Term expiring 2017).