

**Special Borough Council Meeting with Morrisville Environmental
Advisory Committee
Tuesday, February 2, 2010
Held in Council Chambers, 35 Union Street, Morrisville Pa @ 7:10pm
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The meeting was opened at 7:10pm by MEAC Chairman Bill Setzer. He spoke about the Open Space Plan and encouraged everyone to read it. MEAC would like to see some of the ideas in the plan implemented instead of it just sitting on the shelf.

At this time Dorothy Gaydula took roll call. Those in attendance: Council President Nancy Sherlock, Council Vice President Kathryn Panzitta, Vic Cicero, Rhonda Davis, Eileen Dreisbach, Fred Kerner, Dave Rivella, Todd Sanford, Mayor Rita Ledger, Acting Borough Manager Dorothy Gaydula. MEAC Chairman Bill Setzer, MEAC members; Debby Colgan, Katie Carrol, Karen Kane, and Associate Members, Janet Rivella, Mary Ann Bentz, Alina Marone and Joyce and Klaus Senns.

First Request /Southern End of Riverfront

Debby Colgan went over the “To Do List” for the Southern End of the Borough Riverfront.

Most of the leg work will be done by the MEAC, but they can not do it all. They do want and need public support and Council Support for this project.

This area is about 6+ acres; it is in the flood way, not the flood plain. The river runs through it. MEAC believes that the river is an asset that should be preserved and has some historical nature.

Debby Colgan provided us with an outline that explains the reasons we should care for the River. The water quality is very good from the Calhoun Street Bridge and North, and the MEAC would like to see us continue on this path. This could be an outdoor classroom. Just south of this parcel is a Natural Habitat. It is also part of the Delaware River water Trail.

Currently the place is overgrown and not too inviting. The Japanese Knot Weed does not even allow for public access. This parcel can not be built on. MEAC is suggesting a 300’ buffer which is what is approximately there now. They believe that people would come to visit the area. And it will be listed on the County wildlife Trail.

Weeds, INC gave an estimate of \$500 an acre for the first year and \$390 for the second year. This would be about \$8,000 for the 2 year program. You can control the knot weed; you can not get rid of it. TJH expert from this company said there is zero damage to any fish, humans, or birds. This is a gentle product. After the 2 year program our road crew can do spot spraying. It will look like Pennsylvania did 100 years ago. All natural.

The Bucks County Conservation District will help them through the process and help with the grant writing. The plan is not to have the Borough pay for any of this. There are grants available. Open Space funds with matching grants. The three areas of grants are Municipal Open Space, (which requires a 25% match), Natural Resources and Riverfront Community Grant (each of those requires a 50% match).

Since we don't have to buy the land that is a plus. There are dirt paths already and their hope is for passive paths. We should reach out to Staley, and possibly the MMA since their properties abut the parcel. We want a good buffer between them. Hopefully we can partner with them and also Falls Township, what are they doing with their Riverfront? They would also like to include the piece of property behind Riverview Avenue that runs perpendicular to the railroad tracks. They would like to re-forest this area.

Rita Ledger asked if the MEAC looked at the CERAC plan and the trails. The plan had hoped for a continuous path to Falls Township. Both Debby and Bill said that they did and this does not interfere with the plan, it works with the plan. There is the issue of private property. So a continuous trail may not be doable.

Dave Rivella mentioned that he attended a Falls meeting some time ago and they spoke about Biles Island and what they want to do there. They want to preserve the land, and make it as natural as possible.

Maybe we can get a conservation easement for the Staley property.

MEAC is looking for support from Council so they can go forward. The pockets are deeper the more you apply for. They are anxious to get started.

Dave Rivella thinks we should move on it. Rita Ledger wanted to know if the public will know about this. Tonight's meeting is a public meeting that was advertised so there might be some people watching with some thoughts. There will be another meeting and Debby Colgan offered to give a brief presentation at a Council Meeting. No decisions are being made this evening this is an informational meeting.

72% of the residents of Morrisville voted for Open Space. This plan matches our Open Space plan. We will have to re-zone the property. It should be about \$18,000 for a start up program.

Second Request/Southern End of Williamson Park

MEAC is looking to acquire the property from the DRJTBC (Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission) that abuts to the southern end of Williamson Park. They would like to develop a passive park with layered beds in the southern end area with or without the property from the Commission. This work can be done in phases. They believe it will enhance economic development. People will visit the park. If nothing else they would like to see the Commission remove the fence. Debby Colgan provided everyone with a

copy of the features for the proposed park. Any communication with the Bridge Commission will need to be done through the Borough Council.

The storm water pipe problem is not solved yet so the project would have to be done in phases. Low cost is the way they want to go. Hopefully they can get started on this as soon as possible. Open space money for this would be a 25% match. This money could be obtained from impact fees from any future building projects.

Question is? Can the Borough receive any money from donations to build the park? If people wanted to donate money or product is that allowed? They feel we need some corporate donors. This will have to be answered by our Solicitor. They would like to get a good volunteer base and a gardening program. They would also like to try to acquire the property on Delmorr Avenue that has the large Sycamore tree. Maybe moved the millstone back and make it part of the park. Again, low cost is their goal; low cost would be a wildflower garden, even a garden on a piece of ground that we now mow. Parks need to evolve, and be built for how they are used not just to look pretty.

There was a sample park plan with proposed paths and flowers that was presented at the meeting. This was drawn up by volunteer MEAC member Mary Hrenda.

Motion to adjourn was made by Todd Sanford and seconded; meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm

Submitted,

Dorothy Gaydula
Acting Borough Manager