

## **Green Team Meeting**

**February 20, 2020**

**6:00 P.M.**

- The meeting took place at the South Strabane Township Municipal Building (550 Washington Road)

Attendees: Bracken Burns (Supervisor), Laynee Zipko, Mark McCurdy, Penny Steggles, Emily Minor, Janie Deemer, Assistant to the Township Manager Patrick Conners, Aiden McCoy, Karen McCoy, Jamie McCoy, and Ms. Nancy Martin of the Pennsylvania Resources Council.

### Topics of Discussion

- **Eagle Scout Community Project**
  - Aiden McCoy of Boy Scout Troop 1315 began the discussion by highlighting his goal of completing a community project within South Strabane Township in effort to complete his Eagle Scout certification. He highlighted various welcome signs established by municipalities across the region including South Fayette Township, Chartiers Township, and East Washington Borough. He expressed his desire to construct a more noticeable welcome sign for South Strabane Township. He noted that if permitted, the selected entrance area would also include landscaping (i.e. flowers, trees, etc.). He then discussed locations for the revitalized welcome area including a patch of land in front of the Municipal Building and near the park & ride along State Route 40. Assistant to the Township Manager Conners noted that the land referenced near the entrance of the Township Building is currently owned by Huntington Bank.
    - Mr. Jamie McCoy (Aiden's father) noted that he was the Troop Master for unit 1315 chartered by the First United Methodist of Washington. He highlighted that a recent Eagle Scout project completed by a member of the Troop involved restoring a "Welcome to Washington" sign in anticipation of the 2019 Pony League World Series.
    - Ms. Deemer inquired regarding the care and maintenance of plantings associated with the proposed project. Mr. Burns highlighted that perennials may be a wise choice to eliminate the need for annual re-plantings. Mr. McCurdy noted that other groups, including the Green Team may be able to help with the upkeep. Ms. Steggles stated the Martha Washington Club currently plants many of the flowers within Township Parks. She noted they may be able to assist with flowers maintenance near the entry signage. She also highlighted Aiden may want to reach out to Stimmell's Greenhouse to seek donations for the project's plantings.
    - Mr. Jamie McCoy stated that he would like to see Troop 1315 work with the Township moving forward to assist in various community service projects. He noted each scout is required to complete a certain level of community service every year.
    - Ms. Minor inquired regarding the project's timeline. Mr. Jamie McCoy stated all Eagle Scout projects need to be completed by the age of 18. He

noted that Aiden will soon be turning 16. He highlighted a goal of completing the project within 2020. Aiden noted he would continue working to develop the vision of the project in the coming months and would report back to the Green Team.

- **Nancy Martin – Pennsylvania Resources Council**

- Ms. Nancy Martin of the Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC) came before the Green Team to discuss trends in the recycling market, educational programs offered by her organization, and various tools that can be relayed to the Township to assist with the complex realm that is residential recycling. She also highlighted the PRC runs the Department of Environmental Protection's recycling hotline which assists callers with basic recycling questions and processes.
- A discussion ensued regarding specific types of materials that can and cannot be recycled. Mr. McCurdy inquired regarding "clamshell" containers that are used to package various fruits. Ms. Martin noted those materials are not acceptable recyclables, highlighting their brittleness and lack of value as a marketable commodity. She noted a strategy to reduce the need for single use plastics includes re-usable bags and containers which can be brought into grocery stores/markets by consumers. She continued by outlining the 3 R's: Reduce, Re-Use, and Recycle, noting that recycling is only one component of waste reduction and sustainability.
- Mr. Burns inquired if the PRC served in a lobbying capacity. Ms. Martin noted that the PRC does not lobby, but rather encourages individuals to lobby for their individual passions.
- Mr. Burns highlighted the current void in the glass recycling chain, noting that many glass producers prefer to use recycled glass "cullet" in their production process. Ms. Martin Acknowledged the market for recycled glass, noting PRC's relationship with CAP Glass which assists their organization during glass collection events. She highlighted during the transportation process glass is prone to breaking and often contaminates other marketable commodities within the single-stream recycling process. She noted that for those reasons glass was ultimately removed from many recycling programs. She highlighted this issue is a challenge faced by municipalities across the nation. A discussion ensued regarding the Township's glass collection program. Assistant to the Township Manager Connors reported the Township utilizes Michael Brothers Hauling for the transportation and recycling of collected glass.
  - Mr. Burns directed Staff to look further into the operations conducted by CAP Glass. Mr. Burns also directed Staff to look into alternative education opportunities for residents, noting the Penn State Agricultural Extension as a resource.
- Ms. Martin discussed educational forums offered by PRC including recycling, rain barrel, and composting classes. Members of the Green Team expressed a desire to host a recycling education class for Township residents. The discussion concluded with a flyer being distributed to members of the Green Team outlining the fundamentals of single stream recycling.

