

October 16, 2020

To: LMT Board of Supervisors

From: LMT EAC

Subject: 2019 Year End Review

The EAC in LMT plays an important role in enhancing the quality of life for all citizens of our township. Accordingly, it is deemed important for us to prepare a Year End Review for the citizens and leaders of our community so that they may more properly assess the value we add to the quality of life in LMT. This review will also briefly discuss the projects we intend to pursue in 2020.

Sound environmental practices equate to a sound economic policy. We feel strongly that our efforts have not only resulted in LMT becoming a 'better place to live' and 'a standout environmental community', but by doing so, we have also improved home values and the quality of life in the township.

This Year End Review will be widely distributed so that the BOS and LMT's citizens become aware of the positive work being done in our Township by a dedicated group of volunteers.

The report is as follows:

1. Land Use Reviews – The EAC is designated a land use review board for the Township. In 2019, the EAC reviewed and provided comments to the Township on the following projects:
 - a. Erin Development Dobry Road (76 Unit Age Restricted Housing) – 2 comment letters were issued on the Preliminary Plan revisions.
 - b. Fiorello Development (3 home development at Big Oak & Derbyshire Roads) – Letter to the Township noting that the preliminary plan approved in 2007 had expired and a new preliminary plan submittal is needed.
 - c. Proposed Mixed-Use Overlay District (proposed 100,000 ft³ Wegmans, 55,000 ft³ of retail space and 200 apartment units) – EAC Oct. 21st comment letter on proposed ordinance changes.
 - d. Elcon Liquid Hazard Waste Facility – An April 11th comment letter was sent to the Township Manager Mr. Ferguson for distribution to the BOS. The review looked at both the Elcon RCRA and air permit submittals to PADEP.Though not submitting comments, the EAC reviewed the following projects to ensure there were no adverse impacts to the environment.
 - a. LMT Corporate Center – Proposing changes to make the site more tenant friendly and enhance the look of the property. Preliminary plans examined and no environmental concerns.
2. Electronics Recycling Collection Event – The LMT EAC joined by Yardley Borough and Newtown Borough held a successful Electronics Recycling Event on May 4 at Charles Boehm Middle School. Volunteers from the Pennsbury High School Honor Society assisted in the collection.
3. Styrofoam Recycling Day – On October 26, the EAC hosted a styrofoam collection event at the Township Building. The event was a huge success, and participants were very appreciative to have an opportunity to get rid of the styrofoam in an environmentally sustainable way. Mark Bortman of Exact Solar generously provided his company's van to hold and transport the collected styrofoam to Princeton Moulding near Princeton. The Styrofoam is made into picture frames and furniture molding.
4. Plastic Bag Reduction – In an effort to encourage residents to reduce their use of single-use plastic bags, the EAC collected signatures from residents who pledged to stop. Signatures were collected at the April's Community Center Open House, the September 1st Community Pride Day, and at the EAC sponsored film on October 26 at the Township

Building. Each resident who signed was given a reusable grocery bag donated by Shop Rite or McCaffrey.

5. Environmental Lecture Series and Outreach – Because of the many EAC innovative programs adopted by LMT the EAC has been requested to share our success stories with our own residents and with many other communities throughout the PA, NJ, NY area. We have done this through various power point presentations, periodic newsletters as well as through an ongoing Environmental Lecture Series featuring some prominent names in the environmental field. This year, in addition to pertinent, periodic newsletters the following environmental lectures were held:
 1. “Stream Bank Restoration, Detention Basins and Lawn Maintenance.” This timely lecture, given by LMT’s Township Engineer Remington & Vernick and the Bucks County Conservation Agency, explained the environmental value of stream bank vegetation and drainage basins and how maintaining our lawn properly can result in significant benefits to the environment. Presented Feb. 16, 2019.
 2. “The Kingdom, How Fungi Made Our World” This incredible film made by some gifted Australian film- makers detailed the remarkable ways in which fungi helped to create our world. The EAC has been told it was a magical experience by some attendees, especially taking into account the incredible time lapse photography. Presented Oct. 16, 2019.
6. Environmental Stewardship Award – The Environmental Stewardship Award Program, an EAC initiative that started in 2008, has not only recognized the merit of our citizens, but has resulted in very favorable publicity for LMT as well. The 2019 award was given to the Pennsbury Science Club. These enterprising young adults came up with the idea of installing carry-in water bottle refill stations in various areas throughout the High School resulting in a significant reduction in the use of disposable plastic bottles that clog our landfills and waterways.

Also, just recently the EAC sent a letter to the Township Manager and the Board of Supervisors to make some changes to the Environmental Stewardship Award Program. These changes involved: changing the award amount from \$500 to \$1000, having one award instead of two and making some date and minor language changes to make the award easier to administer.
7. Heritage Tree Ordinance – The innovative Heritage Tree Ordinance was adopted by LMT on April 17, 2019. This voluntary ordinance protects LMT trees on public and private property that are of special character, large size, old age or that have local historical or environmental significance. The EAC is especially pleased that the BOS approved this ordinance; ordinances of this type are reflective of an environmentally sensitized community that has significant environmental ordinances under its belt. Also, it is important to note that one of the main purposes of this ordinance is to increase the public’s awareness of the remarkable trees in our own community and how all trees contribute to our well-being. Although the Corona Virus outbreak has put a crimp in our plan to add trees to the program as soon as restrictions are relaxed we intend to nominate, with the assistance of Big Trees of PA, some significant twp. trees.
8. Drainage Basin Naturalization - In 2008 the LMT EAC started an innovative initiative to naturalize some of the open space areas and drainage basins in the Twp. This innovative program entailed a much reduced mowing regimen that resulted in the creation of many self-regulating eco-systems through LMT. Additional environmental benefits included cleaner air through a significant reduction in fossil mowing fuels. Also, at the height of the program over 100 of the approximately 150 basins and open space areas were in the program. Through less fuel usage, lower equipment maintenance costs, and labor reduction LMT was saving over \$50,000 per year. In the last three years or so, many of these basins and open space areas have been frequently mowed again resulting in a loss of environmental and cost savings to LMT. We still do not understand why this happened. The twp., however, has stated they will budget moneys in the near future to upgrade the

