

**I. OPENING**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Environmental Advisory Council meeting of Lower Saucon Township Council was called to order on Tuesday, October 3, 2006 at 7:02 P.M., at 3700 Old Philadelphia Pike, Bethlehem, PA, with Tom Maxfield, Chairman, presiding.

**ROLL CALL:** Present – Tom Maxfield - Chairman, Sandra Yerger, Laura Ray, Tom Conlon, Allan Johnson, Rett Oren, and Glenn Clouser. Rick Tralies from Boucher & James was present.

Absent - Ted Beardsley, , Hazem Hijazi, and Mike McKenna.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**II. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. RECYCLING PROGRAM**

Present - Ms. Lorraine Torella, President of the Historical Society and Lenny Szy, Chairperson of the facilities was also present. Mr. Szy also works with Ms. Torella at fundraising. He brought the recycling program to the attention of the Historical Society. Mr. Szy said he drives bus for Palisades also, and they've had the recycling for paper there for six months. They made about \$100. They take paper cardboard, catalogs, newspapers, magazines, junk mail, fax paper, notebooks, folders, office paper, no garbage, and no plastics. You just place it in the bins. There is also a shredder in the office and they are throwing the documents in there and then they just dump it in the dumpster. There is no charge. Four ton is \$5 a ton. If you go over 8 tons, it's \$20 a ton. It's a good idea and the school district at Palisades now has some bins out. Ms. Torella said they are green and yellow containers which are very neat and clean. If we had your approval, we could approach the school and other businesses in the area and they would volunteer to bring the bins here. It would be a fundraiser for the Historical Society. Everything just gets mixed together. You don't have to separate it. It must be clean, dry and free of foreign objects such as twine, plastic, metal or glass. The paper is collected and processed and they sort everything out and then they have a de-inking process. Mrs. Yerger said maybe we can have one here and have one at the school district. When parents drop their children off in the morning, they could drop their paper off. Ms. Torella said they need to have a fundraiser every month. The EAC said this is a great idea. Mr. Oren said aluminum would be a better fundraiser. Mrs. Yerger said the Lions Club does collect aluminum. Mr. Maxfield said they should talk to the administration here at the Township. There could be a dumpster here at the Township. Mr. Szy said you could drop it off at all hours. They haven't experienced any problems with foreign matter in their bins. Mr. Maxfield said we might want to put it up inside the fence by Public Works. Mrs. Yerger will bring this up under "Reports" tomorrow night at the Council meeting. The Township wouldn't have to do anything. Mr. Szy would go around and look if the bins are full. Mrs. Yerger said once it is approved, it can go on the EAC website.

**MOTION BY:** Ms. Ray moved to refer the recycling program to Council and have it inside the fenced area.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Yerger

Mr. Maxfield asked if anyone had any questions or comments? No one raised their hand.

**ROLL CALL:** All in Favor: Yes

Opposed: None

II. DEVELOPER ITEMS

A. ESTATES AT STONEHURST AT SAUCON VALLEY

Mr. Maxfield said this is a cluster. It's a cluster that Judy from Boucher & James has been working with for some time. It has fourteen acres of open space, and it's near Beethoven Waldheim Club. Mr. Tralies said this is sitting on his desk to review, so he hasn't really looked at it yet.

Mrs. Yerger said the only issues that they've seen is that there is no access other than from the back houses. There really should be some kind of access. We need an access to monitor. Mr. Maxfield said he doesn't know what the plans are for preservation – if it's deed restriction or are they going to go to a Conservancy. Mrs. Yerger asked if it was going to be offered to the township? Mr. Maxfield said it has to be. We need to decide if there should be some kind of access to the property. Somebody should be monitoring the property, a third party. The easement looks like it could be accessed. It will probably be on lot sewer. The lots are relatively small lots. They don't know if there is a Homeowners Association (HOA) or not. Mrs. Yerger said the Township could hold the easement and allow the lots owners to own it. Mr. Maxfield said since there is no real access to the property, except through easements, and because it's isolated, and you only have six homes there, it's probably for the use of the homeowners, and he'll bet there is a HOA.

