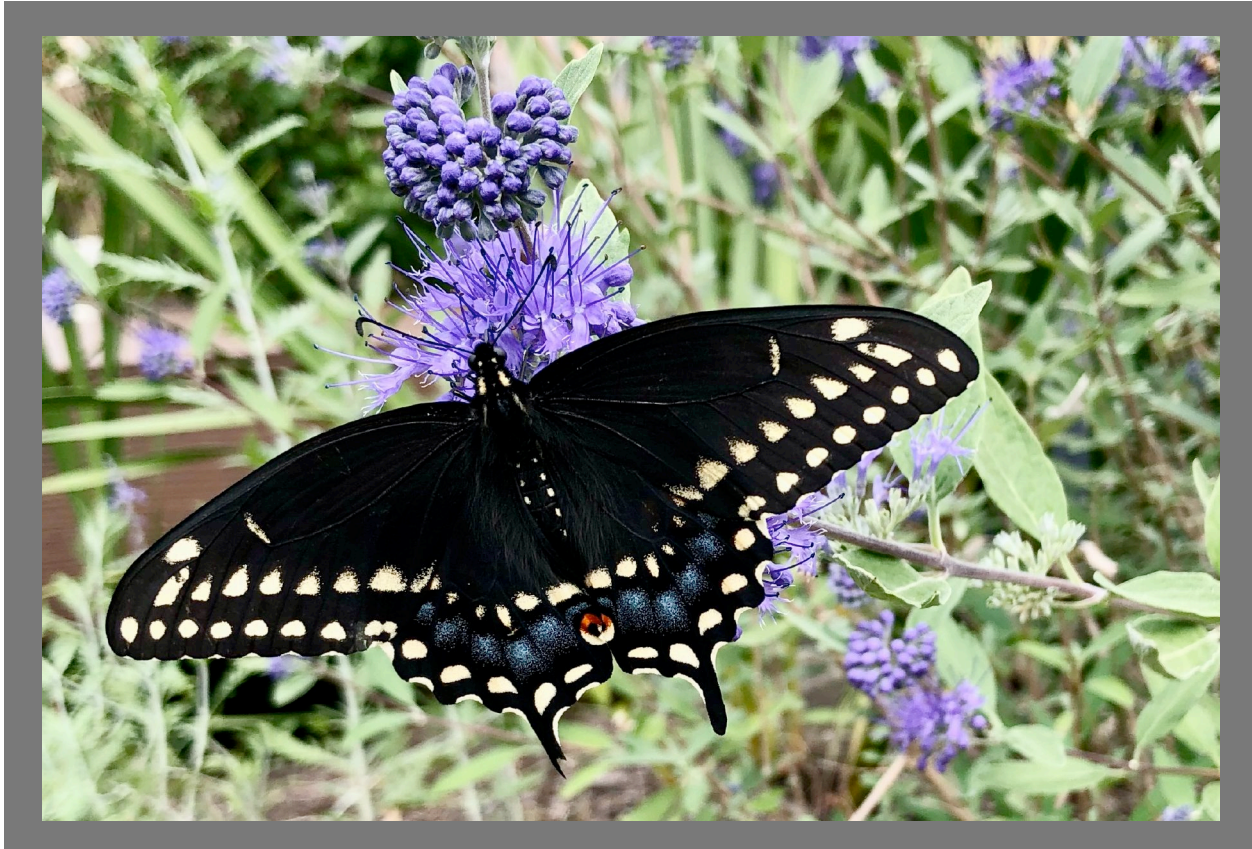


Lower Frederick Township, PA  
Environmental Advisory Council  
Annual Report 2021  
January 1, 2022

## EAC Annual Report 2021



## The Year 2021


As New Year’s Eve 2020 turned to New Year’s Day 2021, a theme emerged that said, “Good riddance 2020.” Vaccines and other discoveries to treat the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic promised to restore a sense of normalcy in 2021, and people were ready to move on from the awful experience. In the end, while mobility did increase, the promise faded after two major COVID-19 variants (delta and omicron) extended the worry, sickness, and loss. And in September, a hurricane-turned-tropical storm named Ida inflicted more damage and stress. In Lower Frederick Township, entire homes were washed down the Perkiomen Creek after seven to nine inches of rain fell in just eight hours. These were just two of the many challenges the residents and leadership of Lower Frederick Township (LFT) faced in 2021.

