

I.

- A. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Environmental Advisory Council meeting of Lower Saucon Township was called to order on Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 6:32 p.m. with Dru Germanoski, presiding.
- B. **ROLL CALL:** **Members:** Dru Germanoski, Vice Chair, Jennifer Helton, Secretary, Laura Ray, Allan Johnson, Cheyenne Reiman, Chad Heimbecker, Kathy Pichel McGovern; **Associate Members:** Janine Bohnam, Russell Sutton & Winfield Clark; **Staff:** Carol Schneider; **Jr. Council:** Harry Vicic.
- C. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- D. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF APPLICABLE)** – None
- E. **JUNIOR COUNCIL - HARRY VICIC**

II. **OPEN SPACE SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES**

Property Updates

1. **Discussion/Recommendation on Appraisal for 2024-01**

**Dru Germanoski**

We have no executive session today, moving right into items so that we can be efficient. There are several open space considerations, mostly perfunctory things that we've kind of addressed. So, for example, appraisal for property, 2024-01. We had recommended it be appraised, but there was a hold up in so far as the property consisted of two parcels, one that had buildings and a trout nursery and one that did not. And so nicely though, they are delineated as two separate parcels, and I would recommend that what we do is request appraisal for the 5.47-acre parcel number one with no buildings. Because I don't fully believe that the individuals realize that where they have buildings, where they have a trout nursery, if something goes, for example, hay wire with the trout nursery and they need to put a filtration system in there. They're going to need special exception. So, I think, it's more sensible for us to recommend appraisal of the portion of the property that's labeled number one on the property map. Are we all good with that? Okay, so there's a motion, there's a second, all in favor, okay.

**MOTION BY:** Dru motioned to move forward with an appraisal of property #2024-01

**SECOND BY:** Jennifer, 7-0

2. **Discussion/Recommendation on Appraisal for 2024-03**

**Dru Germanoski**

The other parcel is parcel 2024-03, again, we had recommended this parcel be appraised. But then when I reached out to the property owners, and that's one where there is, in essence, little consortium of individuals, it took a while for me to hear from them, because I think there was an email string going to about three people, and I think each of them may have been expecting one of the others to respond. It turns out that they actually were thinking about parsing out a two acre or so, two-to-three-acre parcel for development. They have subsequently decided not to do that, and so the entire 17.3 acres, there's no buildings or development on that portion of the property, they would like to have it appraised for open space consideration. One final thing to add to this is, I was reading through this weekend the original open space declaration and policy for the township, and in that document there, there are a number of areas and specific locations that they identified as areas that open space committee and EAC should consider with a special focus for Preservation. And one of the places they mentioned was the riparian corridor along Black River, and Black River runs right through this parcel. So, that was an added consideration, I think so I move that we request that this entire parcel that's undeveloped, the 17.38 acres, be appraised.

**Jennifer Helton**

I second that motion.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay, all in favor? okay, so that's two of the properties.

**MOTION BY:** Dru motioned to move forward with an appraisal of property #2024-03

**SECOND BY:** Jennifer, 7-0

**3. Discussion on Property No. 2024-04**

**Dru Germanoski**

There's a new one that was in the in the call to meeting, which, excuse me, one second like, pull the right file up. It is labeled as property 2024-04. So, this just came to us. It is a property bounded closely to Easton Road and Church Lane. And so, I found that one to be a little bit unusual in so far as it's, it's less than an acre. It's basically a house with, I think there were two buildings on it and a backyard, and not to get overly concerned with setting precedent, but I, as the chair of open space, find it hard. I would have found it very hard to look township residents in the eye who voted for the open space program and in essence, the tax to support open space after having recommended three quarters of an acre, which is basically someone's backyard. In that case, all of us with a couple of acres should put our yards into the open space program. So, I never add this other than the only case I can think of where we looked at a tiny parcel of property for open space was associated with, I think it was the rail trail system to provide parking for that other open space sort of recreation property, but to look at three quarters of an acre that at a glance, and knowing that, I know that real estate, it has carbonate geology, and I would bet, I'm certain, there are no wetland species there. There's no springs, there's no hydrologic features. There are no steep slopes. There are none of the features that we consider when considering open space that have the environmental significance that fit into our scoring system. So, that was my perception of this site. I found it unusual. I guess there's one, one thing on our chart that we normally would consider is if a parcel is adjacent to other open space, so there is a park there, there's a ball field there. But again, I don't know how we would seriously consider this for a parcel to put in open space. I don't know if anybody else, if everybody. I hope everyone looked at that map that came around with the call to meeting. But I was a bit surprised by the whole thing.

**Jennifer Helton**

I didn't understand either in the sense that normally we get the information and the Sub-committee would go out in and look at it. So, if you're just taking it on what was presented, I have to agree, it doesn't meet our scoring sheet. And even if it was access to something, it's behind that open space Park area, which is the ballfield. I don't know where it would be beneficial So, without going out there. So, I agree that it wouldn't fit our normal criteria.

**Dru Germanoski**

And I would add this, I think the spirit of the connectivity criteria, that is to say, for example, the old former Woodland Hills Country Club, we had already acquired a large tract of property that was directly adjacent to that, which made the country club more attractive for bringing into open space, because what it actually did was create a very large compound piece of open space. So, we think about wildlife amenities, watershed and ground water protection by having a large parcel such as that in the open space program, I believe that objective is why we even consider, are we looking at an isolated piece of real estate for open space, or something that's contiguous or adjacent to existing open space.

**Laura Ray**

So, even on that one, I think the building were already segregated out and sold. So, that really wasn't even part of it. Okay, right?

**Dru Germanoski**

Yes, it was. It's a small piece.

**Chad Heimbecker**

Is this in the agenda.

**Laura Ray**

Yes.