Mr. Tralies said the way they have it drawn as a separate lot, he was assuming it would just be offered to the Township. Mr. Oren said on the plans it says, "the developer retains open space and private ownership provides benefits to the residents of this neighborhood." It sounds like it's a HOA. Mr. Tralies said that's what it sounds like, but he doesn't know without reading all the details. Linc Treadwell is going to have to check into this as the notes say one thing and it's drawn to lead you to believe something else. Linc will have to check with the arrangements, and for our purposes, just analyze what the open space is.

Mr. Maxfield said he thinks he remembers when it came as a sketch plan to PC. They did say it was for the use of the homeowners. Mr. Tralies said all that said, based on what's happening with the Reen Development, Chris Garges may have something else to say about that being a separate lot frontage. Mr. Maxfield said somehow, even if it's a deed restricted property, and the Township is going to permit the cluster development, there has to be some agency or some program or method for monitoring of the property. There needs to be some sort of stipulated access for a monitoring agency. Mr. Tralies said there is a steep slope and it's a good idea to ask questions about what happens to the water as it runs down that steep slope. It's something Brien Kocher will look at. Mr. Maxfield said it is zoned RA. Ms. Ray said they get the smaller lot sizes. Mr. Maxfield said from looking at the acreage, he would guess they are dealing with some slope issues.

**Mr. Aranyos arrived. The time was 7:20 PM.**

Mr. Tralies said if the site capacity calculations are correct, it states they are permitted to propose seven dwelling units and they are only proposing six. That's a positive.

Mr. Maxfield said a deed restriction can be changed, especially with a HOA. They can vote to lift it. It's not always the best protection, but in some cases, it may be the only option we have.

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Mr. Maxfield said the recommendations are as follows:

1. There needs to be an access or monitoring agency for the open space area.
2. Ask what happens to the water when it runs down the slope. The flow must be closely monitored and examined.
3. Investigate the conservation easement for preservation/maintenance of the open space.
4. Have Linc Treadwell review the options for the best way to preserve it and whether we want to allow public access or not. He should let us know what the options are.

**MOTION BY:** Mrs. Yerger moved to form the above into a letter.

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Johnson

**ROLL CALL:** All in Favor: Yes

Opposed: None

Mrs. Yerger said is it going to be fee simple? Is it going to be that the township owns it outright? We need to find out the best scenario for the township and it may vary to each piece of property. Mr. Maxfield said if the township owns it, chances are if it's a conserved piece of property, we could ask for it to be exempt for taxes, but one thing he heard from Linc, if it has some sort of public access to it, then it can't be exempt. Linc said if the township holds a chunk of property, you in essence, are taking that or holding that to preserve it for the community. It's not that easy to get rid of for a Township. You have to make a case of why it's no longer important to a community and why you want to get rid of it. The Judges are pretty strict on that. Mrs. Yerger said you have the whole maintenance issue. If the township owns it, then we have to maintain it. If they put it in forest reserve, they could qualify for Act 319. If it's split in half and they agree, they could qualify for the lower taxes under Act 319. Mr. Maxfield said if it's not separated as an open space area, then you may not qualify to do cluster. Cluster, right off the bat, is preservation of 40% or 50%. Dividing it up between other lots, may not be cluster feasible.

- B.** Terry Smith was present and he has some questions about the Dravitz Subdivision. He said he knows the open space referendum is coming up and they are going to be looking for pieces to buy. There's a house for sale at the bottom of their hill, County Line Drive, the Dravitz Subdivision. He's not interested in it. There's a house down there, and there is a piece for sale. It's about 20 or 30 feet into Terry's property. It's beautiful down there. There is water flowing through it. They are asking \$200,000. It's the perfect piece of property to buy. If there was ever a piece of land to be preserved, this would be it. He doesn't know if the price could be negotiated. Somebody should go out and look at it. It's a little under an acre. There's a house on it already, so it's grandfathered. Talking about the open space and protecting the waterway areas, if there's not another piece of property out there that is like this, and this makes sense to buy this and deed it back. There is a trailer on it right now. Mr. Johnson said we buy open space and don't like to pay for buildings. Mr. Smith said that's where it has to be demolished. The land in itself is beautiful. Mr. Maxfield said let's look into it.

Mr. Smith said the recommendation for Dravitz was to consider road width narrowing. He talked to Dave from Keystone today and he couldn't make it. He said we can present that to Council after Planning. Mr. Maxfield said they could put language into it saying you intend to do that and let Planning know - put it on the plan that they plan to narrow the road and that you talked to engineers and you intend to go to Council for a waiver. The road width would be 24 feet.

