

Lower Gwynedd Township EAC Meeting Agenda

February 12, 2025, 7:00 PM

Township Building Conference Room

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82541819661?pwd=9OmVgxCE2GGZyr2TUDQoDDLnGxDecX.1>

Meeting ID: 825 4181 9661 Passcode: 143330 Call in: 646-931-3860; 929-205-6099

1. Call to order
2. Approval of prior meeting minutes
3. Request to move items from Consent Agenda to Regular Agenda, add additional items as part of the Regular Agenda
4. Approval of Regular Agenda
5. Consent agenda: prior Meeting Minutes
6. Old Business
 - a. Going Green Award presented at January 28 Board of Supervisors Meeting
7. Single Use Plastics Planning April Meeting
8. Points of interest/General comments
 - a. Other meetings of interest
 - i. Shady Grove Elementary Science Night March, 27, 6-8
 - ii. Upper Dublin EPAB Environmental Open House March, 8, 9:30-12

Next meeting: March 12th, 2025, Regular Meeting

Upcoming Meeting Topics

March- Regular Meeting

April – Community Conversation on Single Use Plastics

May – Regular Meeting

June – Planning Workshop RF100

Lower Gwynedd Township

Environmental Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 8th, 2025

Members in Attendance:

Mark Schafer, Chair (Zoom)

Brenda Doll

Rea Monaghan, Vice Chair

Lisa Brown

Maureen Nunn

Marianne Grey (Zoom)

Associate Members: Rich Valiga, Suzanne Smith

Board Of Supervisors Liaison: Tessie McNeely (Zoom)

Staff in Attendance: Sandi Feight

1. **Call to Order, attendance, introductions of new members, participants, or visitors** – meeting was called to order at 7 pm.
2. **Approval of prior meeting minutes** – minutes approved as submitted.
3. **Request to move items from Consent Agenda to Regular Agenda, and any other item to be considered as part of the Regular Agenda** – nothing on consent agenda to be moved up. Maureen would like to add Bird Flu to New Business. Lisa would like to discuss Recycling Republic Services. Rea would like to discuss RF-100 and the Public Works building development.
4. **Approval of Regular Agenda** – approved with added items.
5. **Consent Agenda:** prior Meeting Minutes, Deer Management Update
6. **Election of Vice Chair** – This was tabled until the Board of Supervisors appoints new members. Members whose terms ended at the end of 2024 can still sit on the council until a decision is made.
7. **Old Business-**
 - a. Bird town Update – Steve had an update, however, was not able to attend the meeting.
 - b. Deer Management Update – There was a report attached to the packet for the members to review. Maureen gave a brief report. Asked if the police keep records for deer vs vehicle accidents. Suggested to educate residents on deer mating season, encourage deer resistant plans and planting closer to homes and to use repellents. Suzanne was tasked with putting some bullet points together for the newsletter. It was also suggested to invite someone from Upper Dublin to come and speak about their program.

- c. Going Green Award Presentation at the January 28 Board of Supervisors Meeting-Maureen would like the EAC members to be there and show support and then a follow-up meeting to discuss what went right and what went wrong.
- d. We Conserve Membership-the minimum membership fee is \$295. Purchasing a membership shows support for the organization and allows for discounted-free registration fees to some of their programs. The EAC will recommend to the BOS to purchase the membership for the year.
- e. Monthly Meeting Schedule: It was suggested last year to incorporate more topic-based workshops to allow for the members to have more input and allow for more in-depth discussions and developing ideas to move forward.
 - i. February – Single Use Plastic (planning meeting): create a plan for round table discussion at the April meeting, to include how to reach out to the business and community outreach. The plan would need to be shared with the Board of Supervisors with approval.
 - ii. March – Regular Meeting
 - iii. April – Single Use Plastic Community Round Table Discussion
 - iv. May – Regular Meeting

8. Standing Items – Committee and Liaison updates

- a. Parks & Recreation Department & Staff Liaison report review
 - i. Review 2025 Calendar-battery recycling/techno trash on Saturday, 1/11, pending snowstorm and the staff recommend cancelling the event. September collection date is the same as Fall Fest and it was suggested that date not be advertised.
- b. Planning Commission Liaison- Maureen reported there has been a zoning change proposed for a 5 story, 360-unit high rise apartment complex, above retail space with 10% workforce housing included. Workforce housing is supplemented apartments with only allowing the charge of 30% of the income for rent. Zoning would change from MF3 to Mixed Use which would allow this type of project. A traffic study would need to be done. About 100 people showed up to voice their concerns about this building project and zoning change at the last meeting. There were setback concerns, school concerns, police manpower and fire concerns.
- c. LG Comprehensive Plan Liaison - Claire Warner presented to the BOS on December 10th about the plan update and some of the comments during the public meeting. The BOS had a fair number of questions about the changes. The steering committee meeting is set up for January 14th, which will incorporate many of the comments from the Open House, and then they will finalize a final plan and an adoption for May 2025.