**Chad Heimbecker**

I only got the minutes online.

**Dru Germanoski**

Number three on the open space up committee.

**Chad Heimbecker**

Was it in the PDF that was sent EAC packet for 11-12?

**Dru Germanoski**

I think it was a separate file. I thought it was a separate file that came in the same email.

**Chad Heimbecker**

I have two PDFs.

**Carol Schneider**

Open Space information only goes to you Dru.

**Dru Germanoski**

I'm sorry.

**Carol Schneider**

The open space information only goes to you.

**Dru Germanoski**

Oh, okay, then this is my fault for not forwarding this to everyone. I assumed we all got those two files, so therefore we really can't discuss it in great detail. So, what I suggest is, if we feel that we need further discussion, I will make sure to get this parcel to you. But it is I can describe it is literally two thirds of an acre with buildings on it.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

It doesn't meet the criteria.

**Dru Germanoski**

No, I don't think it does.

**Chad Heimbecker**

Is there a minimum size?

**Dru Germanoski**

Again, we did one time consider a very small parcel to serve parking for a trail. So, in that respect, when I read through the open space plan, there's a lot of you know, they allude to the desirability of preserving large open spaces. But there's never a moment where they identify a small space now where, for example, I would think this is hypothetical, just using what I believe to be common sense in in the spirit of the Open Space Preservation Plan, a place with, say, a high discharge spring, or something like that. Or a place where, for one reason or another, there is really good geologic

evidence that it's fundamentally a ground water recharge location, or something like sometimes there are major sink holes where it's obvious that those are ground water recharge spaces, they can be identified. Not to take us off subject too far, but I can tell you from direct experience along the I-78 corridor, when that was all planned, there are places say, for example, some of you are aware of Shantz spring. Shantz spring provides Allentown with a large percentage of their drinking water. So, parcels like that are small have small footprints. But when they engineered interstate 78 they went to great lengths to identify recharge points for Shantz spring and made sure, for example, they weren't discharging highway run off into those parcels. The highway run up was collected and treated otherwise. So, there are locations such as that. This piece of real estate at a glance. And even again, I drive by this place anytime I come to Hellertown, that area. As a geologist, I know that we'll score it with carbonate geology, maybe, maybe soils Washington, soils that have statewide significance for agriculture. But there again, we would be evaluating a half-acre, you know, so you can.

**Laura Ray**

A house, office.

**Chad Heimbecker**

So, Easton Road, yeah, where the new ball park is. And then there's that little tiny Church Road.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

There's, like a house right there.

**Dru Germanoski**

There are maybe three lots or four there, and this was one of them.

**Chad Heimbecker**

And it touches and it joins to that.

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, we could pass this around. Jennifer has a print out of it. Let's just pass it around, because there's there. I don't see, I don't see any value in open space subcommittee going out to score that property.

**Laura Ray**

Yeah, I wouldn't say it won't score.

**Dru Germanoski**

And when you look at that once again, the other side of this is, again, if we had a room full of people, and I was going to recommend that we should score, in essence, a half an acre and consider it for open space, we would get flooded with applications.

**Allan Johnson**

Don't you have to have a big enough property that the people that decide how much money to do them for it, they decide how many houses they can put on it.

**Laura Ray**

Yeah.

**Allan Johnson**

They can't put one house on this thing, right? Then it wouldn't be worth anything.

**Dru Germanoski**

That's another point that there's too small the footprint to put a house on.

**Laura Ray**

Yeah, the appraisal wouldn't appraise at anything.

**Dru Germanoski**

Having discussed this a bit.

**Laura Ray**

I don't think we have to do it again.

**Dru Germanoski**

I'm ready to make a motion that we do not consider this property any further for the reasons that we've discussed.

**Laura Ray**

I'll second that.

**Dru Germanoski**

Right, okay, so I'm going to make sure that everyone has seen this footprint, so that we can do a vote after everyone has an idea of what it is we're talking about.

**Chad Heimbecker**

The only thing I would think is for it is that it's adjoining....

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, but then that would score the one point or two points. And did you see this Allan where it is?

**Chad Heimbecker**

It would end up becoming a parking lot. Then, anyways.

**Laura Ray**

Well, there's no driveway access, really.

**Dru Germanoski**

One last thing, if you which I'm going to ask us all to do, and I'll send the link for our next meeting. I would like us to discuss Open Space Program little more detail, and have everybody read the open space the original open space document, for a number of reasons, one of which, to get a sense of the spirit of this second to bring to the forefront of our minds many of the properties and in some cases, historically significant locations that the framers of Open Space Program identified and recognized as properties that we should seriously and in some respects, self-evidently, consider for Open Space Preservation.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

I was going to ask to bring up, bring that up a new business, small proposal, all wrapped up in what talking about, but I was going to wait till we got to new business.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay, but we can, I think we should put this on the agenda and have this conversation. Next month, we're also going to have a visitor from, help me, Carol. He's he from the Heritage Conservancy.

**Laura Ray**

So, Matt Babbitt, right? Yeah. He's like, our attorney from the heritage.

**Dru Germanoski**

Yes.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay, so Cathy had invited him to our December meeting. Okay, so it seems sensible for us to make this an agenda item, also, because we will have him here visiting with us. So, let me back up, I move that we do not consider this property 2024-04 any further, for open space consideration.

**Laura Ray**

I'll second that.

**Dru Germanoski**

Laura, second, okay, all in favor?

**EAC**

Aye.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay, so that carries Carol.