LFT public meetings briefly returned to in-person meetings in June after the COVID-19 disaster emergency declaration was ended, but the staff and leadership quickly re-employed Zoom again when hybrid (in-person/Zoom) meetings were needed to accommodate the public. Mask requirements were loosened only to be tightened again. As it had done in 2020, the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), with the assistance of the township manager, Mark Hudson, met the challenge to meet its responsibility, which LFT Ordinance No. 18-9 states, **“to identify critical environmental issues and problems as may arise within Lower Frederick Township and draft plans or proposals to address such problems and issues, and recommend same for consideration by the Board of Supervisors.”**

Former EAC secretary, Denise Finney, did not return for a second term due to challenges related to the pandemic. Fortunately, the Council did finally reach a full, seven-person roster after Dyanne Jurin and John DeMedio attended their first meeting on February 22, 2021.

### The Volunteers Who Served on the 2021 LFT EAC

and its working groups.

|   | Name                             | Working Group Participation       | Current Term |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| <br>Ruth   | Ruth Heil,<br>Chair              | Tree Protection                   | 2019-2021    |
|   | Warren Jacobs,<br>Vice Chair     | Tree Protection; BMP Inventory    | 2021-2023    |
| <br>Warren | Monica Strawbridge,<br>Secretary | Tree Protection; Outreach         | 2019-2021    |
|   | Dyanne Jurin                     | Development Review; Outreach      | 2021-2023    |
|   | Gary Bonner                      | BMP Inventory                     | 2020-2022    |
|   | Jackie O’Neil                    | BMP Inventory; Development Review | 2020-2022    |
|   | John Demedio                     | Outreach                          | 2021-2021*   |

*\*abbreviated term to ensure staggered expirations*

  
Monica

  
Dyanne

  
Gary

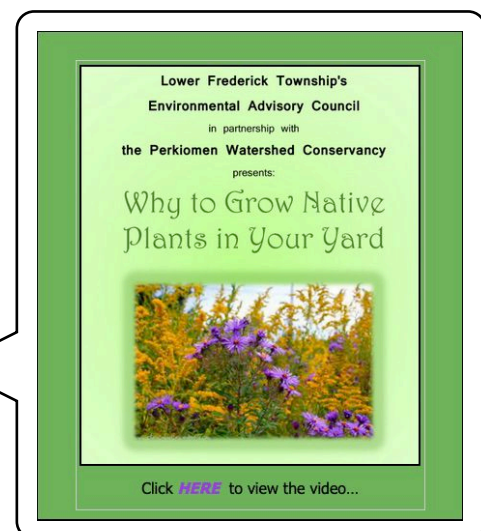
  
Jackie

  
John

## Summary of EAC Activities:

### 1st Quarter (January - March)

- In response to circumstances related to the development project known as Arcadia Station—in which some tree protection standards set in LFT’s Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO) ordinance were not followed nor enforced—the EAC continued to spend considerable time and effort in trying to understand what could be done to prevent such action in the future. In particular, the members of the Tree Protection working group submitted multiple rounds of questions to the township solicitor, Peter Nelson, by way of Mark Hudson, in an attempt to close the exploited loophole(s).
- Under Jackie’s leadership, with assistance from New Hanover Township’s Environmental Advisory Board Chair, Ross Snook, and Penn State University, the BMP Inventory working group continued to map out existing, constructed Best Management Practices (BMPs) in Lower Frederick Township. As part of an effort to create the first-ever, online, comprehensive inventory, functionality rating, and GIS map of stormwater BMPs in Montgomery County, a Montco Stormwater BMP Field Inspection Form and a Municipal Stormwater BMP Inventory & Assessment Listing Form was created. Online meetings for the broader initiative (beyond LFT) were planned for February and March 2021.
- The “Genterra” development plan proposal, which sought conditional use for neighborhood lotting, was reviewed, potential environmental impacts discussed, and a memo of recommendations submitted to Mark Hudson for circulation to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and Planning Commission (PC) in advance of the Conditional Use Hearing.
- A second conditional use development plan proposal, known as “Prestige” was also reviewed.
- Solicitor Peter Nelson attended the March EAC meeting to discuss potential regulatory solutions to two, ongoing, Stormwater and Sub Division and Land Development ordinance-related issues: tree protection during construction and water protection during the pumping of groundwater from below-grade structures.
- The outreach group worked to make the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy’s (PWC) Native Plant Training Webinars available to LFT residents via lowerfrederick.org
- Working groups were adjusted (see “Volunteers Who Served” table).





