

Lower Gwynedd Township EAC Meeting Agenda

March 12, 2025, 7:00 PM

Township Building Conference Room

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89941720891?pwd=Gw3bCB3N5l1mfY649P08i8bgHxVXLS.1>

Meeting ID: 899 4172 0891 **Passcode:** 194360 **Call in:** 1+646 931 3860; 1+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. New Business
 - a. Gilmore and Associates, Township Engineer: Sidewalk and Trail Map
7. Old Business
 - a. Single Use Plastic Waste Reduction Planning Discussion for April Event
8. Points of interest/General comments
 - a. Other meetings of interest
 - i. Shady Grove Elementary Science Night March 27, 6-8
 - ii. Wissahickon Trails Cleanup, Saturday, April 26

Next Monthly Meeting: May 14, 2025

Community Conversation: April 9, 2025 (instead of our regular meeting)

Upcoming Meeting Topics

April – Community Education on Single Use Plastics

May – Regular Meeting

June – Planning Workshop RF100

Lower Gwynedd Township

Environmental Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

February 12th, 2025

Members in Attendance:

Mark Schafer, Chair (Zoom)

Rea Monaghan, Vice Chair

Maureen Nunn

Brenda Doll (via Zoom)

Lisa Brown

Marianne Grey (Zoom)

Associate Members: Suzanne Smith

Staff in Attendance: Sandi Feight

1. **Call to Order:** Mark called the meeting to order 7:00 p.m.
There was a slight delay in the meeting, zoom had to be restarted for attendees online to hear. The matter was resolved.
2. **Approval of prior meeting minutes:** The meeting minutes were approved as presented.
3. **Old Business-**
 - a. The Going Green Award was presented at the January 28 Board of Supervisors Meeting – Mark thanked Maureen and the subcommittee for the Going Green Award. The program has been a great success. Maureen asked for a brief bio from the EAC members, she feels there needs to be some documentation for the quantifications of the EAC members.
4. **Single Use Plastics Planning Discussion**

The EAC had a very in-depth and thorough conversation regarding their plan to move forward with a community conversation with residents and businesses to discuss Single Use Plastics.

The goal is to have a setup like the community conversations the Township has conducted with success.

Table 1: Environmental Impact of Plastic Bags

Station Lead: Penn Environment, Sierra Club, Beyond Plastics

Questions that station leads should be able to answer from residents and businesses.

- How do plastic bags affect our local environment and wildlife?
- What are the long-term consequences of plastic waste?
- How can we balance environmental responsibility with economic concerns?

Table 2: Policy & Regulations

Station Lead: Representatives from neighboring municipalities or EAC's.

- What policies have been implemented in other municipalities, what has or hasn't worked?
- Discuss potential policies and sustainable practices for plastic waste reduction?
- How have other municipalities enforced bans?

Table 3: Business Perspectives & Alternatives

Station Lead: Chamber of Commerce (representing a wide variety of businesses), LGBA

- How would a ban or fee on plastic bags impact small businesses?
- What businesses have done to become more environmentally friendly
- What are the costs and benefits of switching to sustainable alternatives?
- How can businesses transition to eco-friendly solutions affordably?

Table 4: Community Education

Station Lead: EAC Members

- How can we encourage reusable bag use?
- What alternatives (paper bags, reusable bags, compostable bags) are available?
- What incentives or educational campaigns could help?
- What barriers prevent residents from using reusable bags?
- How can we encourage a culture of sustainability?
- Encourage community-driven solutions for a greener future

Table 5: Tally Table

Station Lead: EAC Members / Staff

- What key takeaway from this evening?
- What items should be taken into consideration: Plastic Bags, Styrofoam, straws, etc
- Create a chart with different levels of support for a plastic bag ban; no change, encourage people to use reusables, plastic bags, straws and plastic utensils.
- Encourage community-driven solutions for a greener future

5. Points of Interest/General comments

a. Other meetings of interest

- i. Shady Grove Elementary School Night March 27, 6-8, Lisa said she would volunteer to attend the event. She asked about age-appropriate topics, and Suzanne volunteered to help.
- ii. Upper Dublin EPAB Environmental Open House March 8, 9:30-12, Mark received a save the date for the Upper Dublin event.