**MOTION BY:** Dru motioned to not consider property #2024-04 for Open Space Conservation

**SECOND BY:** Jennifer, 7-0

**4. Discuss Evaluating Property No. 2024-07**

**Dru Germanoski**

And then this one is a little more challenging for me. It's, you know, the item is, discuss evaluating property number 2024-07, but I have never received anything describing that property five and six. I don't know, now I will say this, five and six may already have been designated, because the normal sort of state of affairs or procedures usually is landowners contact the township and have a conversation about open space, so it would make sense for me. I don't know if this is true. Carol, you can let some light on it is. It would make sense to me that if I was the township manager or someone working here at Township, and I get a phone call from a property owner, who says, I really want to have a conversation about placing a property in open space. And I'd like to learn a little bit more about it, and I pretty much intend to strongly consider having this, having my property put in the open space I could easily see for record keeping, where you'd say, okay, 2024-05, property owner x, and then someone else calls, okay, 2024-06, Mr. and Mrs. Y and then. So, there may be two designators that are sort of placeholders, because there was another parcel that Cathy had talked to me about, but even that was all I know about that was it was relatively large property, and that the heritage conservancy might be interested in co-sponsoring Open Space Preservation. So, five and six could be these properties that are sort of in process. I don't know, but I do not know what property number 2024-07 is what we would normally do with something like this, is receive a map, receive an application, bring it to the committee's attention, and like we just did with 2024-04 decide whether this committee recommends open space, go out and evaluate the property.

**Laura Ray**

And you know my thing, it says 2024-04 is the fourth one.

**Dru Germanoski**

I'm sorry.

**Laura Ray**

My number four item has property 2024-04 we're gonna see what?

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, you have the same numbers here too.

**Laura Ray**

Mine says four.

**Dru Germanoski**

We might have had two different sets of agendas floating around at various points, right? There was one that we retracted, right?

**Carol Schneider**

Yes. I didn't make a copy for her. I have updated copies outside, I'll get another one.

**Allan Johnson**

I have item three as 2024-04.

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, that's what I have.

**Laura Ray**

Well, other people have different ones too.

**Jennifer Helton**

So, why are we talking about a property we don't know about?

**Dru Germanoski**

I think we've just had the conversation, which is, when we receive an application for the property, then we can have a conversation about evaluating it.

**Carol Schneider**

Laura was 2024-07, something that council wanted to pass onto EAC to look at? You don't recall?

**Dru Germanoski**

I never received anything to that effect.

**Laura Ray**

Well, there's nothing in our packet.

**Carol Schneider**

This doesn't go out to everyone. It just goes out to Dru.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay, let me just get my bearings here. Okay, so I think I know where it is, Old Philadelphia Pike.

**Jennifer Helton**

If it can't be discussed.

**Laura Ray**

I didn't know it had a number. Okay, it didn't have a number at Council.

**Jennifer Helton**

I don't think we can really bring it up.

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, I would suggest that what we do is, and Laura, you're our liaison to council. Yeah, bring us an actual application.

**Laura Ray**

That one's messed up. Yeah, so either the attorney is going to reach out to the property owner, was the last I saw? Yes, it we don't just go to people that don't know we're coming.

**Dru Germanoski**

So, what I move is that now that I communicate to say that we would like to see following standard procedure, an application for property number 2024-07 and we could consider scoring it, you know, discuss having the Open Space Committee score it at our next meeting. And I mean, we just don't know much about this, so okay, then All in favor?

**EAC**

Aye.

**Dru Germanoski**

So, we'll deal with it in due time when we get an application. But, yeah, this is the first time I saw an image of where this location is, okay, so for the moment, the only just to reiterate that, I will send the link out for the original, I believe it was 2007 open space program. It's really a pamphlet, a book, and there's a lot of good information. So, you know, put a little bit of time aside. I'll get this out to everybody tomorrow, if not tonight, put a little bit of time aside before our next meeting. To read through that document. It's actually it's a fun read, so they're not a whole lot of whereas and heretofores and thereafters. It's written by normal people without legalese language. So, at any rate, just know that's coming.

**MOTION BY:** Dru motioned to review property #2024-07 after they receive the proper paperwork.  
7-0

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay, new business. Do we have new business? Kathy?

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

We have new old business? So, it's all ties together. I didn't know that the Heritage Conservancy was coming in December, like I didn't know you were going to talk about the open space when I saw the agenda, we talked months ago, probably in the summer, about how we had a open space forum for Lower Saucon Township residents. And I remember you saying that it had been quite a while ago? If I were all so I it all kind of coordinates together about we should be educating more ourselves on the open space. You know, maybe we could do something more current on the website regarding open space. And I was thinking based on the conversation that we had six months ago about inviting the Lower Saucon township president? Sorry, I could be mistaken, but I thought you said somehow the township can narrow it down to people that would actually qualify to be in open space, like their parcel sites had to be...

**Dru Germanoski**

What we did one time, as I recall, and I didn't review old minutes, because I don't even know what year we did that.

**Carol Schneider**

October 2022. Was the last time we had a forum. Okay? It was two years ago.

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah. And so what we also sent letters out to property holders above some threshold acreage. Did you look at or recall what that was?

**Carol Schneider**

I don't know what the acreage was.



**Laura Ray**

I would say 10 acres was what they were looking for.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay, now once again, we could have further conversation about that next month. One thing to draw your attention to is so looking at the I have the document in front of me. So, this open space, let me go up to the front page to get the Lower Saucon Township Open Space Action Plan. That's the official name of it, dated April 4, 2007 it is 56 pages long, and you won't have 56 pages of text to read, because the text transitions after page 36 and then there are a series of appendices, which are basically various maps showing hydric features, woodland areas, slopes, soils. So, the maps are actually very, I think, very useful and I only bring this up so you have a mental picture to some degree about what this document has available to us and for us to consider, and we can have further conversation at that meeting about once we read this, for example, because it Does list a variety of places the steep slopes on, goodness gracious, what's the term for the Steel City slopes, the steep slopes on narrows road, right? They are an example of a piece of real estate that should be considered as important for adding potentially to open space as is the Proving Grounds down there, bull cave, for example. So, and I already mentioned Black Black River riparian corridor, needless to say, Saucon Creek riparian corridors are listed, and they did a pretty thorough job of looking around the township. And also with these maps, we can get a better sense of where there are large parcels of real estate that might be identifiable. And so, I think it be, it would be best for us to have that conversation next month where we can discuss what we think is a sensible threshold of acreage to reach out to people for preservation.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

The Heritage Conservancy, so I don't know what that is, and then you have open space, and then I get stuff from Northampton County, right for land preservation. So, it seems like there was, yeah.

