**EAC Meeting Minutes**

**10/11/24**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm

**Committee Attendance**

Those committee members in attendance were:

Barbara Mako, Charlene Briggs, Donna Delany, Drew Wallace, Rachel McKay

Dana Alan, Supervisor Liaison

Jennifer Munson was awarded a Healthy Yard Recognition sign. Thank you Jennifer and family for having a healthy yard!

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

MOTION by Donna to approve the Sept. minutes; second by Charlene. The motion carries unanimously.

New Business

* Book Club Review Braiding Sweetgrass
  + A Big Success! People requested another one!
* Nature Club
  + Review of Nature Tenders event – a big success, good volunteer turnout, 4 OJR students, we want to thank Wawa for the food.
  + What’s next? We scheduled our next Opalanie Park Nature Tenders event for Nov. 16, 9am, rain date of the 17th. Goals
    - Pound in stakes from last time farther
    - Try 2 kinds of vole prevention – put 2B stone from road crew around some of the trees, then ask road crew to mow a circle around the rest of the trees with a mown strip connecting them, leaving some vegetation in meadow. See what works best. Note – upper right side of field is all thistle – would be good if that was part of the mown part
    - Plant some more trees to replace missing ones if Drew has trees left.
    - Remove invasives from meadow
    - Remove invasives from area if enough volunteers
  + Icon Progress – Elisabeta sent us a draft of 4 Nature Tenders icon designs – we chose #4 unanimously. Now we can get the hats made!
  + Tree giveaway – Drew has distributed most of the trees he picked up. He may be able to get more to give out Nov. 16/17.
  + Riparian Buffer Discussion Wilson’s Corner and Cook’s Glen – we were asked to evaluate the riparian buffers in these places, and 6 of us plus Dana visited. Riparian buffers are natural and adequate EXCEPT for where the current parking lot is at Wilson’s Corner.
    - Could the parking area at Wilson’s Corner be moved away from the stream and trees/shrubs planted?
    - Deer exclosures could be put up to protect young oaks and birch that are already growing there
    - Bamboo along road could be dug out with backhoe, filled with top soil, and trees and shrubs planted along the road.
    - Beautiful rock at driveway at road. Would be nice to clear more around the rock so it is visible and plant flowers like Blephilia ciliata or other aggressive, shade loving, deer resistant, low growing, native flowers there
    - We would like to suggest a different name for the park, one that better represents the natural elements there.
    - We suggest a garbage can there for trout season and a fishing line disposal recepticle.
    - Instead of picnic benches, benches or chairs might be a nice idea. Eagle Scout project? Must be attached to ground in case of flood.
    - All parts of the property that are now mowed but not needed for parking could be planted with trees/shrubs to enhance water quality. Guessing 50 trees/shrubs for interior of property, 50 along road
    - Drew will contact Mike Schwinninger to see if he can arrange a meeting with Dame Juliana people to see why they thought 1500 trees were necessary.
    - Cooks Glen - We suggest that the autumn olive that surrounds the field is removed and replaced with white pine enhance the owl and bird habitat.
* Lawn to Meadow
  + Barbara reports that the DCNR municipal C2P2 grant program has changed, and they require more detail than our committee is capable of doing (e.g. professional drawings, ADA compliance). We should probably begin to tackle the project ourselves. Step one would be to contact professionals from the DCNR list to get an estimate for the cost of meadow installation, since we don’t know what ballpark we are in.
  + Charlene attended a lawn conversion session at the recent PA EAC Fall Gathering. She will ask a representative of the Lansdale EAC to come and talk to us. They did several test plots, and we can learn from their experience.
  + Drew’s neighbor used Refugia to install a meadow. We could try to connect with them, also.
* Botanical Sanctuary – the area for the sanctuary has been cleared by the road crew! Thank you! Charlene is hopeful we will soon receive a grant to cover the cost of plants. A deer fence is needed for the 80 x 20’ rectangle. Charlene will work on getting an estimate for the cost of the fence and a gate. We are hopeful Carys can source a beautiful sign. We will create an event to do the planting.
* EAC Fall Gathering – Charlene attended (Donna was sick). Charlene learned about stormwater management and lawn conversion. She made good contacts with other EAC’s and WeConserve PA.
* Pollinator Pitstop
  + We need to pick a 2025 plant and get the seeds in time for January seed giveaway
  + Native Garden Designer Laura Cruz said she will do a presentation for us on native gardens. Perhaps this could be in conjunction with the seed giveaway.
  + All of our healthy yard signs have been assigned to a family. Time to order 30 more. Need updated QR code and no nail hole in the bottom.
  + Donna made a motion that we request that a Pollinator Pitstop be installed near or under the Opalanie Park sign. We can customize the design. It would need to be cared for by the township gardener. Seconded by Rachel. Passed unanimously. It was requested that the nearby yucca plant be removed.
* Update from Traffic Safety – Supervisor Couris and Ken Alan are continuing to investigate the PennDOT spraying of pesticide on state roads.
* Resident Penny Fulton is concerned about the dangers of rodenticide and the harm it causes to birds of prey and other predators of rodents. She asked that we educate the public on this. We will look for graphics and share on township social media pages.

Motion to Dismiss was made by Rachel at 8:50, Donna seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

Future Dates

Nov. 16/17 – 9am – Nature Tenders, Opalanie Park

Elementary School Earth Day – to be scheduled

April 26 – Shredding Event

May 3, Community Day, Opalanie Park

Respectfully Submitted, Donna Delany