9. Points of Interest/General Comments

- a. Bird Flu – 200 snow geese were found deceased in this area due to being exposed to this flu. Mark will send an email to Steve looking for recommendations.
- b. Republic Services – the website and newsletter are not updated with the latest information on recycling. Sandi explained that she had reached out to Republic for new information to be shared on the social media outlets and I only just received information that week.
- c. RF100- Rea wants to establish a workshop at one of the monthly meetings to discuss this. EAC will start putting together recommendations for the new Public Works building.

Meeting concluded: 8:09 PM

Next Meeting: February 12th, 2025

SINGLE USE PLASTICS

The EAC has been tasked with reaching out to, and engaging business owners regarding banning SUP and perhaps other plastic items.

SUP Moving forward:

- Obtain a list of the business community owners (I can go online and also view the Montco. Business Assoc. but a specific list for all LGT business owners is not available.
- Sandi will reach out to the Chamber of Commerce to obtain a list of LGT businesses. The LGT Business Association operates under the Chamber of Commerce.

Potential options to engage the business community

1. Mail a survey created by another municipality:

- BOS approval for the EAC to mail a survey created by another munic., with tweaks as needed, to business owners. BOS will review and provide comment.
- Does the BOS prefer the EAC use an existing survey or one that we create?
- If a survey is approved by BOS, confirm staff can print and mail out the surveys
- Inquire if BOS supports funding this effort using monies in the EAC's budget (e.g., educational outreach line item)
- If survey is approved:
 - Send to all business owners to gauge their perspective regarding a single use plastic bag ban and/or bans for other plastic items (e.g., SUP bags only, and/or banning plastic flatware, Styrofoam containers, straws, coffee stirrers)
 - I have attached a survey Upper Gwynedd Township mailed to their business owners. There are numerous samples available online and on the SUP group's Google Drive. UGT is a neighboring municipality and the survey is brief and hones in on key issues.
- Give a **deadline** for survey responses to be completed and mailed back (or emailed?) to LGT attention EAC
- Also ask for phone and email contact information on the survey form

2. EAC creates our own survey:

We can list the same or similar answers to those listed in the UGT survey.

- Potential questions:
 - Is the use of plastics a concern to the business owners?
 - Are protocols in place to scale back on providing plastic products:
If yes, list which items, e.g., SUP bags, plastic flatware, Styrofoam containers, straws, coffee stirrers)
 - Have economic concerns regarding alternatives to plastics been raised, or are of concern?
 - Do businesses currently utilize alternatives to plastics and if so, what are the alternatives?

- Is your business in favor of a SUP ban?
- Is your business opposed to a SUP ban?
- Is your business in favor of a SUP ban but not in favor of banning plastic flatware, Styrofoam food containers or straws?
- Is your business in favor of banning plastic flatware and/or other plastics (list items) but not SUP bags?
- Is your business in favor of a SUP ban and banning other plastic items (list items)?
- Is your business in favor of alternative solutions (e.g., encourage and/or require guests to bring reusable cloth bags? (list specific alternatives)
- Is your business willing to offer incentives for those patrons using reusable bags and reusable food containers (list specific incentives, e.g., coupon for future use at the establishment, minimal discount off of bill)
- Does your business encourage patrons to bring reusable bags for goods and reusable containers for food?
- Approximately, what percentage of patrons bring reusable bags and reusable food containers?
- Are business owners in favor of banning SUP but willing to provide paper bags at a nominal fee (e.g., .5 or 10 per bag)? Most of the surrounding municipal business, malls, etc., have banned SUP but charge .10 per paper bag.
- Does the business already have fees in place (probably not given there is no municipal ban in place) and if so, what are the fees?