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, and there have been, I don't recall us ever directly.... We have to be careful about this, because we recall Sandy Yerger chaired this committee and also worked for heritage, so she sometimes served as a liaison with them, and so we have cooperated with them in preserving some properties. We also got additional funds, for example, for the Woodland Hills, former Woodland Hills property that was an outright purchase, as was the property to the south of it, which, if I remember, I could be incorrect with this. So, forgive me, but I think it was the Whitmore property. I think that was the name of the tract. But the township purchased those properties outright. And so, we don't, but I think we got funding from heritage.

**Jennifer Helton**

That ends up on the deed. So, that there's not an easy out? So, they come in on these larger partials and land trust.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

So, it makes sense to have us discuss open space and have him discuss the heritage, like what they would do.

**Jennifer Helton**

Yes.

**Dru Germanoski**

What some cooperative possibilities would be?

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

And I'm just kind of thinking, because you want to coordinate it. So, if you're going to do something in January or February, or whatever, do you bring this person back to talk to the public?

**Dru Germanoski**

Oh, I think we could. We have to have that conversation with him, because I don't know what their standard operating procedures, guidelines, etc, are, you know. You just never know with one organization to another, there might be something in their bylaws or their mission statement and have him say "No, we don't really do that" you know. So, I think we have to talk with him and ask him about these possibilities in much the same way that I think the County Open Space Program provided some of the funds for Woodland Hills. I don't know. I can't say that factually.

**Laura Ray**

They did.

**Dru Germanoski**

So, how exactly that was negotiated, I don't know.

**Laura Ray**

That's something, that a conservancy like heritage, helps with coordinate funding sources for things, because my property, my property was a complicated one.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

You see, there's farm preservation, but they also preserve land like it's all, I see the sign,

**Laura Ray**

Well, they know which, who has what funds and which grant things are available, and they help coordinate all that, just like wildlands does as well. Though we haven't worked with them often.

**Dru Germanoski**

And I suspect everybody's, I feel comfortable expecting that each one of these preservation plans have their own standards, guidelines, limitations, and I think that's why we're sometimes getting reports on some of these parcels. So, I think that goes, you know, this sounds like a pun, but it goes part and parcel with their particular guidelines and requirements. And so why? That's why, I think we get these other annual or semiannual review reports delivered to us, because we partnered, probably to preserve some of those properties. So, I think the good thing about this is, we've had a lot of infusion of new people on this committee recently and the Open Space Committee. I think the timing couldn't be better for us to review the open space document, the plan, as well as meet with this representative from the Heritage Conservancy, so that we can ask questions, we can be brought up to date. We can learn more, etc. I've never spoken with anybody from the Heritage Conservancy before.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

Just one more quick question, any legislative I guess, updates with open space since 2007 seems like a long time ago.

**Dru Germanoski**

No, and that's why reading this will be beneficial to all of us. There is a statement or two in here that I think charges open space with, perhaps reviewing procedures, characteristics. I mean, one thing we did do, for example, was change our scoring sheet. This particular document had a list of features, like a checklist of steep slopes, you know, etc, floodplains. But somewhere along the line between then and when I came on this committee, they developed an actual scoring sheet, which we used. And then I think it was about two years ago, we revised that. So there have been some changes relative to the 2007 document. And when you read it, you'll see that, in essence, open spaces is charged with considering updating, altering, changing with changing times, changing directives, changing needs. For example, when this was since, since this was written, there were a couple of parcels in open space, the Yerger property and two others, I think maybe three, that I don't believe the township purchased preservation rights for. But I believe Sandy Yerger Just put her property into the preservation program before it even existed, per se and without financial compensation. And I suspect these other two or three parcels, those

property owners must have done the same thing. And so, things have evolved, and we now, since then, have acquired, you know, the two big, biggest parcels, probably three would be Polk Valley Park and Woodland Hills and that old Whitmore tract on the hill slope. It's on the hill slope that connects the old Woodland Hills Country Club down towards Easton Road. But if you know Easton Road through that stretch between Lower Saucon, the countryside that's all developed there, old farms and so back the equivalent of two city blocks.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

He plants the corn and the soybeans that's preserved?

**Dru Germanoski**

Not that one, behind it. If you drive Countryside Lane, and look, you have to be in a high truck or something, you'll see where that farmland transitions into red Briars and green Briars and a jungle. And that property then extending down. And it's not a rectangular property. It's like a lot of these Pennsylvania properties. It's polygonal in crazy ways. So, we will put that on the agenda for the next meeting. This will obviously be a focus of our conversations next month. We don't have developer items, to my knowledge, that's true. Carol, right?

**Carol Schneider**

**Dru Germanoski**

No, I don't know. You know, maybe if it were last month and it was still Halloween, there could be a ghost in the audience, but I don't think there are. So, we don't have any, any township residents here to provide public comment? Then that brings us to updates and reports.

