

**Environment and Recreation Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, November 2, 2023 6:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Committee Members Wendy Margolis (Chairperson), Ben Bell, Joe Frederick, Recreation and Special Event Coordinator Caitlin Hernandez, EAC Member Grant Alger, and Building and Zoning Director Karyn Hyland.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Ms. Margolis.

The **Minutes** from September 7, 2023, were approved as submitted.

An **Open Areas Index Proposal** from the Environmental Advisory Council came to the ERC. They would like the authority to develop an Open Areas Index. The EAC feels it will be a helpful resource in the future to identify spaces that need to be protected. Grant answered questions posed by the ERC. Karyn confirmed a lot of the information is already publicly available, so there would be no need for any software purchases or things of that nature. Mr. Bell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Frederick, to give the EAC permission to begin an Open Areas Index.

**“Leave the Leaves”** is an idea to leave the fallen leaves in property owners' yards. The leaves provide habitats for pollinators and other small animals. Ms. Margolis would like the information shared on the website and social media sharing this idea. Mr. Frederick mentioned that the leaves can blow into the storm sewers if not collected. Once in the storm sewer system, they will rot and can cause blockages. They can degrade the waterways, which will result in pollution. Ms. Hyland will have it added to the website to reach more people. The Township made a similar post on their Facebook page.

Ms. Hernandez provided the Recreation Director's Report. The Broad Commons Park and Playground are both being well utilized. The mural at Burpee Pavilion has been completed. Burpee Gardening Company contacted us and would like to promote the pavilion and mural there. Ms. Hernandez is pleased with the idea of a partnership with the Burpee Gardening Company. The Pavilion has been winterized for the season. The Historical Society Park renovations are underway. The flagstone terrace is complete. The Plumstead Hawks have planted five white oak trees at Veterans Memorial Park. The fall clean-up has begun in all the parks.

As of October, the Saturday Chess program has been moved inside Borough Hall. Scenic Stroll has been very well attended this season, averaging 17 people per week. The Witches Bike Ride had 150 participating witches, making it the most successful ride ever.

**Old/New Business** Mr. Bell had questions about the tree-lighting ceremony. Santa rides to the tree in a fire truck and climbs into the Borough's cherry picker truck to light the tree. Mr. Bell was wondering who is in charge of the event, whether it is Public Works or a different entity. The tree will arrive on November 18.

Mr. Alger had a question about whether solar panels for Borough Hall will be included in the ERC's budget. Ms. Margolis said it would be included in the 5-year budget under Public Works. Mr. Alger also had a question about the Scenic Stroll. Ms. Hernandez gave an overview of the strolls. Mr. Alger was also happy to hear about the new tree planting at Veterans Memorial Park. Ms. Hyland shared there will be more new trees planted on E. Court St. by the cemetery.

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Mr. Bell also had additional questions about the criteria for a “street” tree vs. a shade tree on private property. Ms. Hyland gave a detailed answer because there is a lack of suitable space to plant trees that will become quite large over time. The focus will be on shade trees versus ornamental trees.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:36 pm.