## 2nd Quarter (April - June)

- With the intention of providing ample notice for a replacement, Ruth announced she would not be seeking a second term on the EAC.
- Tree protection discussions continued. Recommendations to improve the tree protection zone language in the SALDO ordinance were approved and submitted to Mark Hudson for circulation to the BOS and PC.
- Sump pump/below grade discussions continued. Recommendations for action were approved and submitted to Mark Hudson for circulation to the BOS and PC. The Below Grade Structures working group was dissolved.
- The BMP Inventory initiative continued, both in LFT and beyond.
- The outreach team consulted with the Parks and Recreation Board (PRB) to coordinate activities and efforts. It also began creating an EAC logo to aid with outreach. It communicated with LFT's newsletter editors to begin submitting quarterly info.
- Members signed a newly created Code of Ethics and Conduct policy, one required of all LFT volunteers and elected officials.
- The Development Review working group started a checklist to standardize plan reviews.
- The Outreach working group made the PWC's Stormwater and Rain Gardens training webinars available to LFT residents via [lowerfrederick.org](http://lowerfrederick.org).
- The EAC began reviewing examples of Natural Resource Protection Standards Ordinances (NRPSO), which were sent by solicitor Peter Nelson after the discussion in March revealed the limitations of the SALDO ordinance as well as a concerning lack of protections in LFT. The EAC also began to research tree-protection-related ordinances from additional neighboring municipalities and revisited a Whitemarsh Township ordinance, which had been considered previously. The EAC voted to formally request the BOS consider NRPSO adoption (see 3rd Quarter below).
- Discussion began on ideas for participation at the PRB's Fall Fest.

## 3rd Quarter (July - September)

- As part of the EAC's monthly report to the board, Ruth submitted (in person) the following statement at July's general BOS meeting: In light of the fact that the draft comprehensive plan calls for conservation of wetlands, riparian buffers, dark skies, and conservation zoning in general; in an effort to achieve some of the water- and soil-protection goals identified in our sump pump/below grade ordinance recommendations; and in order to potentially prevent the unjustifiable destruction of valuable woodlands and the diversity they contain, we the members of the EAC, ask that the Board of Supervisors begin the process for writing and adopting a Natural Resources Protection Zoning Ordinance.

"In light of the fact that the draft comprehensive plan calls for conservation of wetlands, riparian buffers, dark skies, and conservation zoning in general; in an effort to achieve some of the water- and soil-protection goals identified in our sump pump/below grade ordinance recommendations; and in order to potentially prevent the unjustifiable destruction of valuable woodlands and the diversity they contain, we the members of the EAC, ask that the Board of Supervisors begin the process for writing and adopting a Natural Resources Protection Zoning Ordinance."

— Ruth Heil, EAC Chair  
Read aloud at the July 6, 2021 Board of Supervisors Meeting

The EAC was later informed that the solicitor, Peter Nelson, would begin creating a draft ordinance for LFT.

- The Development Review working group's *Development Review Guide Checklist* was submitted to Mark Hudson for circulation to the BOS and PC. Because its intent was to promote a comprehensive, detailed, and focused review of potential *environmental impacts* as well as *environmental opportunities* of development projects, the EAC requested that it also be circulated to any development-related individuals.
- The EAC continued to advocate for early involvement in development plan reviews, particularly at the earliest, preliminary stages, since the site layout affects land use, which is the factor that has the greatest potential to increase or reduce environmental harm. Discussions occurred between the PC, BOS, and EAC to try to establish the most effective and efficient process for delivery of EAC recommendations in order that all parties involved could apply the knowledge and make informed decisions.
- The Outreach working group continued with logo and branding creation, newsletter submissions, and Fall Fest participation ideas.
- A review of the update to the stormwater ordinance—done to comply with annual MS4 permit requirements—began.
- The Development Review working group began reviewing the Lock Tight Storage Expansion Plan application.

## 4th Quarter (October - December)

- The EAC demonstration table at Fall Fest sparked interest in the three topics presented: make-your-own reusable bag (and why it's the best option), stormwater's origin of sedimentation and erosion, and the negative effects of "sticky tape" and other harmful and ineffective controls for the Spotted Lanternfly.
- The PC's initiative to submit a Montco 2040 Grants application was discussed briefly.
- A review of the proposed stormwater ordinance update was submitted to Mark Hudson for circulation to the BOS and PC.
- The NRPSO was discussed at great length. Ruth wrote an alternate lighting ordinance section using the Illuminating Engineering Society's *Model Lighting Ordinance* users guide. A informal summary of the discussion was approved and submitted to Mark Hudson for circulation to the BOS and PC.

The EAC was later informed that the current version would be adopted as is, without the lighting section, under the condition that work on an amendment to improve it would begin immediately following.

- Jackie announced that the constructed BMP inventory in Lower Frederick was complete. It would be submitted to the Montgomery County SW BMP inventory and mapping web site (<http://bit.ly/MontgomeryBMPs>). She also noted that PA DEP's Southeast Region was considering using the tools developed by the partners of this Municipal Stormwater BMP Inventory and Mapping Program.
- Monica announced that she (along with Ruth) would not be able to seek a second term on the EAC. The two were honored for their service with t-shirts adorning the new LFT EAC logo.

## Financial Information

No expenses were incurred or reimbursed; no funds were appropriated during 2021.