

Upper Mount Bethel Township Environmental Advisory Council Meeting

Date: March 12, 2024

Time: 7:00pm

Location: Upper Mount Bethel Township Building, 378 Ye Olde Highway Mount Bethel, PA 18434

Meeting called to order by Judy at 7:03 PM.

Attendees:

- Committee Members
 - Judy Henckel
 - Dohl DiFebo
 - Courtney Gilmour
 - Alexandra Dutt
 - David Friedman – Supervisor Liaison
 - Jonathan Erler – Supervisor
 - *Absent:* Allison Heinsohn

Welcome:

- Noted the establishment of Environmental Advisory Councils in 1999.
- Mentioned that the ordinance governing the council originates from the PA EAC Handbook.
- Acknowledged the Upper Mount Bethel EAC's inception in 2000.
- Introduced Dohl, a fifth-generation farmer, highlighting his role in preserving one of the Township's first farms.
- Discussed the possibility of including a planning commission and supervisor member.
- Emphasized the role of the Township engineer in handling open space and review plans.

EAC History:

- Discussed the council's beginnings with the Nature Conservancy and the Growing Greener Grant program.
- Mentioned the GIS project funded by WREN, which was never completed.
- Noted the involvement of the Nature Conservancy in various conservation initiatives.
- Highlighted the creation of the Martin Jacoby Watershed Conservation Plan in 2009.
- Mentioned the assistance provided by the Nature Conservancy in developing the Comprehensive Recreation Parks and Open Space plan in 2004.
- Noted the role of Heritage Conservancy in obtaining a Block grant for the Open Space Plan.
- Referenced the Upper Mount Bethel Comprehensive plan 2020.
- Discussed the Natural Area Inventory and its relevance to environmental planning.

Ordinance:

- Detailed the term lengths for council members.
- Noted the powers of the EAC, including identifying environmental problems and recommending plans to supervisors.
- Discussed the process for member appointments and removals.

Meeting Schedule:

- Discussed potential meeting dates and agreed to finalize them via email.

Officer Elections:

- Chairman: Judy Henckel
- Secretary: Alexandra Dutt
- Co-Chair: Courtney Gilmour

Discussion of Future Goals:

- Agreed to approve minutes at the next meeting.
- Discussed potential social media presence and environmental programming.
- Mentioned collaboration opportunities with other environmental groups.
- Discussed access to open space and the management of its use.
- Noted the upcoming Shad Run in mid-April through mid-May.
- Discussed regional planning initiatives and the Wild & Scenic Rivers program.
- Mentioned the National Geographic Program and the Environmental Defense Fund's initiatives.
- Planned for a presentation by Tara M. on April 9.

Public Q&A:

- Addressed questions from attendees regarding open space preservation and the website.
- Discussed the potential economic benefits of tourism in the area.
- Mentioned the possibility of the Delaware Water Gap becoming a national park.

Meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM.

Next Meeting:

- Date: April 9, 2024
- Time: 7:00pm
- Location: Upper Mount Bethel Township Building, 378 Ye Olde Highway Mount Bethel, PA 18434