

September 25, 2018

Attending: Elizabeth Jenkins, James Verdi, Corey Ullman, Matt McCabe, Susan Kelly, Nancy English, Alan Prindle, Claudia Cueto, Annie Fox, Lauren McKinney and Jennifer Pfluger

Housekeeping

— Approval of August meeting minutes

Composting and mosquito workshops

— Elizabeth says that Jen has been in touch with master gardeners from Penn State Extension who are willing to give a two-hour composting tutorial at the Swarthmore farmer's market this fall.

Alan points out there is a financial incentive to the borough to educate and encourage residents to compost since it would reduce garbage tipping fees.

Elizabeth says after the composting presentation, she, Jen and Colin Purrington can speak to people at the market about mosquito control. Jen adds that information about tick prevention should also be shared.

Elizabeth notes that Colin has written a blog post intended to educate people about mosquito prevention in backyards and communities, and the dangers that chemical sprays pose.

<https://colinpurrington.com/2018/09/buzz-on-mosquito-sprays/>

James says he will have a table with the Lions Club at the market on Oct. 27 and suggested the EAC could share his spot for the composting/mosquito presentation.

Recycling update

— The tour of the Republic recycling facility, which had been organized by Bill Foster of A Few Steps, didn't happen this month. Instead, representatives from A Few Steps, along with Lauren, went on a tour of TotalRecycle Inc., a single-stream recycling plant in Berks County.

Lauren says company representatives gave an interesting tour of the two-year-old facility. She notes that recycling rules can vary according to the way in which recycling companies handle the processing of materials. TotalRecycle representatives said 20 percent of the population are excellent at recycling, while another 20 percent do not participate, and the remaining 60 percent of people can be taught to recycle correctly.

Elizabeth shared some of the information handed out on the TotalRecycle tour, including:

- There does remain a market for higher-purity material (well-sorted). The European recycling market is more advanced than the U.S., even with mixed-stream recycling.
- * Plastic bags, ropes, wire and Christmas lights are all a problem and end up recycling along with propane tanks, dead animals and diapers, which are dirty and dangerous to workers.

- Recycling glass still exceeds the cost of manufacturing new glass. That market won't change. It is best to use aluminum cans, and reduce use of glass and some plastics.

- Material streams that have positive markets — aluminum cans, hard plastics, cardboard. In the near future, local companies may be able to recycle styrofoam.

Elizabeth says she will share the information from TotalRecycle with the rest of the council and adds that the EAC is still waiting to hear about a tour of Republic.

Jen asks if TotalRecycle will recycle plastic campaign signs. Lauren says she is not sure but the company hates metal and paper mixed together. Claudia mentions that some candidates make sure to only use paperboard signs.

Street tree survey proposal

The preferred vendor to conduct the survey and data management of the town's tree canopy sought by the borough's Street Tree Committee is Bartlett Tree Experts. Representatives from the company will attend tomorrow's meeting of the Environment Committee to explain their proposal.

Elizabeth notes that questions about the proposed survey asked by members of the EAC at the last meeting will be addressed in Bartlett's presentation. She adds that the Street Tree Committee is also pursuing grants for the survey from the Centennial Foundation and the PA Urban Community Forestry Council.

2019 Budget Proposals — Little Crum Creek Park

Susan says Little Crum Creek Park is badly in need of maintenance and that particular attention is needed to address the overgrowth in poison ivy and weeds as well as the dilapidation of the park's paths.

She reports that she met with representatives from Weeds, Inc., a company that comes highly recommended by Scott Arboretum, local biologist Roger Latham and the CRC Watersheds Assoc.

Weeds provided the following quote for killing the poison ivy, knotweed and wisteria in the park:

- Poison ivy — \$1,000 for 2018-19
- Knotweed and wisteria — \$1,500 for 2018-19

Susan says she will present the quote to the borough Public Works Committee on Thursday as a budget request for next year.

Susan says the poison ivy has gotten very bad next to the creek and the storybook posts, all along the wetland and the paths near Cresson Lane. She adds that she is now not comfortable hosting clean-up days at the park with students who volunteer because of the prevalence of poison ivy.

She says she has been assured that Weeds Inc. uses the least amount of toxic chemicals to control the poison ivy and weeds, and that they are water-safe.

Jen asks if the company has provided exact details of the chemicals they use. Annie says she'd like to have in writing a guarantee that the chemicals will present a low toxicity to aquatic life and wildlife.

James suggests that maybe goats, which eat poison ivy, weeds and other vegetation, could be considered an alternative option. He promises to look into that option.

Matt notes that the paths are all gone near the wetlands.

Susan says she has talked with Cuzzy from Public Works about how to address the crumbling paths along the stream banks on Cresson.

Cuzzy has suggested paving the paths with macadam to make it easier to walk and accessible to wheelchairs.

Susan notes that making the park accessible to seniors is a goal of the borough's aging in place task force. Getting senior citizens outside is important and better paths mean they could use walkers, canes, etc.

Lauren asks if the whole park has to be ADA accessible. Matt asks if the borough has a rule on accessibility of public parks. Claudia says she doesn't know if there is an absolute rule but there might be a need to make part of a park accessible.

Susan suggests that it may be worth it for the borough to hire an engineer to stabilize the stream banks and straighten out paths. She says a very rough estimate to do that might be around \$5,000.

Currently, the macadam path along the stream bed has to be moved. Replacing it with more asphalt will destroy tree roots.

Claudia says it's a nice wild park and that asphalt is petroleum-based and she would like to see less paths. She adds that if the wood chip path were done right, dug down and layered with sand and gravel, that might be a nice alternative.

Susan says asking for money for a consultation with an engineer can go through a Public Works committee.

Elizabeth suggests putting out an RFP and that the borough engineer might want to take a first crack at it.