

MALVERN BOROUGH  
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL  
Zoom Conference  
Malvern, PA 19355

June 24, 2021  
7:00 P.M.

EAC MEMBERS PRESENT:  
Helise Bichefsky, D.O., Chair  
Brian Walker, Vice-Chair  
Zoë Warner, Ph.D., Secretary  
Tiffany Brouillet

ABSENT:  
Daniel Kunze  
Brendan Phillips

Staff & Professionals Present:

Christopher Bashore, Borough Manager  
Alicia Marziani, Administrative Assistant & Parks and Recreation Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER

Helise Bichefsky called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. MINUTES

A motion was made by Helise, seconded by Brian Walker, and carried by a vote of 4-0 to approve the minutes as amended from March 25, 2021, April 22, 2021, and May 27, 2021.

3. New Business

a. Resignation – John Butow

John sent a letter of resignation on \_\_\_\_\_. The resignation was accepted by the members of the EAC. There is now one vacancy on the EAC, with the term ending Jan. 21, 2024. The position will be advertised, and residents are encouraged to apply with Malvern administration.

b. Presentation – Colleen Falicki, Back to Earth Compost Crew

Ms. Falicki started Back to Earth Compost Crew (BECC) in 2017. The business grew out of her own experience with composting and a desire to share it with the larger community. The business model is similar to that of Bennett Compost in Philadelphia in which BECC gives customers a 5 gallon bucket and lid to be filled with vegetable waste. The bucket is picked up curbside twice a month for \$18/month. They also provide service to businesses and can customize a pickup schedule based on need.

BECC operates in Chester, Montgomery, and Bucks Counties. They haul 2 to 3 tons of compostable waste per week to two Saul Agricultural High School in Roxborough and Camphill Soltane in Glenmoore. BECC is looking to another location that will allow for meat, bones, and dairy, which need to be composted at higher temperatures for a longer period of time.

BECC is at the Malvern Farmer's Market once a month. They have a table for outreach and collect compostable waste at \$5 for a 5 gallon bucket. Ms. Falicki also teaches individuals how to compost and has done programs for organizations. BECC also gives back 4-5 lbs. of finished compost to customers, so they can use it in their gardens.

Brian and Helise asked about the BECC business model. Ms. Falicki said she offers 1 month free, and 90% of the people continue with the service. She will also meet with local restaurants to learn more about their needs. Brian thought restaurants would probably save money and would reduce their trash hauling. Ms. Falicki agreed and said businesses can promote their participation in composting.

Chris Bashore asked if BECC has exclusive contracts with municipalities. Ms. Falicki said there are no contracts currently, but she is open to doing a pilot with the Borough. For the Borough to be able to promote the service, there would have to be a contract in place with BECC. The solid waste contract with AJ Blosenski covers 867 units. A contract with BECC could be structured in a similar way. By instituting curbside composting, it is likely collection cost would be the same, but tipping fee based on tonnage would be less

Zoë Warner asked about capacity to serve the whole borough. Ms. Falicki said BECC would have to build the capacity to provide the service and would likely have several days of pick up.

Helise said we have talked out a composting contract in the past. She suggested we pursue the issue further. Some possibilities in moving forward could include: offering a discounted rate to interested residents and having the EAC purchase composting buckets to supply to residents.

No action will be taken until Chris consults with the solicitor to determine what steps would be needed to move forward. This will include checking the trash contract, which includes garbage, to see if there is an exclusivity provision.

c. Borough Broadcaster

Helise will write about rain gardens and pollinator gardens for the summer edition of the Borough's newsletter. The deadline for the 450 word submission is July 12.

## Old Business

a. Ordinances

Brian would like to have the EAC review Borough ordinances to find opportunities to include provisions related to sustainability. The stormwater ordinance is one the EAC might like to review. Brian also asked about extending the EAC's educational initiative to specifically include education regarding stormwater management

and reduction. One possible resource is the Executive Director of the Chester County Water Resources Program who lives in the Borough.

Chris said whatever changes would be made should be sent to Chris, so he can have the solicitor review them to make sure they are supported by state enabling legislation.

The plant materials list to accompany the newly passed Street Tree Ordinance Amendments was also discussed. Zoë suggested the EAC work in partnership with the Shade Tree Commission as they revise their acceptable plant material list. The EAC could provide the educational component.

To learn more about the possibilities for revising the plant materials list, Zoë spoke to Lara Roman from the Urban Forestry division of the USDA on June 22. They discussed the following options:

1. Trees can be listed by site type and frequency to provide more guidance and to promote natives where possible. The site-specific list would recognize there are be different growing conditions in different areas. We could look at examples from: Philadelphia Street Tree List, PWD species list, and New York City Plant List.
2. Within the recommendation list, we could include a description of the beneficial characteristics of individual species.
3. Include language that allows a tiered approach--start with natives where possible, then extend beyond that initial list if natives are not suitable given certain site conditions

Ms. Roman also suggested keeping a list of what has been approved, so we can monitor what is being planted over time. This would help the Borough maintain a diversity of species to reduce vulnerability to a single infestation/event. This would protect against losing a large stand of trees in a short period of time. She also suggested including a removal ordinance to protect ecologically significant trees.

Zoë would like to meet with STC at next meeting to develop partnership on this issue

b. Mission/Vision statement

The EAC will work towards developing a mission statement that more clearly defines the scope of our role in making recommendations for changes to ordinances and educating Malvern residents.

c. Committee updates

Borough council – a grant has been award to build a bicycle pump track

Comprehensive Plan Task Force – Rob Peterson gave a presentation on Natural Resources and Open Space and the slides were distributed to the EAC

Planning Commission – MPC recommended the passage of a two tree ordinances

Parks and Rec – nothing

Master Watershed Program – Zoë completed the course and passed the exam. She will become a full Mater Watershed Steward upon the completion of her volunteer hours.

#### Public Comment

Mark King offered to promote solar tour in the fall. The tour would show different solar panel installations in the Borough. Mark sent an email to Malvern EAC about a presentation on backyard lawn transformation—replacing lawn with native plants to increase habitat for pollinators—which will take place on Tuesday, June 29 at 7:00 p.m.

Helise and Mark King would like to know where they can get rid of styrofoam sustainably.

Chris wants committee agendas in timely manner. The agenda must be posted on the Borough website by noon the Friday before the meeting.

#### Adjournment

A motion was made by Brian Walker and seconded by Helise Bichefsky and carried by a vote of 4-0, to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Zoë Warner