

Lower Gwynedd Township EAC Meeting Minutes

September 9 ,2026

Township Building Conference Room

Members in Attendance: Robert Sawyer, Rea Monaghan, Brenda Doll, Karleigh Burns and Maureen Nunn

Associate Members: Lisa Brown (Virtual), Richard Valiga and Steve Saffier

Staff in Attendance: Morgan High, Program Director and Andrea Brockway

Call to Order

Mr. Sawyer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Approval of August 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes

The August 12, 2026 minutes were approved.

Tree Giveaway

Ms. High confirmed that tree selections had been made and sign-up sheets distributed.

Ms. High confirmed five township staff members are committed to the event. The question of student volunteer involvement was raised. Ms. Doll will contact Wissahickon High School and set up a Sign-Up Genius that would be sent to National Honor Society, Key Club, and similar organizations to recruit a modest number of student helpers, as extra hands had proven useful in prior years—particularly for managing mulch.

The event runs from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, with sign-up slots closing at 11:30 AM to allow time for cleanup and distribution of any remaining trees. It was noted that approximately 39 slots remained at the time of the meeting, with only three tree varieties left: chokecherry, winterberry holly, and hophornbeam. The event was expected to be fully booked within the next week or two. A reminder email to registrants would be sent earlier in the week to encourage timely pickup or arrival by 11:30 AM at the latest.

Recycling Drives

The next township electronic recycling and shredding drive is scheduled for October 23rd. The following Techno Trash event is scheduled for December 19th. No additional action items were identified.

Going Green Awards

The board revisited the ongoing discussion regarding this year's Going Green Award recipient. It was noted that no formal vote had yet been taken. Two candidates discussed in prior meetings were the Spring House Tavern, recognized for its composting practices and

staff engagement, and Journey Works, which had previously received recognition but had not yet received the overall award.

The general consensus leaned toward presenting a single award this year to the Spring House Tavern. It was formally voted that Spring House Tavern will be the winner of this year's award. Ms. Nunn noted that the award presentation is typically made at the January Board of Supervisors meeting, accompanied by a brief PowerPoint with photos and a summary, and requested coordination with the recipient to ensure accuracy.

Plastic Bag Ban Implementation

Rather than focusing narrowly on a plastic bag ordinance targeting specific retailers such as Giant, the board discussed pivoting toward a voluntary Green Business Certification or Recognition Program that would acknowledge businesses across the township for a range of sustainable practices.

Ms. Burns research showing that another municipality's EAC had implemented a similar tiered point-based green certification program for businesses, with categories covering energy efficiency and water conservation. A reference was also made to existing programs such as a green restaurant certification. The board discussed the appeal of a tiered structure—such as a basic certification level followed by bronze, silver, and gold designations—where businesses earning higher tiers demonstrate progressively greater sustainability commitments. Recognized businesses would receive a window sticker or decal, and periodic press releases would highlight participating businesses.

Members noted the importance of keeping criteria practical and accessible, particularly for businesses that may not be retail-oriented, such as accounting firms, while acknowledging that the program would naturally apply most readily to retail and food service establishments. The relationship to, and distinction from, the Bird Town business support program was also discussed, with the board agreeing these should remain separate initiatives.

It was agreed that a small working group—led by Ms. Monaghan and Ms. Burns would develop a draft proposal for the program to be presented at next month's meeting.

Fall Programming and Earth Day 2027

No specific fall programming items were identified for action at this meeting. The board noted that a presentation or screening event over the winter months was under informal consideration.

A brief discussion arose regarding a film titled *Amazing Caterpillars*, which has been screened at Bird Town events in Bucks County and is being shown by Master Gardener

groups. The film was suggested as a potential community screening event to introduce residents to native plant and habitat concepts.

Inform Residents of the Availability of Green Energy Options

No separate discussion.

Conduct Educational Events

No separate discussion.

