

Swarthmore Environmental Advisory Council

February 28, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Present: Susan Kelly, Chair; members Ashley Grider, Matt McCabe; associate member Annie Fox.

Absent: members Tracy Bouvette, Doug Hasbrouck, Jon Penders, Aurora Winslade; associate members Phil Coleman, Jennifer Pfluger, Melissa Tier.

Borough resident Joan Urban; Swarthmore College students Brittni Teresi and Gavi Mallory

Public Comment:

Joan Urban, representing Earth Quaker Action Team (“EQAT”), discussed EQAT’s background and current campaign. Joan explained that EQAT’s prior campaign led to the divestment by PNC of investments in mining companies engaged in mountain-top removal. EQAT is currently launching a “Power Local Green Jobs” campaign. The goal is to get PECO to source 20% of its power from local solar sources. While there have been meetings with PECO executives on the matter, PECO has yet to commit to higher solar usage. EQAT is currently organizing a 1-2 day march in late May possibly from PECO’s Chester Generating Station to the Eddystone Station.

The group discussed ideas to support this initiative. Joan asked about formal support from Swarthmore Borough Council and Susan agreed to discuss with Lauren. With respect to generating walkers for the planned march, Susan suggested Swarthmore Next Door and A Few Steps. Annie raised Interfaith Power & Light as well as saying she would discuss with her rabbi. Matt suggested appearing at the Swarthmore Farmers’ Market.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on January 24th, 2017 were not approved as the necessary quorum was not present.

A Few Steps

In Phil Coleman’s absence, Susan mentioned that Phil planned to attend the “Take Action Fair” at Media-Providence Friends School on March 18th.

Sustainability Office/Students

Brittni and Gavi are Swarthmore College President’s Sustainability Research Fellows. They attended the meeting as representatives of the Crum Woods Stewardship Committee. Brittni and Gavi gave a presentation on the committee’s goals and eight focus groups (including, Biodiversity, Deer Management, Invasive Species, et al.).

Brittni and Gavi, on behalf of the Committee, are looking for ways to better connect the college with the community with a focus on the natural space provided by Crum Woods. In this regard, they are organizing a community event on Earth Day (April 22) from 10am-4pm. The event aims to offer, for both college students and members of the community, tours and events in the Crum Woods, which will include nature tours, bird walks, as well as kid-friendly activities such as face painting.

Brittini and Gavi were looking for support from the EAC and ideas on how to encourage community involvement in the Earth Day event. The group discussed getting word into the local schools as a first step. Susan volunteered to inquire at SRS and Matt agreed to try and find the appropriate contacts at the middle and high schools.

Other means to increase college/community were discussed. Brittini mentioned a possible app for smart phones through which people could upload photos from the woods. The group also discussed ways to better inform the community about events on campus, such as tours of Crum Woods, which occur six times a year. The idea of posting a campus calendar on Swarthmore Next Door was raised, but Gavi and Brittini mentioned that a comprehensive college calendar may not exist as different groups on campus all keep their own calendars.

The group discussed other issues pertaining to Crum Woods, including the prevalence of unleashed dogs and local teenagers drinking at different places in the woods. Brittini and Gavi said that the college is aware of these issues and is attempting to find ways to reduce the occurrence of both problems.

Susan raised the idea of getting college students involved in Little Crum Creek Park clean-ups. Brittini and Gavi thought students would get more involved, especially if events were organized for weekend afternoons (2pm-4pm).

It's Not Trash

Ashley discussed whether college students could get more involved in efforts to better inform the community about disposal of household items that may not belong in regular trash pickup. Brittini and Gavi mentioned other fellows who were working on waste projects. It was agreed that those fellows (Adina and Vanessa) might help. Brittini and Gavi would check and Ashley will contact Adina and Vanessa.

SRS Parent/Child Work Days

Susan discussed a request by SRS parents to help take care of Little Crum Creek Park. The parents had proposed March 31, April 28, and May 19, afternoons after school. The parent groups will not require any supervision or tools, although Matt would try to attend some of the allotted time, but Susan will check closer to the first work date to see what they need.

Kitchen Harvest

The meeting ended with a brief discussion of Kitchen Harvest, a small, local composting company, and attempts to coordinate efforts on campus with efforts in the community. Discussion will continue at our next meeting.

Recording secretary,

Matt McCabe