**IV. DEVELOPER ITEMS - None**

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT - None**

**VI. UPDATES/REPORTS**

**A. Appointment of Associate Member Vacancies (Recommend to Council)**

**Dru Germanoski**

One of the items is appointment of Associate Member vacancies to recommend to council. We did receive a few applicants. Am I the only one that? Did everyone receive that? Yeah, there are a few paper copies here, if anybody would like to have one. I open the floor for any discussion. I would say that it might also be possible to solicit more applications, one more round to see if we get applicants that have expertise that is more in line with an Environmental Advisory Committee. In other words, in particular environmental expertise. We, I know we heard, if you, if you go to the recordings of the township council meetings, I know in one particular meeting, there was a lot of vociferous assertions that EAC should be occupying themselves more with concern for invasive species and things of that sort, or maybe reestablishing native species. And I know from having we've had visitors come here who have that expertise. I'm throwing that out as one of many examples of the sorts of expertise that could be helpful to EAC, and I can envision others. This is one time Allan is a retired engineer. We have often had a civil engineer on this committee, and they bring expertise that we have found to be very helpful, say, for example, when we're evaluating development plans, if we have a civil engineer, as we did for a number of years in Haz, he looked at development plans five days A week, and probably on many weekends. And so, I can envision a number of areas of expertise that an EAC could benefit from that I don't really see jumping out on these applicants. I will say, I reached out to one former member of this committee to see if they might be interested in rejoining. Sometimes, what happens? Of course, we all live busy lives, and sometimes we hit those moments in life where, especially with, say, young children or something, and we're overwhelmed, and that individual went through one of those moments and so point being, I think we could reach out to people who might have interest and expertise if they just knew more. So, with that, it's a subject for discussion. I welcome anybody's thoughts, recommendations, considerations, etc.

**Jennifer Helton**

I mean, it's a non-voting position, so it's, you know, not critical that we choose from this group. We could get additional candidates that may fit a veteran void that we're missing as well as it's a one year. So, in January, we reposition ourselves, so we're sitting in November now. So, the weight, I don't know if that would be adaptation, you know, a negative effect on us.

**Dru Germanoski**

So, I mean, one thing that does make sense from what you've alluded to, with respect to where we are, it's, it's the 11th hour. It's the 11th month, so we would be recommending an appointment for a month. It would be more in line with the appointment calendar to hopefully receive some additional applicants and then recommend appointment to council effective in January 2025 and the whole situation is cleaner and more sensible. And as you mentioned, Jennifer, it's not, it's not a voting position. As an aside, one thing that I find, again, I'm very excited about the committee right now, and that people attend, and our tables full. I've never come to one of these meetings where we had to pull another table up, which with two additional members, we will have to do that. I think that's a positive thing. And so, I think we should put, we should request, solicit, request that the township put the solicitation out on the website one more time. And I encourage any of you that have friends, people, acquaintances, that you know, have some good expertise that could perhaps add to this, perhaps we can look again at the at the applicants that we had the last time around. It was a much larger group, and there was a lot more diversity of expertise. And so, whether we would reach out to any of those individuals to see if, if they would be interested.

**Laura Ray**

That's a good idea.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

Are there previous members of like the Open Space Committee, you know, that may have resigned, and you know, I would know somebody that has more history with you, with you, with the EAC.

**Dru Germanoski**

A couple of people sort of moved out, because one or two people, one, I think, moved to another committee, Mr. Juargui, Dave, moved to, I'm not sure which committee it is. It might be zoning.

**Laura Ray**

He's on Zoning, and they can only be on zoning.

**Dru Germanoski**

So, for example, his perception was that his expertise would have fit better with zoning. And so, he resigned from here to move there some people. Michael Boyle, I think once, if he didn't move to another committee, his life situation changed in a way that he didn't feel that he had time to function.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

Are there people that we might be able to tap into, is what I'm hearing possibly.

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, if we can get the previous application list, do we still have that? Carol, could you, could I request from you to look and see if we have that list, and we can look and see if there are people on there that have additional expertise that would enhance our knowledge base, because we're not going to have a voting member come out of this right away, but what we would like to have is a voice where someone can clarify add knowledge to our conversations and considerations.

**Laura Ray**

Okay.

**Chad Heimbecker**

So, are we just going to skip over these applications? Are we going to hold them and review them with others?

**Dru Germanoski**

I think we can hold them and review them with others. I don't I imagine we can't recycle them or trash them without some conversation, but I'd rather see a bigger group of possibilities, and I also don't like the idea, then of perhaps responding negatively in some way in the public record on any of these individual files. I would rather just look at a bigger pool and see what we have and maybe, maybe we don't.

**Jennifer Helton**

I second.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay, so we we're moving to keep the position the application positions open and advertised for one more month, with the idea including retaining these three and then consider the application pool at. As it stands in December, and the we may find ourselves with these three same applications, and we can move forward from there.

**Allan Johnson**

I thought you were going to push it off till January. and but you're going to decide in December.

**Dru Germanoski**

If we can. I don't see any reason to, I don't see any harm for one year in delay.

**Allan Johnson**

Or, does it start in January?

**Dru Germanoski**

It would start in January.

**Allan Johnson**

Good for 2025.

**Laura Ray**

They do anyway. I mean, that's just how it is.

**Allan Johnson**

Well, do the positions get automatically get renewed? Or, I mean, the assistant memberships, do they get automatically renewed?

**Laura Ray**

They're officially to be appointed that council.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

I get an email Allan, at the end of my term, do you want to continue your term?

**Carol Schneider**

All expired terms, terms that end at the end of the year, we'll get an email from me asking if they want to stay on. Now it's up to council, They will decide who they will let stay on or choose someone else, but you will get a email from me.

**Allan Johnson**

How long is assistant members?

**Laura Ray**

Associate are one year, and its calendar year. So, if you started in December. You actually expiring at the end of December.

**Dru Germanoski**

So, it's a one meeting appointment.

**Laura Ray**

But then you know, council would likely, you know, reappoint, unless you something terrible happened in that one month. Council still has to do it, but yes.

