

Plymouth Township Environmental Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2016

Gary McKeown , Greg, Scott, MikeM, MikeV, Dean, Rick and David in attendance

We started the meeting with Gary McKeown by letting him know we plan to nominate Maple Acres for the Go Green Award. Gary shared that they own 30 acres, but farm 200 throughout the township. They have their own beef, pork chickens, vegetables. They have the solar panels. They have hay rides and birthday parties.

When it comes to pesticides, he doesn't like using them, but certain times of year they need to--but uses 1/3 the amount he used to. The GMO bit is a difficult topic. He believes on it, because it helped cut down on pesticides significantly.

Conservation-wise, they think about what kinds of crops they will plant to control erosion. They plant with clover in between to re-nitrogen ate them soil. They use trickle irrigation and draw their water from well water. Places like Wings field have no water, so they have to bring it in.

The Township does hayrides through the park and his wagons are used for that. It's a nice opportunity to show people the crops growing throughout the summer. They stage-out the planting of corn in 5 day increments from March through June to ensure a continued supply when it ripens.

They have solar panels on two barns. One is 26x 20 ft and the other is double that size. He believes it's 25Kw.

They sell more produce every year, but it's very labor-intensive. He employs 20-25 over the summer.

This year he built some horse stalls to try to rent-out. He's repurposing the part of the barn in the Harriet Wetherill Park to use for his horse stall. He guesses that he saves \$1,500-\$1,700 - so saves roughly half the cost.

The Board nominated officers for the 2016 year.

- Michael VanBuren was nominated to a second term as Chair of the EAB.
- Scott Apel was nominated as Vice Chair for 2016.
- David Huie was nominated for Secretary for 2016.