efficiency and environmental value of the basins. So, hopefully, the twp. will once again enjoy the significant savings of the EAC Naturalization Program. We are hopeful that the upcoming budget will have ample moneys to meaningfully address this important program.

9. Tree Replacement and Woodlands Protection Ordinance Update – The EAC proposed revisions to several of the Township’s Tree Related Subdivision and Land Development and Zoning Ordinances. The first would consider street, parking lot, and buffer trees planted at the site as replacement trees. This change will reduce the number of waiver requests from the tree replacement ordinance but leave intact its overall goals. The second would apply the tree protection ordinance to nearby trees on adjoining property when their tree protection area extends on to the site being developed. The last would increase the woodlands protection ratio developers must meet in three of our residential zoning categories (R1, R-2, and R-RP). These ordinance changes were approved by the BOS at their April 17th meeting.
10. Long Range Tree Planting Plan/Volunteer Participation – The EAC, along with Parks & Recreation and Public Works, organized a tree planting at Greg Caiola Ball Fields on November 16, 2019. The tree/shrub planting utilized the Park & Recreation Department to dig the initial locations for the planting. Local volunteers, EAC and Board of Supervisor members were present to assist with planting. All planting work was performed on November 16th, with some cleanup/straightening work on the 17th. The planting consisted of 47 shade trees, 10 evergreens, 16 ornamental trees, and 50 shrubs.
11. Sustainable PA, Ready For 100 Program – Researched Sierra Club’s Ready for 100 initiative (commitments by municipalities to commit to 100% renewable electricity by 2035 and heating & transportation to be renewable-powered by 2050), and rekindled interest in Cool Cities and the Sustainable PA initiative.
12. Yardley Borough Growing Greener Grant/Stream Analysis – In 2019, Yardley Borough received a grant from PA DEP for \$70,000 with an additional \$25,000 of in-kind matching. The grant is for a "Buck Creek Watershed Restoration Assessment" which will include an assessment of water flow and pollutant levels of Bucks Creek and its watershed as well as a management plan. Michael Thompson of the Yardley EAC is leading the effort on this project. The assessment is expected to begin in 2020 with LMT members volunteering to help the effort.
13. Invasive Species – The EAC researched and prepared a flyer related to the spotted lantern fly.

The following is a list of projects that the EAC intends to pursue in 2020:

- 1) Environmental Lecture Series – The EAC is proposing a lecture series regarding invasive species (“What’s Bugging Our Trees in Pennsylvania”) by Penn State Master Gardener Colleen Michaels. The tentative date was scheduled for September 26th, however due to COVID-19 concerns this lecture will be rescheduled to spring 2021.
- 2) Implement the Township’s approved tree planting plan by utilizing the tree bank
- 3) Long Range Tree Planting Plan/Volunteer Participation – The EAC is proposing to plant a section of a Buck Creek tributary within Patterson Farm on November 7, 2020
- 4) Tree Bank Payments by Developers – The EAC will continue its investigation of money owed to the Township’s Tree Bank. It is believed that significant funds are currently owed by 3 or 4 developers, some have owed money for many years. The EAC will consider drafting a possible ordinance change that would create interest charges on late payments or to hold development permits from release until fees were paid.
- 5) Revive and strengthen the Township’s basin naturalization program
- 6) Styrofoam Collections – A January 4 styrofoam collection event was performed; an additional collection is scheduled for October 31.
- 7) Expansion of EAC informational and outreach to LMT residents
- 8) Implementation of past LMT commitments to clean power purchasing
- 9) Work with local grocery stores to limit their use of plastic bags

- 10) Create a list of opportunities for township residents and local organizations to volunteer to support local environmental improvements
- 11) Participate jointly with the Yardley EAC regarding analysis and monitoring of the Bucks and Brock Creek Watersheds
- 12) Sponsor additional electronics waste collection events in the Township
- 13) Submit a resolution for RF100 initiative; investigate opportunities for dark sky programs and other light pollution reduction initiatives; work with LMT on progressing further with the Cool Cities and Sustainable PA initiatives; work with LMT on Electric Vehicle charging stations, transitioning vehicle fleets to Electric Vehicles, and other energy initiatives
- 14) The EAC continues to submit information regarding environmental concerns and events in a newsletter

The year 2019 was a productive one, but not without frustrations, for the Environmental Advisory Council. It is our steadfast opinion that the EAC's projects translate not only to a better environment in the Township, but to economic savings for the citizens of LMT. As always, it is both a privilege and a pleasure to serve the people of Lower Makefield.

Sincerely,

The LMT EAC

Linda Salvati – Chair

Kevin Gallen – Co-Chair

Jim Bray, Member

Paul Roden, Member

Soumya Dharmavaram, Member

Alan Dresser, Alternate Member