
West Reading Environmental Advisory Council

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MEETING MINUTES

July 24, 2023

Members Present

Chairperson Patrick Kaag, Ryan Lineaweaver, Nicole Weik, Dean Murray Borough Manager, Jim Keller, Samantha Kaag Associate Member Ty Gardner and Associate Member Jay Santo Domingo

Visitors

From NewCastle Lawn andLandscape Tyler Weisman, Brad Stephenson, and Tricia Voss

Call to Order

Mr. Kaag called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Mr. Lineaweaver and seconded by Mr. Keller to approve the minutes of May 22, 2023. Motion carried.

NewCastle Law & Landscape Presentation

Mr. Weisman presented a video of a design that NewCastle is proposing for a memorial garden in honor of the victims of the Palmer explosion tragedy. The location of the memorial garden would be on Playground Drive to the left of the walking bridge. Ms. Voss designed the garden and explained that she wanted to make this both a memorial garden as well as a space for the community to utilize and enjoy. Mr. Murray asked if the riprock would remain where it currently is located since it is vital to the amount of water that comes through that area. Ms. Voss stated that it would remain where it is and maybe we could look at getting some different rocks and stones to place in that section as well.

Ms. Voss explained that as part of the memorial seven sky pencil hollies will be placed in the garden with seven boulders adjacent to them. The time of the explosion was 4:57pm and it was designed so that at that exact time during that same time of year a shadow will be cast onto each of the boulders. Ms. Voss explained that she would like to incorporate a lot of early blooming flowers so that in March there is some brightness. Ms. Kaag asked about what type of timeframe NewCastle was looking at to start work on this project. Mr. Weisman stated that the Fall season would be a great time to plant and start working on this project. Mr. Kaag stated that the owners of Palmer had previously mentioned that they would like to get involved with a project like this as well. Ms. Kaag noted that this could be a good spot to also pay tribute to the first responders. Ms. Kaag suggested that families of the victims and the first responders would want to help with the planting and setting up of the garden. Mr. Stephenson mentioned that he is happy to have as many volunteers as possible. He stated that he sees it more as being a part of something and not necessarily getting the work done as fast as possible.

Mr. Kaag asked if we need to be concerned about the roots of the trees. Ms. Voss stated that both trees have very shallow roots. Mr Gardner asked if any of the plants would be pollinator plants. Ms. Voss stated that many of the plants she incorporated into the design would be great pollinators. Mr. Stephenson mentioned that he

would like to have this be no cost to the borough. NewCastle will donate the labor, the materials, and possibly maintenance if any is needed. Ms. Voss suggested asking Palmer to contribute to getting the boulders engraved with the victims names. Motion made by Ms. Kaag to send this to The Borough Council for approval with a Fall install. Seconded by Ms. Weik. Motion carried.

EAC Member Goals Update

Ms. Weik presented a flyer that she made that can be passed out to local businesses and restaurants to try and help reduce the plastic waste in the borough. Mr. Kaag suggested getting some quotes on how much some of these items cost to provide to the restaurants. Mr. Weik suggested creating a West Reading themed tote bag that we could give to restaurants and businesses that then customers could buy and utilize over and over.

Mr. Lineaweaver mentioned that he discovered a program while visiting Lambertville New Jersey called Third Bin. This program allows all the businesses to have a third bin which is used for composting. This program helped reduce the trash by two thirds for most of the businesses. Mr. Lineaweaver suggested pairing this with Ms. Weik's idea to reduce the plastic waste.

Mr. Kaag mentioned that we have gotten two more dog waste stations installed. Mr. Santo Domingo suggested putting some more dog waste containers within the streets of the borough. Mr. Murray stated that this will need to be approved by Public Works. Mr. Santo Domingo stated that Home Depot is selling them for \$145. Mr. Santo Domingo stated that he is also looking into creating fridge magnets that would have information on what can go into the trash and recycle.

Mr. Kaag stated that he will be meeting up with Paradise to get recommendations and quotes for the solar project.

Ms. Kaag stated that the soil samples came in for the community garden. Nothing looked to be out of the ordinary. Mr. Murray stated that the MS4 layer and the spray on grass seed is doing very well.

Spring Free Market Results

Mr. Kaag shared that the Spring Free Market went well but that the biggest thing he heard was more people want to hear about this type of event sooner. Ms. Kaag and Mr. Lineaweaver suggested that we try and promote this type of event more especially on social media.

Open Member Spot

Motion made by Ms. Kaag to recommend that Jay Santo Domingo become a full member of the EAC. Seconded by Ms. Weik. Motion carried.

MS4 Bulletin

Mr. Kaag mentioned how important it is to keep yards clear of any contamination so that it doesn't runoff into the sewers and creeks.

Global Update

Mr. Kaag stated that this year El Niño well be back.

Adjournment

Moved by Mr. Lineaweaver and seconded by Mr. Keller to adjourn the meeting at 6:57p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Weik
EAC Member