**Dru Germanoski**

I don't see any drawback to waiting one more month to try to get additional applicants.

**Laura Ray**

And then everybody can do some recruiting, and we can look for old applicants. We did have a lot of good ones before.

**Chad Heimbecker**

Okay.

**Cheyenne Rieman**

Do they email Carol?

**Dru Germanoski**

Yes. Okay. All in favor of doing that?

**EAC**

Aye.

**B. EAC Budget (JH)**

**Dru Germanoski**

So, the EAC budget Jennifer has had some conversation with township manager, and some data has been shared. So, Jennifer, I yield the floor to you, if you're ready.

**Jennifer Helton**

I am. Basically, they are putting moneys in the budget, and at this point it's \$10,000 so that it will cover some of our administrative expenses as well as any of the events we hold. Right now, we're over budget by, let's say, \$2300 roughly, maybe a little bit more, but it's because we spend out money for the electronics and the tire, but we're waiting on money to come back from Northampton, and there was a small portion that we got from Hellertown, so we'll quite down according to what Cathy was saying. So, I think we're in a good position. I think the one thing I would like to ask is that, once we get that, we move forward in doing a membership to we conserve PA, and I think it will run about \$800 it's 1% of some kind of budget, but it wasn't much. And so, if we so want that we could probably I could call them and ask them what our cost would be, so that we could at least prepare to become members, because one of the things they have this next year, Kathy, you'll be happy, is they have a it's a whole week, but in land conservation conference.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

Yeah, yeah.

**Jennifer Helton**

So, being members, I don't know how much it costs. It's not we would likely get discounted costs.

**Chad Heimbecker**

For attendance?

**Dru Germanoski**

We normally haven't done like electronic recycling was a big-ticket item. We normally do that every year. And so, we could look at other options for how we might want to use some of these funds for sponsored events next year, with the notion that probably electronics recycling might come around again. The following year, as I recall, what happened is township residents start reaching out after, after having accessible recycling, and a year passing and unused electronics start accumulating, and people start to call the township and ask about recycling, so we can see how that plays out, maybe consider something else to sponsor this next year.

**Jennifer Helton**

And I think it's important to remember what our mission is, and that's part of it, is education and awareness, and that's where these programs play a big part. You know, the tire was successful. And, you know, I will tell you electronics, there was a lot of people that did come. The weather wasn't so bad. Maybe we'd get, would have gotten more. But yeah, I think it's very important, yeah, and there's always grants that, if we know about or the township gets awareness of it, that can be applied to some of these other programs.

**Chad Heimbecker**

We've talked about a lot of other things earlier this year.

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, on our yearly agenda.

**Chad Heimbecker**

Pollinators or wild flowers or native species. We have a whole spreadsheet that we put together of ideas. And we've, we really kind of haven't done anything with in the past.

**Dru Germanoski**

Not lately. We haven't because the good news is, because we've been sort of up to our necks with sponsored events and so forth. So, we still have that document to work with. Before you know it, we're going to mean we're going to devote the next meeting, probably mostly to open space, and then we'll be back to a new year where we start off by trying to establish a yearly agenda. Yeah. So, we start with that old spreadsheet and say, what did we fail to accomplish that we still think has value, and just for again, for historical points, you know, you say, well, what sorts of things would you do? Well, we've had rain barrel sponsored events and things of that sort in the past. So, there's a wide array of possibilities.

**Jennifer Helton**

Would it be? I mean, I know it's something we can do. That isn't a plan. We can do a workshop meeting. Now, it could be on a Saturday, where your whole goal, or half a day is, what is our plan for the year, and you talk about the budget, you go through, and it's a working plan. Would that be of any interest, where it's not like this, where we're not prepared, but we, you know, spend a couple hours, and all we're talking about is, what is our goal for next year?

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, like, I think a lot of people do annual retreats.

**Chad Heimbecker**

Set up the calendar in a direct direction, and maybe look at other groups and what they're doing. So maybe we can coordinate when we're timing things.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

So, speaking of that, did you hear from the Lehigh Valley EAC after that initial meeting?

**Chad Heimbecker**

The online thing, they took the poll. We got the results back, and that was the last I heard of it.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

Yeah, okay.

**Chad Heimbecker**

I haven't seen anything since. That's exactly the kind of environment or platform where all of the groups in the area could be sharing a calendar what they have coming, and we could put our events in there and maybe combine them.

**Dru Germanoski**

Something just popped in my head too, is that again, to try to perhaps think of ways to incorporate more young people into our activities, and one opportunity that it's not going to provide 20 projects, but one ongoing need. And the local boy scout troop needs those kids that are approaching Eagle Scout they get their merit badges and any Eagle Scout projects. So those are opportunities where we could interact with young people to, you know, provide a project that helps them, because they're looking for projects and can accomplish. And we had the Wildflower Garden here, for example, native plants sort of came from that kind of realm.

**C. Fall Adopt-A-Road Clean-up 11/2/24 (KPM)**

**Dru Germanoski**

Updates, Kathy, fall, adopt the road cleanup. How did that go?

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

It went spectacular. It was me, Chad, we rocked it.

**Jennifer Helton**

It was not, it was not.

**Laura Ray**

It was me and Jennifer. We left half our litter laying there.

**Chad Heimbecker**

We got, I think about two large, two large bags of garbage.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

It went well.

**Dru Germanoski**

I think that's about normal for that, for that area.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

I had a resident come up and tell me, thanks.

**Dru Germanoski**

Was that part of that road so closed down?

**Jennifer Helton**

No.



**Dru Germanoski**

No, okay, so, because that's going to influence the amount of trash one way or the other, okay, well, then that's good. Thanks.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

By the way, thank you Laura Ray and Jennifer and Chad, because I changed the date, so it was very nice of them.