3. Business Community Meeting Based on Survey Mailing:

- Working with township staff, identify a date and location to conduct a LGT business community meeting (BOS tasked the EAC with hosting a business community meeting by the BOS):
 - Perhaps the meeting should only be for the business community and not open to the public (if this is permissible by law)
- Prepare a presentation to engage businessowners of retail, corporate, café and restaurant establishments
- If approved, survey business owners a month before the meeting
 - EAC tallies replies in advance of the meeting
 - EAC can opt to review the responses in a roundtable discussion or include responses of each question, by percentage, in a PowerPoint presentation **(Format and date TBD)**.
- EAC can ask for additional feedback at the end of the PowerPoint presentation or roundtable discussion in a Q&A session.
- If a survey is approved, include a RSVP section and phone and email contact section
- EAC can conduct a roundtable discussion or PowerPoint
- Two meeting dates could be offered and the date with the greatest RSVP will be selected **OR** we offer two (2) meetings conducted using the same format

- We will **strongly** encourage completion and return of the survey to LGT before the meeting
4. Business Community Meeting Without a Survey Mailing:
- If not mailing a survey, the EAC can prepare a list of questions to be distributed at the beginning of the meeting. EAC can provide an introduction and a brief overview of the problems caused by plastics but also the reasons many prefer using plastics.
 - Attendees will be broken into groups to collectively discuss and write their responses on easel pads (EAC will write questions on the easel pads prior to the meeting. One representative from each business will write a check mark under the corresponding answer).
 - The EAC could also collect forms and then tally up and review responses with the group. OR, we can ask each question and write the answer to each question on an easel pad
 - **I think this will be cumbersome and too time consuming to carry out.**
5. Various Meeting/Presentation Format Options
- Do we limit attendance to only one person per business entity?
 - Based on RSVPs, determine how many tables and chairs are needed. We can have attendees sit in the seats in the BOS meeting room as currently set up, or set up tables for a roundtable discussion (**format TBD**)
 - EAC members and/or guest speakers can give an informal presentation and/or give a PowerPoint presentation (**format TBD**)

Plastic Waste Survey

Upper Gwynedd Township

Businesses

The Upper Gwynedd Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) is interested in ways to reduce plastic waste and would like to hear about your business' practices, interests, and goals as it relates to single-use plastics. In addition to surveying community businesses, the EAC will also be surveying Township residents. Thank you for your responses.

1. What type of business do you have?

- Restaurant, café, take-away food
- Small commercial/retail space
- Large commercial or chain space
- Supermarket or grocery store

Other _____

2. What is your position at the business?

Owner

Manager

Shift Manager

Employee

3. Does your business use any of the following single-use plastics?

- Plastic Bags
- Plastic Straws/Coffee Stirrers
- Styrofoam
- Plastic Utensils

- Plastic Cups and Food Containers
- My Business Does not need/use these items

4. How are single-use plastic items provided to customers?

- Automatically
- Upon request
- Not provided

Other: _____

5. How important is it to you to be able to use single-use plastics in your business?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Somewhat unimportant
- Very unimportant

6. What barriers (if any) keep you from switching to a more environmentally friendly alternative?

- Cost of alternatives
- Availability from suppliers
- Unaware of alternatives
- Store policy and procedures
- Convenience

Other (please specify) _____

Customer preference

7. Would you support measures to reduce or ban the use of single-use plastic bags in Upper Gwynedd?

Yes

No

8. Which of the following alternatives do you feel your business would support to limit the use of single-use plastic bags?

A ban on the distribution of plastic bags, with the distribution of recycled material paper bags allowed for a 10-15 cent fee per bag that would be kept by retail establishments.

Distribute plastic bags for a small fee and paper bags for free (or both charge?)

Offer customers a 5-10 cent refund for bringing reusable bags.

Distribute plastic bags upon request only

Other: _____

None of the above (Please explain) _____

9. You have made an investment in your business and single-use plastics may play a role in this investment. How long would it take you to use up your current supply of single-use plastic bags?

3 months

6 months

9 months

12 months

10. Are you in favor of a policy that allows for the handing out of plastic straws only upon request?

Support

Oppose

11. Are you in favor of a policy that bans the distribution of plastic straws in Upper Gwynedd?

Support

Oppose

12. Would you support a wider ban on single-use plastics that would include plastic cups, utensils, and/or Styrofoam/polystyrene containers (to be replaced by paper or compostable material where practicable)?

Support

Oppose

13. Additional Comments: