

I. **OPENING**

CALL TO ORDER: The Environmental Advisory Council meeting of Lower Saucon Township was called to order on Tuesday, August 9, 2016 at 7:00 PM, at 3700 Old Philadelphia Pike, Bethlehem, PA, with Sandra Yerger, Chairman, presiding.

ROLL CALL: Members: Sandra Yerger, Chairman; Laura Ray, Ted Beardsley (arrived at 7:18 p.m.), Allan Johnson; **Absent:** Tom Maxfield, Dru Germanoski, Haz Hijazi. **Associate Members:** Michael Boyle and Glenn Kaye; **Absent:** Thomas Carocci, Sarah Stanlick & David Jauregui **Hellertown Liaison:** Terry Boos; **Staff:** Diane Palik, Administrative Assistant; **Boucher & James:** Valerie Liggett

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION: The EAC did not meet in Executive Session.

II. **OPEN SPACE SUB-COMMITTEE**

A. **PROPERTY UPDATES**

1. Property No. 2016-02 – Mrs. Yerger said this property is about .49 acres. Ted will call the applicant and report back to the EAC next month.

B. **DISCUSSION WITH PROPERTY OWNERS AND CHIEF FORESTER ON KATARINA & JUSTIN SMITH PROPERTY – 1987 WALDHEIM ROAD**

Mr. Brian Deed, Chief Forester from Weaber Timber Company and Katarina Smith, the property owner were present. Mrs. Yerger said the E&S application was submitted to the NC Conservation District for potential timbering. They have not presented an application to the Township at this point. Ms. Smith said after looking at the forestry ordinance for the Township, the property they have is definitely not a square. They wanted to talk about what they could do with some of the buffers that are in the ordinance.

Mr. Deed said when reviewing the ordinance, they can comply with most of it. Once they get the letter from the Conservation District then they will send an application to the Township for their review. What they felt was problematic was in the lower section, the parcel is 28 acres and you have 75' setback buffers from the street and property lines and 100' setback on any neighboring house. That turns the 28 acres into 17 acres.

Mrs. Yerger said that's probably an issue for the Zoning Hearing Board. It falls into Zoning which is not our technical per view. She's not sure why this came to the EAC. Mr. Deed said the reason they started here was they talked to the Zoning Officer and he said come to this meeting and have a conversation and try to work something out; and get some kind of a recommendation that when they go to the Zoning Board there's a recommendation from the EAC.

Mrs. Yerger said one of her concerns is this area in particular is prone to flooding. We've had major storm water issues in this area not far from their property. She personally has difficulty saying go ahead and go beyond our ordinances as they are there for a reason. They took a lot of time and consideration before they adopted their timbering ordinance. Coupled with the conditions on the property, she's hesitant to say go ahead. She has some concerns, and even allowing it with our ordinances is pushing it to the limit as far as the forest health.

Mr. Deed said they go through the forest and then dictate which ones are removed. There are dying and damaged ones that are marked. There's over mature trees which are marked. They need to promote long term sustainable. The type of harvest is a group selection.

Mr. Boos said were you using any Silva prescription programing? How are you determining your prescription? Mr. Deed said generally they don't go through and do a physical tally of every tree on the property and put it into a Silva program. He's done that program before and he's familiar with it. Group selections are taking down damaged, defective, miscellaneous trees. They never really did the Silva program for any timber harvest and he doesn't know of any company that uses that program. Mr. Boos said he understands the group selection, but what is your parameter of how

you are selecting your groups? Mr. Deed said the basil area is the main factor to determine how many trees are sustained. Mr. Boos said do you have pre-stand identification of what you are doing, going from a B to an A density? Mr. Deed said yes, all that information, reading your ordinance he knows you need that from the ordinance, but this was sent to the Conservation District.

Mr. Kaye said are the buffer zones meant more to avoid clear cutting those areas or does it apply to a much more thinning of these areas. Mrs. Yerger said it would be like anyone constructing anything 100' within your home. There's going to be trucks coming and going. Mr. Kaye said it's not just about cutting down the trees in that area. It's about having machinery and so forth in that area. Mrs. Yerger said yes, it does impact potentially. Mr. Deed said it's looked at the same way as corn, soy beans as farmer's can harvest up to the property line, so forest land owners protected under all those same protections They can manage, maintain and harvest their crop up to their property line. There's Act 67 and 68 that pertain to woodland owners.