Meeting concluded: 8:27 PM **Next Meeting:** March 12th, 2025, Regular Meeting

Lower Gwynedd Township Community Conversation Open House: 4/9/25 from 5:00pm-8:00pm
(EAC members will remain for late arrivals)

Registration table

- 4 Clip boards with registration forms
- Business Community Attendees:
 - Write down their name, company name, email and phone contact information.
- Residential Community Attendees:
 - Write down name, address and email address
- Name Tags:
 - residents write down their name
 - Business community writes their name and company name
- Pens
- 1-2 EAC member to oversee/assist with registration and go over housekeeping items (bathroom locations, refreshments (separate table alongside registration table?) Ask BOS if funds can be allocated for light refreshments, e.g., cookies, coffee).

Easel Pads and Tables

- Pens

Email communique to business community

- Inform business owners and residents (via flyers, email blast, posting to township website). Include *The What, Date, Time, Meeting Format and Goals of meeting* (gauge knowledge of environmental impacts of plastics, what practices do you as a resident use, e.g., bring reusable containers and cloth bags to restaurants and stores. Business owners: Offer plastic bags for food takeaways and purchases, give patrons reusable food containers and cloth bags for leftover food storage, or purchased items; permit the use of Plastic flatware, straws, etc.).
- ***Give a RSVP date-perhaps 2 weeks to reply Y or N and the number of attendees
- Refreshments- recommend attendees to bring a reusable bottle of water or tea or coffee, etc. to the meeting.

Set Up Items to Consider

EAC member/s provide an introduction/overview of how the meeting works (this may be redundant given the postcard information being sent?) EAC members should direct attendees throughout the process and from station to station

- ~~• LGT/EAC will offer light refreshments~~
- Have a large chart on display at the registration table that shows: (I need to verify if my copy is the most up-to-date. I will Not have this available today.)
 - When ordinance/s was/were passed
 - Are the ordinances still in place?
 - What items have been banned

- What items are available upon request only
- What alternatives have been encouraged (e.g., reusable bags)
- deemed unavailable as takeaways?
- Also display inside where the easel boards are stationed, that:
- The same chart, as listed above, should be on display in 1-2 more locations within the easel pad station area inside the boardroom.
- EAC members, other municipal representatives having passed waste reduction ordinances and professionals from organizations, e.g., Sierra Club, Beyond Plastics, can be available at a separate table with their own displays. Each can answer regulatory questions, statistics regarding plastic waste (perhaps?), etc. Municipal representatives can be from EAC's having passed waste reduction measures. These individuals can discuss the process, what has been prohibited, tweaks to the original ordinance or requirements, stumbling blocks, community feedback, if any.
- Montgomery Township -EAC rep.
- Ambler Borough or Upper Dublin Township -EAC rep.
- Sierra Club – Faran Savitz
- Beyond Plastics – Do they have a video we can use to run on a continuous loop. This could be cost prohibitive and time-sensitive. We would need to confirm this is needed. Probably not if the other presenters are able to attend.
- Business Owners – wanting to share their experiences: e.g., waste reduction plan in place; what do they prohibit and/or encourage or discourage; alternatives they use and the successes or stumbling blocks. ***We would need to ask if business owners want to have a table night of event (include in the RSVP- should we be concerned if many business owners reply yes- space constraints, etc.) We should limit to say 2 -4 tables at a maximum (pro waste reduction and against waste reduction efforts). ***Perhaps do not mention but if business owners express interest in speaking to the larger group, we can reserve a table for them.
- People to discuss Cons – need to work on this item and to determine if we want to go in this direction and if so, who would be able to discuss the negatives. ~~Other “potential”~~ Presenters can address both issues and concerns or issues related to implementing a waste reduction plan/ordinance, whether business owner, EAC member, organization representative).

White Boards and Tables/Chairs

- 5 easel boards with tables to hold pens
- 4-5 extra tables (**TBD**) from other municipal EAC representatives (2-5 munis), one for the Sierra Club and perhaps 1 or 2 more agencies/entities.
- Perhaps 1-2 tables for business owners willing to speak on behalf of their efforts. (If we are inviting business owners to have a table. If so, how do we select which businesses. This may be too problematic. It might be best to have them go through the stations and provide feedback that way- via electronic questions/responses being prepared by staff.)

Items to be placed on each table:

- Pens
- Tablets for each EAC members and staff to take notes
- 2 Displays for Excel sheet (attached)

Questions to Consider.