**- Act 101 Update (Commercial Recycling Compliance)**

- Assistant to the Township Manager Conners reported current metrics for commercial recycling reporting within the Township. He noted participation rates to this point are higher, year over year than in 2019. He highlighted that a follow up letter would be sent in the coming week for non-respondents.

**- Pennsylvania Legislative Recycling Update**

- In reference to past discussion, Assistant to the Township Manager Conners reported that he had been in contact with a representative of the PA Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to seek clarification regarding a moratorium placed on establishing bans and or taxes for single-use plastics. He read aloud correspondence received from Mr. Stephen Fickes concerning the matter. To summarize:
  - Act 2019-20, essentially created a one-year moratorium from Pennsylvania municipalities enacting bans/fees on certain plastic items. The Act made various changes to the Commonwealth's Fiscal Code. While the moratorium is in place, two legislative service agencies—the Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) and the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC)—are to conduct studies looking at the issue of plastic bag bans/fees. The IFO is looking at economic impacts, and the LBFC—are looking at all other impacts, including municipal interest in creating these bans/fees, as well as possible unintended consequences. The reports will be issued separately later this summer 2020. Assistant to the Township Manager Conners noted the Township participated in the survey distributed by the LBFC gauging municipal interest in the reduction of single-use plastics through legislative action.

**- Range Resources Forest Management Program Update**

- Assistant to the Township Manager Conners updated members of the Green Team regarding the Forest Management project proposed by Range Resources Appalachia, LLC. He noted this project is to be the first of its kind implement by Range Resources. He reported Range Resources has applied for a zoning variance (Public Hearing on March 18th) requesting relief from the Township's Zoning Code concerning fencing. He noted the fencing would be used to protect over 5,000 native, non-invasive trees that will be planted on the 26.5-acre tract of land located near the Munce Well Pad (50 Meadows View Road). He noted as the program moves forward, Staff would be inviting members of Range Resources to speak further on the matter to both the Green Team and Board of Supervisors. He concluded by highlighting a volunteer partnership opportunity between the Green Team and Range Resources for the planting of larger trees placed on the property.

**- Washington County Court Community Service Program**

- Assistant to the Township Manager Conners reported the Township has been scheduled to receive assistance through the Washington County Court Service Program on October 24, 2020. He highlighted the Township recently worked in

partnership with the program, citing the November 26, 2019 litter pickup conducted along portions of Locust Avenue. He acknowledged the long wait time highlighting the popularity of the program, particularly during the spring and summer months. He concluded by stating the Green Team would need to select a road(s) to complete as the project date draws nearer.

**- New Ideas, Current Events, and Final Thoughts**

- Ms. Deemer highlighted various projects and ideas for the Green Team moving forward including the following:
  - She complemented the Public Works Department for litter pickup along Cameron, Berry, and Fischer Roads. She encouraged the Township to continue this policy.
  - She highlighted concerns with the recycling cans in Community Park. She noted they need to be more visible to encourage people to recycle.
  - She inquired regarding bamboo trees along Community Park. Assistant to the Township Manager Connors noted that bamboo trees are an invasive species. He reported it would not be advisable to plant such a genus in any portion of the Township.
  - She encouraged the Township to continue with the distribution of a newsletter by the end of March. She highlighted various topics which could be included within the newsletter to help educate residents on both their obligation to recycle along with its associated benefits.

**Adjournment: 7:30 p.m.**