Mr. Boyle said the people next door and down the stream, what voice do they have? Mrs. Yerger said if this goes to the Zoning Hearing Board, the residents could show up at the ZHB meeting and express their concerns. This is only opinion here. We have no actual say.

Mr. Johnson said you have a lot of acres of steep slopes and you are considering removing some vegetation, which would increase the storm water runoff. Who determines what the increase storm water runoff will be after the vegetation is removed? We already have a flooding problem in this area. Mr. Deed said the stumps stay where they are. Their disturbed areas are essentially steep trails and the road system when they are dragging the logs down the road.

Ms. Smith said this property has been let go for a couple of years, and now they have cornfields there and are trying to clean it up and think longer term for the property. You may look at this as he's coming in and tearing down a bunch of trees. They are not developing it. They are cleaning it up for 10 to 20 years from now, so it's not overgrown even more than it is and completely unmanageable. Their goal is to clean it up and make it look like an operating farm and to think long term on what that forest is going to look like.

Mrs. Yerger said she really thinks for everyone's sake so there are no misconceptions, they would be very happy to review it once they do an application through the Township, then everything is in stone. She doesn't want to give misinformation. Mr. Deed said sure, they talked to the Zoning Officer and he said start here and have a conversation. Mrs. Yerger said she apologizes; she's not sure why he said that as it's too early in the process to start here, but you did what he advised you to do. Usually when a plan comes in, it's through the Township process and then we can all abide what's in front of us.

Mr. Johnson said have you ever considered the open space program? Ms. Smith said she'd have to hear more about it. They can consider this and take a look at it. They are not looking to develop the property.

Mr. Deed said when the letter comes through from the Conservation District, does it go to Zoning? Mrs. Yerger there will be a review process by our Planner. Depending on the complexity of it, it may or may not involve our engineers. Your request was more of a Zoning Hearing Board request. Mr. Deed said they will wait for the letter then speak to the Zoning Officer.

Val Liggett from Boucher & James left at 7:55 p.m.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. JONAH BEERS – EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT – WOODLAND HILLS PRESERVE

Jonah Beers was present. He said he is working on a project at Woodland Hills Preserve. He made colored post markings for two separate trails. He had a map of the trail showing where they posts

would be staked. He will put the posts around every major bend so you will be able to see them. He will also construct a wooden kiosk, which will be installed at the beginning of the two trails so people wanting to walk the trails can decide which trail to take based on distance and what they look like with their twists and turns. Mrs. Yerger said there's a lot of natural thing growing there. The EAC gave their blessing and said they approve the Eagle Scout project.

IV. DEVELOPER ITEMS

A. HOMAY MINOR #MIN 01-16 – 1415 PUGGY LANE

Mrs. Yerger said this was tabled by the Planning Commission and is going to be revised.

V. UPDATES/REPORTS

A. NOTICE OF DATE CHANGE FOR NATIVE PLANT SALE TO AUGUST 21, 2016

Mrs. Yerger said they will be at the Farmer's Market on August 21, 2016. They will get the plants from Edge of the Woods and Mr. Boos will pick them up. The plants will be in bloom.

B. CITY OF BETHLEHEM – ELECTRONICS RECYCLING EVENT – SEPTEMBER 10, 2016 – 9 A.M. TO 12 NOON

Mrs. Yerger said the City is having an electronics recycling event. They have a Facebook page if you want to see what they are accepting.

C. TERRY BOOS REPORT – HELLERTOWN REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Boos said the Farmer's Market has been reconfigured because there was some drainage work that had to be done on site. The past two weeks have worked out fine.

VI. OLD/MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

A. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MAY 10, 2016 MINUTES

MOTION BY: Ms. Ray moved for approval of the May 10, 2016 minutes.

SECOND BY: Mrs. Yerger

ROLL CALL: 4-0 (Absent – Mr. Maxfield, Mr. Hijazi and Mr. Germanoski)

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- Ms. Palik said Community Day is August 20, 2016 from 10am to 5pm at Dimmick Park.
- Ms. Ray said she looked at the forest brochure. Mrs. Yerger said Penn State has been a huge advocate of timbering. It was a little bit of reinforcement on best management practices. Ms. Ray said she believes proper timbering practices is a good thing. She wouldn't be opposed to someone doing it properly.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY: Ms. Ray moved for adjournment. The time was 8:15 p.m.

SECOND BY: Mr. Johnson

ROLL CALL: 4-0 (Absent – Mr. Maxfield, Mr. Hijazi and Mr. Germanoski)

Sandra Yerger, Chair