**Chad Heimbecker**

It was a beautiful day, and there was definitely a lot of single use plastic waste out there, yeah, which might be what the next topic.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay, good everybody. Thanks for doing that. That's important. And it's camaraderie building, right? You're all better friends for it, unless, unless two of you are about, you know, next year, maybe the thing to do is to have, like an official race to see who can get more trash. You know, teams, Okay, but seriously, thank you all very much

**D. Climate Action Plan Update (AJ)**

**Dru Germanoski**

That brings us to Allan, Climate Action Plan update. I assume you had a meeting.

**Allan Johnson**

We didn't have a meeting but I made up some stuff to talk about.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay.

**Allan Johnson**

I made up enough of these so that everybody can have one. And then I'm just going to read it so you can follow up on it.

**Dru Germanoski**

We're good, Allan, I think they cycle it all the way around?

**Chad Heimbecker**

The two you can have it. We'll share this one.

**Allan Johnson**

I got one for everybody.

**Laura Ray**

Down there they're sharing.

**Allan Johnson**

I want you to take them home because you decide to read them. Give one to Harrison, okay, thank you.

**Jennifer Helton**

Unless you want to get Carol.

**Allan Johnson**

I'm going to give her one so she doesn't have to do my minutes, because this will be my minutes. It's all typed out for you. Anyway, let's get started. So, one thing I wanted to say was Lehigh Valley Planning Commission did a program on climate change, on WDIY. WDIY is a local FM station, and their website is wdiy.org and you click on public affairs, and then scroll down and click on Plan Lehigh

Valley. That's the name of the programs, and then scroll down to climate change. Climate change transcends borders where you can listen to the program. And I just listened to that today because they just put it up. It covers everything that I have on my sheet. But in much more detail, it's really good thing to listen to. It's 28 minutes long. You can listen to it on your cell phone. It's not a video. All right, so let me read this. The 2022, Inflation Reduction Act authorized the United States Environmental Protection Agency to allocate funding to states, local governments, tribes and territories under the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program to develop and implement Climate Action Plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other global and other harmful air pollutants. Want to put that microphone over here. Can you hear me? Okay? I The Climate Pollution Reduction Grant consists of three phases, priority Climate Action Plan, Comprehensive Climate Action Plan progress and monitoring the Lehigh Valley. Priority Climate Action Plan is the deliverable for the priority Climate Action Plan phase, with completion of the with completion of the Lehigh Valley priority Climate Action Plan, the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission will develop a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, which will cover all major emission sectors within the region. Following adoption of the climate of the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, the Lehigh Valley will the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission will monitor progress on the plan, strategies, completion of the Lehigh Valley priority Climate Action Plan, opens the door for Lehigh Valley Planning Commission to apply for funds from a \$4.6 billion pool of funding. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission was granted \$1 million over a four-year period to use for climate action planning, the Lehigh Valley priority Climate Action Plan was completed in February 2024, Lehigh Valley Priority Climate Action Plan is available on the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission website LVPC.org, click on environment, then climate action. The following are the goals of the Lehigh Valley Priority Climate Action Plan. Goal one, implement, Walk/Roll LV Active Transportation Plan is a previous LVPC plan adopted in June 2020, available on the lvpc.org website. Goal two, increasing transit ridership above current levels in the Lehigh Valley. Goal three supporting deployment of alternative fuel vehicles of all types. Alternative fuel vehicles include electric vehicles with batteries, fuel cell electric vehicles powered by hydrogen and bio mass fueled vehicles. Goal four, increase Alternative Fueling infrastructure and stations. Goal five, reimagine and retrofit major transportation corridors with green infrastructure. Goal six, plan and implement Intelligent Transportation Systems technologies, integrate transportation systems, management and operation strategies into the plan. So, are there any questions, any discussion?

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**

I would imagine they have, like goal one, right? What their idea is, I just picked goal one, but implement walk row LV, so I'm envisioning, like, bike paths and the rail trails and all that stuff. Do they have, like a plan, like, you know, by 2025, we want to have, have done this much. Or, you know, seek funding.

**Allan Johnson**

Well, Walk/Roll LV is a previous LVPC plan, and in there they have all the details. Yeah, and that was already, well 2020, so it was quite a few years ago, however, Lower Saucon Township paid somebody to develop a active transportation plan for Lower Saucon Township, but it was never implemented. So, I don't know where I dug it up at, but I read it and it basically implements all the same kind of things that the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission advocates. But it's something that we could do. It's, I don't, I know we don't have the money. And you know, with what's going on with the garbage dump? We probably won't have any money for a while, but it's something to read about. If you want to read about it, it's something that was done four or five years ago, which is a good thing. So, their ideas out there are, what can they do to decrease the amount of use of gasoline powered vehicles. That's what all these things are that they came up with. And of course, gasoline powered vehicles are what produce CO2 goes up in the atmosphere and contributes to causes global warming. So, you'll see that that idea is in all these things like increasing transit ridership. Well, if they could get more people to ride the bus, then they don't use their cars as much, don't burn as much gas, and, well, supporting deployment of alternative fuel vehicles. Well, that's, you know, that's a nationwide thing that that's been, you know, talked about all over the internet and the television and everything else. Everybody, if you have the money, you can do that, otherwise you probably won't be able to do it. So, there's more people that don't have the money to do that then there are people that do have the money to do it, unless the government comes up with some, you know, loans or grants, or whatever you call it, for regular, normal