For Business Owners

- Is the use of plastics and waste, in general, a concern to you as a business owner? Is your business in favor of implementing waste reduction measures?
- If you are a business owner, are protocols in place to scale back on providing plastic products?
 - If yes, list which items, (e.g., Single-Use-Plastic bags, plastic flatware, Styrofoam containers, straws, coffee stirrers)
- Is your business in favor of alternative solutions (e.g., encourage and/or require guests to bring reusable cloth bags? (list specific alternatives)
- Does your business currently utilize alternatives to plastics and if so, what are the alternatives?
- Are economic concerns regarding alternatives to plastics and waste reduction measures of concern? **If so, would you like information regarding how impacts can be mitigated?**
- Is your business in favor of reducing the use of/distribution of plastics bags but no other plastic items?
- Is your business opposed to reducing or banning plastic bags but in favor of reducing/banning other plastic items.
 - If so, list which items
- Is your business in favor of a waste reduction plan/ordinance to include banning plastic bags?
- Is your business in favor of a waste reduction plan/ordinance that bans other plastic items? If so, list items.
 - Styrofoam
 - Plastic flatware
 - Straws
 - Coffee Stirrers
 - Plastic Bags
 - Take-away bags
- Identify municipalities having waste reduction measures in place. Have these municipalities changed any waste reduction measures changed resulting in the removal of specific items?
- Does your business encourage patrons to bring reusable bags for goods and reusable containers for food?
- If so, approximately, what percentage of patrons bring reusable bags and reusable food containers?

- Is your business willing to use incentives to encourage people to bring reusable containers rather than using the company's plastic bags?
 - If so, list specific incentives, e.g., coupon for future use at the establishment, minimal discount off of bill)

For Residents

- Are you aware of the impacts plastics have on the environment?
- Do you view these impacts as negative or are your opinions neutral?
- Are you aware of municipal efforts to encourage the reduction of plastic use and/or banning specific plastics?
- Is the use of plastics and waste, in general, a concern to you as a resident?
- Do you support making waste reduction measures individually?
- Do you support community-wide waste reduction measures communitywide?
- What waste reduction measures do you support (e.g., banning single-use plastic bags, using reusable bags and food containers, not using straws, etc. List all that apply)
- As a resident, do you take measures to scale back on the use of plastic products?
 - If so, what measures?
- Are you in favor of alternative solutions to use non-plastic or reusable products (e.g., bringing reusable bags to stores, bringing reusable containers to restaurants for leftover foods? (list specific alternatives)

The EAC will regroup a week or two following the Community Conversation Open House to discuss findings. Responses and feedback received will be tallied and incorporated into a document which will be forwarded to each attendee via email (Assume the township would email results to attendees? Please fill in the correct process and protocol).

EVENT FORMAT

***TABLES 1-5 below will need to be fleshed out with specific questions, points, facts, etc.

TABLE #1

Environmental Impacts

TABLE #2

Policies and Regulations

Separate table with EAC Members or perhaps Faran Savitz from Sierra Club will be willing to be stationed here (or separately)

TABLE #3

Business Perspective

TABLE #4

Community Education

TABLE #5

Categories of types of items businesses items would be willing to ban, reduce, or encourage changes to current policy.

Options: *** Check all that apply and write additional notes on Post-it notes and place on the easel pad

Waste Reduction Measures Currently in Place:

- Ban on single-use plastic bags
- Ban on Styrofoam food containers
- Encourage patrons to use reusable cloth bags
- Encourage patrons to use reusable food containers
- Ban plastic bags but offer paper bags for a fee
- Offer straws by request only
- Offer coffee stirrers by request only
- Require patrons to purchase a plastic reusable coffee mug from business and bring back for refills
- Encourage patrons to purchase a reusable coffee mug from business and bring back for refills

Business Plan to Encourage the reduction of plastics by implementing the following. Check all that apply:

- Single-use plastic bags
- Straws
- Styrofoam food containers
- Plastic film from items purchased from your business
- Coffee stirrers
- Require patrons to purchase one plastic reusable coffee mug from business and bring back for refills
- Allow specific items to be used upon patron request only (List items)
- Encourage patrons to purchase a reusable coffee mug from business and bring back for refills

Does your municipality plan a total ban on some of the items listed below.

- Single-use plastic bags
- Straws
- Styrofoam food containers
- Plastic film from items purchased from your business
- Coffee stirrers

- Require patrons to purchase one ~~plastic~~ reusable coffee mug from business and bring back for refills

Other

Attendees list other items being banned, or those items, not listed above, they encourage patrons to use/not use.

Additional Tables, Chairs and Perhaps Easel pads:

- Montgomery Township, Springfield Township, Upper Dublin Township/Ambler Borough
- Faran Savitz-Sierra Club
- Other organizations (TBD)
- Perhaps business owner table/s