Bird Walks/Bird Town

Mr. Saffier, the Council's Bird Town liaison, provided a comprehensive update:

- **New Bird Town signs** are now installed at three locations: the overpass at Route 309 entering Lower Gwynedd, Bethlehem Pike, and near the William Penn Inn.
- Mr. Saffier confirmed he will be present at **Fall Fest** to promote the Bird Habitat Recognition Program, which focuses on native plantings and habitat creation. He noted the Council is charged with registering approximately three new properties per year.
- **Bird walks** for September through December have been scheduled, with the first walk on **September 22nd**. The walks have been well attended.
- The **Purple Martin sign** installation, coordinated with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, has been delayed until October due to a redesign in their signage program.
- The **Purple Martin gourds** are to come down for winter storage. They will be cleaned and stored at the Oxford Park shed, to be reinstalled in the spring.
- Mr. Saffier noted a large, well-established **Bird Festival at Green Lane Park** on **September 26th** (starting at 11:00 AM, free and open to the public), now in its 15th year, featuring Audubon chapters, bird count tables, and family activities.

Trail Stewardship Liaison/Invasives

Mr. Sawyer establishing a simple, honor-system-based recognition program for residents who maintain native plant or pollinator-friendly gardens. The proposed framework would require basic criteria—such as a minimum garden size (e.g., 100 square feet), confirmation that plants are native species, and a submitted photo—in exchange for a weatherproof recognition postcard or stake sign the resident could display in their yard.

The program was framed as a first step, designed to draw in everyday residents rather than those already deeply engaged in environmental programs. It was noted that this recognition could serve as an on-ramp to more rigorous certifications, such as the Bird Town Certified Habitat program. The distinction between this resident-focused program and the separate business recognition program was emphasized.

A pilot program concept was mentioned, potentially capped at 25 participants. . A working group was discussed informally, with a formal proposal to be developed for a future meeting. Ms. High suggested that the EAC contact former Supervisor Tessie McNeely on her efforts to restore a portion of Trewellyn Creek Park for additional input.

Board of Supervisors

Ms. Brockway reported that the prior day's Board meeting featured a presentation by the township engineer titled "**Stormwater Permitting 101.**" The presentation provided an overview of Clean Water Act permitting requirements applicable to Lower Gwynedd and included practical tips for residents, such as directing car wash runoff onto lawns rather than into storm drains, minimizing fertilizer application, and awareness of common stormwater pollutants. The presentation also covered local watershed data, including phosphorus and sediment levels in the Little Neshaminy watershed. The slide deck was not included in the Board meeting packet but was accessible via the recorded Zoom session.

Board approved native plantings and landscaping as part of a **stream bank restoration project at the Old Bethlehem Pike culvert.**

Planning Commission

No separate discussion.

Parks & Recreation

Ms. High reported that the historic **schoolhouse structure at the baseball field park**) is being demolished. Phase 1 of demolition is commencing imminently, with Phase 2 to follow, and the full demolition is expected to be completed by October. In its place, the township plans to install a **batting cage** (ready for the spring season) and, pending additional grant funding, a **new playground**. The playground design will incorporate interpretive glass prisms or pillars that display historical images of the schoolhouse, allowing visitors to visualize what once stood on the site.

Points of Interest/General Comments

Garden Tour: Ms. Monaghan highlighted an upcoming Garden Tour on Sunday, September 27th, from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM, featuring five diverse gardens in the area. The event was noted as having been promoted on the township website and social media.

Textile Recycling: Mr. Sawyer noted ongoing research into textile recycling container options for the township, following a prior email discussion. Results are to be reported at a future meeting.

Deer Population: Legislative office recommended hunting as the primary management tool and referenced a Pennsylvania Game Commission document outlining management plans available to landowners, as well as programs being developed for municipalities. Of particular note was a reference to **Upper Dublin Township's program**, which involves coordinated, permitted hunting on township parklands managed in cooperation with police, who tracked deer-related calls to establish cost-justification for the program. The board discussed this reference with interest but expressed no desire for the EAC to formally advocate for a hunting program. It was suggested the information be shared with the Board of Supervisors to gauge whether it is something they wish to explore independently.

PFAS/North Wales Water: Ms. Nunn provided an update on PFAS contamination concerns related to North Wales Water Authority. Ms. Monaghan stated that there is a public town hall meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 16th, from 6:30 to 8:00 PM at the high school, with a Zoom option available. The meeting relates to a multi-site health study tracking the effects of PFAS exposure on a defined population with known exposures, including residents affected by contamination linked to the Horsham naval air station.

Hatboro-Horsham High School Auditorium

Maureen Nunn stated that she intends to speak with North Wales Water Authority staff in person at their booth to identify the appropriate technical contact for future EAC outreach.

Bird Walk Date Correction: Steve noted that the bird walk date listed on the agenda as the 12th is incorrect; the correct date is **September 22nd**.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21p.m.