people. And well, the increasing alternative. Oh, and the other thing about the hydrogen powered electrical vehicles. Do you know about that? Well, there's a device called a fuel cell. It's been around a long time, and somehow or another, when you feed hydrogen into this device, it makes electricity. Three. So, these devices are pretty big, and they can be made huge. They fit under the hood of a car, but they also, I also read an article believe. I was hard to believe, but I'll tell you what I read. There's a company that owns a copper mine down in Peru, someplace down in South America, and they have these huge trucks that can carry hundreds of tons at one time, and they put fuel cells in, and they're bragging about how they're doing their part to cut down on carbon emissions because they did this. It's amazing. It's amazing engineering thing if they did, I mean, but it's expensive, and one of the reasons that's being pushed is because Air Products makes hydrogen. You know, they're not, they're in our North Lehigh County, big company. Now, the thing here about reimagining and retrofitting major transportation character corridors with green infrastructure, well, we all, I mean, council wrote a letter to encourage that, you know, so that's being done, or at least we helped plan and implement intelligent transportation system technologies. Well, there's some kind of software that can be used to, I guess, model your transportation system, and then you can figure out how to cut down on the number of trips or something. It wasn't explained. They just said Intelligent Transportation Systems technologies. So, I think if you take the time to listen to this, I don't want to call it, call it a podcast, I guess, but it's a program. It's a on the WDIY, they have a weekly or monthly programs that have to do with the Public Affairs and Lehigh Valley Planning Commission gets on their quite often to explain what they're doing, and it's a really good explanation of their efforts to, you know, help reduce global warming.

**Dru Germanoski**

Does anyone have any further questions for Allan? Laura Ray, that brings us to plastic bag ban, update.

**E. Plastic Bag Ban Update (LR)**

**Laura Ray**

Sure, a few of us did meet over the weekend to talk about this, I am charged, and I am working on getting a list of our businesses in the township that do retail sales, so anything like a store or a restaurant where you might carry out your purchase, so something where plastic bags might be involved. And then the idea is, within our group, we'll divvy up this list so that we can one on one, have go to the businesses and talk to the manager there, or the owner or whoever, and just discuss what we're considering doing and hearing what their concerns might be. So, that's our next step. We also have, you know, we were provided with templates of different regulations that you can put in place. So, we would, when we get to the point where we're ready to do that, we would have the solicitor, you know, make it customized to Lower Saucon Township, specifically.

**Dru Germanoski**

I have a question, and maybe it's a suggestion Fresh Market, I think, requires people to bring their own bags, bring use their own bags, if there are there any others in the township. And what the reason I ask that is it might be helpful to talk with them and ask, what motivated them, what amount of enthusiasm do they experience? I know when I go there, it's like back when we were wearing COVID masks. I get halfway from the vehicle to the door, turn around and get my bags. Well, that's no big deal, but people seem to embrace it. When I'm there. People are carrying their bags in or putting them in their carts. So, it might be helpful to see what they've learned and how much enthusiasm they experience, or how much pushback they might experience. I don't know. I've ever been there where someone started complaining or arguing about, you know, people have stuffed their pockets with grocery items too.

**Laura Ray**

It seems a lot of places that do not necessarily, in the township, you know, they just gave up on plastic bags as a, you know, corporate decision like Wegmans, yeah is a good example. We don't have any in Township. But even places like you go to BJ's or Aldis or Costco, they're not giving you plastic bags. You take your cart to your car and put your stuff in your car. Everybody lives.

**Dru Germanoski**

I mentioned this before. You know, province of Ontario, they ban plastic bags. Everyone does function.

**Laura Ray**

It's just a matter of getting used to it.

**Dru Germanoski**

You know, the trick is to go to fundamental multi use plastic bags, as opposed to the there was a snafu in California where they use something that were like thicker two or three use light bags. And so, they ended up throwing them out more so. But in places like Ontario, from my experience, again, people use the heavier cloth or plastic bags and we have several of the insulated bags to put meats and milk and so forth in. And I prefer it.

**Russell Sutton**

I refuse to use those bags so they're useless to put one item in and it goes right through.

**Laura Ray**

A lot of the bags are like that, yeah?

**Russell Sutton**

Because they're useless to get with, yeah? And just make a lot of trash, yeah?

**Chad Heimbecker**

Well, on this, I just to say in addition that I know that Hellertown working collaboratively, in some ways, we're talking to some people in a group, but the they have the surveys that they've issued this so they have some feedback already, and they're working towards a public session for discussion on this towards the beginning, hopefully of next year. So, I'm not sure what our timeline is going to be.

**Laura Ray**

We have to catch up.

**Chad Heimbecker**

So good energy and focus, and there is movement forward.

**Dru Germanoski**

Yeah, we're not just forging new ground. I mean, we can learn from some of the what Hellertown's learning, and then likewise, what these businesses have discovered. I mean, people are still going to Aldi's, Costco, Fresh Market, etc. It's not like their business is crashing, or this wouldn't be the case. So, I think it's as illustrative to be aware of that. So good. Thank you.

**VII. OLD/MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

**A. Review and Approval of October 8, 2024 Minutes**

**Dru Germanoski**

This brings us to the fun part of the evening, which is review the minutes from the last meeting, I reviewed minutes and emailed Carol a list of corrections or changes, deletions, etc., from the minutes from last month, in particular things that I commented on because I had a better grip of what I did or didn't say, or where sometimes that word recognition software pulls some things and creates a few new words out of fragments, etc. So, having said that, Allan, did you put together a list?

**Allan Johnson**

Yeah, I'll give it to Carol.

**Dru Germanoski**

Okay. Anybody else have anything to add? Okay, well, at that point, we're at the point of entertaining a motion to adjourn.

**Chad Heimbecker**  
I'll make a motion to adjourn tonight.

**Kathy Pichel McGovern**  
And I'll second.

**Dru Germanoski**  
All in favor?

**EAC**  
Aye.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION BY:** Chad moved for adjournment. The time was 7:46 p.m.  
**SECOND BY:** Kathy, 7-0

**Next EAC Meeting: December 10, 2024 @ 6:30 p.m.**