**C. HIDDEN MEADOWS**

Mr. Maxfield said this is a plan we've seen before. It's the old Mease Farm. It is a re-submission. He's not sure why, but there is some additional information on there about trees which is very interesting. They are taking down a lot of large trees to accomplish this. From looking at the plan,

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Mrs. Yerger said they are cutting down about forty plus trees. Mr. Johnson said there are a lot of big trees up there, like Oak, Ash, but not too many Pine trees. Mr. Maxfield said that is bad planning.

Mr. Tralies said they are going to have grading issues if they cut all those trees down. They are using storm water swales down the sides of the road. Mr. Maxfield said they have a big infiltration bed to the west side. Mr. Johnson said what runs off the road is going to go in the swales and down the street. Mr. Tralies said

Mr. Maxfield said do all the trees have to come down? We need better planning there. Trees are assets in cluster developments, so why would you not try to preserve them Mrs. Yerger said we are dealing with a slope and the water is already going to come down plowing. What trees you retain will be an asset.

Mr. Maxfield said the recommendations are as follows:

1. They need to look at preserving more of those trees than they are getting rid of. There are some special trees there which are about 40 inches. They need to re-examine the tree issue on the southern part of the property.
2. They can bump the road over to the north more or realign the road. Ask them is it necessary to cut down all forty trees? The loss of trees is a big concern to the EAC.
3. Modify their plans to save the trees, if possible. Trees are a natural asset to the cluster development.
4. Keep the natural vegetated swale and reduce the size of the swale.
5. Look into the landscape remediation upslope to control runoff from the north to the natural fashion.

**MOTION BY:** Mrs. Yerger moved for approval of the above recommendations.  
**SECOND BY:** Mr. Aranyos  
**ROLL CALL:** All in Favor: Yes  
Opposed: None

**III. OLD/MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

**A. OPEN SPACE REFERENDUM**

Mr. Maxfield said they have posters and a brochure that are currently being printed. They have \$800 in donations from our consultants that work with us at the Township. We are getting a lot of this paid for by donations, so very little will be coming out of the township coffers. We are planning an Open Space Referendum Meeting for Tuesday, October 17 at 7:00 PM at Town Hall. They will address any questions and give the public a basic outline of what the plan is about and tell them about a basic outline of mechanisms that will maybe facilitate the actual selection or the criteria of property. They will get the signs out to everyone who signed up for them as soon as they are done. The brochure announces the November 7 election date. It encourages them to vote for the referendum. There will be volunteers at the polls for the referendum to hand out palm cards. If you are available, let Tom or Sandy know. A presence really makes a difference.

Since Election Day is November 7, the EAC will meet on November 14.

**B. OPEN SPACE PLAN**

Mr. Conlon left. The time was 8:50 PM.

- C. **FILLER MAJOR – PRELIMINAY PLAN COMMENTS**
- D. **HULETT MINOR – SUBDIVSION PLAN COMMENTS**
- E. **MCCLOSKEY AVENUE – LOT CONSOLIDATION COMMENTS**
- F. **MANDARINO PRELIMINARY PLAN – SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP**

These are all review letters. Just read over them.

**G. LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION SEMINAR**

Mr. Maxfield said this seminar is on Wednesday, October 18, 2006 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. Mr. Johnson and Ms. Ray said they will probably go. Mr. Maxfield said if you go, please give a report at the next meeting.

**H. LAND PRESERVATION SEMINAR**

This already happened.

**I. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2006 MINUTES**

Mr. Johnson said on page 6, line 28, it should read “across the property”.

- MOTION BY:** Mrs. Yerger moved for approval of the September 2, 2006 minutes, with corrections.
- SECOND BY:** Mr. Johnson
- ROLL CALL:** All in Favor: Yes  
Opposed: None

**IV. UPDATES/REPORT**

- A. **HELLERTOWN REPORT**  
Nothing to report.

Mr. Maxfield said Recycling Day is November 11, 2006. It is from 9 AM to 2 PM. No TV’s. They also need volunteers to help out. It’s rain or shine.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

- MOTION BY:** Mrs. Yerger moved to adjourn. The time was 9:10 PM.
- SECOND BY:** Mr. Johnson
- ROLL CALL:** All in Favor: Yes  
Opposed: None