Environmental Advisory Council

Jefferson Hills Borough, Pennsylvania

Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2021

**Attendance**

Roll call, including Zoom participation: Rick Moore, Terry Ackman, Tom Donohue, Ale Hakala, Christina Weir, Kevin Polick, Sergio Flores, and John Stinner, Borough Mgr.

Guest: John Thatcher - JHFR

**Citizen Comments**

No members from the community at meeting.

**Litter in borough**

Rick will send letter requesting adoption of Peters creek on behalf of the Troop 210.

As a followup to October’s meeting item to identify areas in the Borough with excessive trash/litter,

Rick surveyed and created a list of roads with trash accumulation and provided it to John Stinner and Tom. This list is provided below:

Route 885 (particularly Payne Hill going east)

Coal Valley (between Rt 885 and Rt 837)

Miller Road (between Rt 885 and Rt 837)

Worthington Ave (Rt 51 to Dek Hockey)

Ridge road (Gill Hall Rd to Rt 51)

Route 837 (Floreffe area)

Chamberlin Road (Gill Hall Rd to Old Clairton Rd)

Elliot Road (Old Clairton Road to Rt 51)

Waterman Road (Cochran Rd to Gill Hall Rd)

Terry brought up the idea to put the roads on a map to target. Also add roads that are currently adopted.

Tom to request a map from Borough engineer where these problem areas can be shown and any other known areas of the borough with existing Adopt-a-Road Programs for use for Borough Cleanup Day in the spring and other groups that are willing to participate throughout the year in cleanup programs. Map could be posted on Borough’s website highlighting the most needed areas for cleanup.

**Beneficial Use of Mining**

Terry indicated that some maps are very old and need old software to read the maps. Gateway is checking on software requirements for these maps. There is some applicable software available for only $100/year (this may be a better option, cheaper and more accessible for us)

**Barge Safety**

Tom spoke with Dave Montgomery who previously worked in an area where he was familiar with some licensing and inspection of river traffic. Dave said that the Corps of Engineers inspects barges on a routine basis depending on the potential danger each type of material the barge hauls. Typical construction is double walled but single walled on bottom. He gave Guttman Oil as a potential lead for more info concerning barges. The Commission members had additional questions such as: who levies fines for spills, does the state or federal gov’t have responsibility for monitoring the safety of river traffic. Mr. Thatcher said the Conservation District would likely have information about the safety of the water traffic.

**Forever chemicals in the water**

John Thatcher, President of the JH Fire Dept, joined the meeting to discuss the firefighting foam that the fire department in the borough has for certain types of fire suppression. The Class B foam (foam designed for liquid fires) is PFAS-containing foam. John indicated that the foam is rarely used and not trained with in the borough. Fire fighters are sent to Texas for training in preparation for responding to large fires, particularly for industrial companies along the Mon River.

John will check if there are any records kept on the use of foam, where, when, how much.

Rick discussed the concern of even small amounts of foam being released could cause widespread impacts to groundwater and surface water.

Rick completed a search for water supply wells (PADEP well information website). There are 46 water supply wells listed on the website. These wells, if active and in a plume (underground water) contaminated with PFAS should be sampled for safety concerns. Rick also indicated that the information tends to be not complete. It was also noted that there is grant money in the newly passed federal infrastructure bill for the plugging of abandoned wells.

Resin Superfund Site. – Rick reviewed publicly available documents for the superfund site. There was not indication that there is a PFAS issue. Other than adhesive manufacturing, which is sometimes associated with PFAS, there was no direct evidence of potential PFAS issues.

Lori provided a phone number for Belle Vernon Municipal Authority’s Supervisor. Tom called and was sent to voicemail. They may not be interested in discussing potential PFAS issues at waste water plants with the EAC.

John Thatcher mentioned that John Kelly from USArmyCorps of Engineers is a Jefferson Hills Resident. He worked for the Pittsburgh District for USACE. He may have information on the river and inspection of barges that would be transporting fracing waste on the river. He also mentioned the borough should request Rep. Puskaric fund alternative searches for fire suppression alternatives as this is not just a local problem.

**US Steel Clairton Works.**

Kevin have not heard from US Steel on dates for a follow-on meeting / tour of the steel mill. Need to review minutes of our meetings with ACHD and U.S. Steel for follow on questions for Mike.

**Hazardous Waste Program**

Borough Council did approve the EAC’s recommendation to add-on the hazardous waste program for households. Program will start in 2022 at $0.70 per household.

**General Business**

John Thatcher brought up wetlands near Peters Creek. Asked if the EAC is involved in any wetland plans or education opportunities. The EAC does not know of any planned wetlands. There are a lot of areas where wetlands could be constructed. John suggested that it would be good to have a demonstration wetland as an educational environmental interpretive project. It would be good to talk with the school district to discuss involvement.

Rick brought up discussion of zoning map conservation districts. Tom indicated that there are some areas designated as conservation districts from nearly 15 year ago, but the recommendations from EAC (`2018) were not included in the conservation district as of yet as no formal action by Council has taken place on revising the borough zoning map.