

# PLYMOUTH TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD (E.A.B)

## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 17, 2012

The Plymouth Township Environmental Advisory Board held its meeting at the Plymouth Township Municipal Building at 7:00 pm, in Engineering Conference Room A. All Board Members were present except Barry. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The November minutes were approved.

[Dean Eisenberger](#) was introduced as the council member who will be actively engaging with the Environmental Advisory Board going forward.

Bill Sabey was elected to be Chair of the EAB for the next term and Michael VanBuren was elected as Vice Chair for the next term (we should also make sure to update the [township web page](#)—Mike's name isn't even there).

Mike made motion to approve the minutes from the November meeting. Barry seconded

Thursday March 1 is the date for this year's [EcoFest](#)--Barry and Walt volunteered to represent EAB. David also plans to go.

The Spring Cleaning Flea Market is scheduled for Saturday May 5<sup>th</sup> from 8am to 12pm in the back parking lot of community center.

It was announced that the vote was taken on complete streets to send it into workshop. As a side note, Rick indicated that street paving is usually done in late summer

Rick said that the Township will be spending \$15K to upgrade the sear rating of the cooling system for the township building this year.

Barry said that he had heard that the Obama administration just released a lot of money for the upgrades of municipal buildings ([article found here](#)). Rick said he'd investigate any grant opportunities. Barry is a member of the sheet metal contractors association and that is where he saw about the federal grant money.

It was asked if there could be synergy of volume if we could get nearby townships to get together to use leverage on our energy service company ([ESCO](#)) to get better savings?

It was suggested that the new council members should make an effort to reach out to specific local townships on sharing resources. Dean will bring that up with council. Rick said that the township had previously applied for a similar grant, so it should be easy to reapply.

The township was able to lock in a new gas supplier for community center and estimates we will save about \$15K.

It was agreed that as a group, we would work on 2011 accomplishments at February meeting.

We would also like to help get a school program for watershed management going...a poster program? It's another thing we should discuss with Chris. It was also suggested that he come next week to discuss commercial recycling program... there's a strong recommendation to change the frequency of trash and recycling collection—reduce trash from twice/week to once/week and increase recycling from once to twice a week—as a further means of discouraging waste and encouraging recycling.

Dean indicated that he's seen that PECO has not shown a willing to extend access to natural gas for those businesses and residences that do not already have service. There are efforts to underway to work on extending natural gas access. Comparatively, the cost to heat a home for the winter with gas versus oil is nearly \$700 vs \$2400 for the same BTU output. There were some discussions about activities to put pressure on PECO. At least 40% of the township does not currently have access to natural gas. It was suggested that we invite PECO to an upcoming meeting. Rick volunteered to invite someone from PECO in near future.

### **Proposed 2012 Goals**

Commercial recycling: Set hard number goal and figure out how to get there. Establish a system where you pay per bag of trash to encourage more recycling. In comparison, Waltham, Massachusetts has nearly 70% of their waste stream recycled. We are nowhere close.

Trash collectors said they have a policy where if the recycling truck does not pick up the recyclables, it is because there are unrecyclable items in it and they throw it all away.

Republic Services are recycling haulers in King of Of Prussia said they have recycling services for types 1-7 and they have an incentive to collect everything.

Do we want to pass an ordinance to force businesses to recycle 1-7s? We would have to have a phase-in process? What are the school's interests and processes?

We should have a master plan of overall goals...we should see that the township puts together a sustainability plan.--for example, a plan regarding tree planting. Other examples could include getting natural gas access to be more ubiquitous. Those would be incentives that would entice people to want to live here. Sustainability planning and multi-township cooperation are keys—proper plans are necessary for successful adaptation and mitigation. We should also attempt to develop approximations of costs for adaptation vs costs for mitigation.



We also discussed possibly using the local TV station to get the word out. We could start off small with a neighborhood watch approach along with street signs saying this neighborhood has been “green approved” by Plymouth Township. We could also possibly offer to plant trees for neighborhoods/teams who reach sustainability goals. Maybe we should also have some other designation for solar panel owners, etc. It could all result in the development of a green neighborhood award.

The big thing we need to be looking at in the future is bigger storms and greater rainfall...if we pave more of our township, we will have a bigger problem. The Builders Association balked at it. As a result, the alternative energy ordinance was defeated last month.

The question was asked whether there is any way we can allow natural lawns in order to provide incentives to get rid of lawns that require constant mowing and the energy used by lawnmowers to maintain lawns that require weekly maintenance.

Rick wants to leave stream banks natural and a lot of open space is not mowed as often. Chris can say what sort of outfall monitoring we have for storm water—the DEP requires that monitoring.

Marylou volunteered to reach out to [Temple’s School of Environmental Design](#) to see if she can find someone to help us in our efforts to develop a sustainability plan.

Regarding a conservation and natural resources plan, the Township has narrowed the selection to 3 candidate plans. It will be proposed to Township board and a recommendation will be made. Mrs. Weatherall will be moving out soon. By springtime, someone from EAB will likely be selected to join a committee to review the plan.

[Earth Day](#) is on April 22<sup>nd</sup> this year.

Typically there is a plan for them to celebrate it at Ridge Park Elementary planting a tree at Harriet Weatherall. We will need to try to find a volunteer community for the green neighborhood award.

Walt motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mike and Barry.