



TO: Kennett Township Board of Supervisors
FROM: Eden Ratliff, Township Manager
SUBJECT: January 2022 Department Head Report

1. Municipal Separate Storm Sewer (MS4) Permit/ Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Update

In accordance with the requirements of the Township’s Municipal Separate Storm Sewer (MS4) permit the Township submitted a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plan which outlines a plan to achieve MS4 benchmarks to improve stormwater quality in our urbanized area. The plan is still under review by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP). This means the Township should not advance projects to improve stormwater quality, nor the Revolving Water Fund program, as they have not been approved by PADEP and would not earn MS4 credits. In the meantime, the Township continues to ensure the minimum control measures, such as public education and inspections, are preformed in accordance with the permit requirements.

2. Kennett Greenway Update

In June 2021, the Supervisors approved the final engineering contract of the Chandler Mill trail segment of the Kennett Greenway, specifically an off-road 6-8-foot-wide trail along Chandler Mill Road. This contract also included the final engineering of traffic calming measures on Chandler Mill Road. This approval to proceed was the culmination of over six months of intensive community engagement and preliminary engineering work, and years of evaluation of various engineering plans for the project, which was first awarded grant funding in 2017. Biohabitats, McMahan Associates, Unknown Studio and Meliora Design have been the trail consultants for the Township since mid-2020.

Since the approval of the final engineering contract, the consultants have completed the traffic, environmental, native and endangered species (bog turtle), botanical, historical, cultural resources (above ground structures), and geotechnical data collection. In November, the Board of Supervisors approved McMahan to conduct additional traffic data collection and analysis as necessary to respond to questions the team received from residents about current speeds and post-pandemic volumes, evaluation of sight distance along embankment areas and placement of additional traffic calming measures. McMahan has completed that work and will be meeting with local fire and EMS to review the traffic calming measures in the next week.

The consultants have also been engaged in the process of finalizing engineering, reviews and permitting for the trail as designed. As part of that process, the consultants have engaged with the public and organizations such as the Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County (TLC) on the final engineering of the trail on their property and potential

resting stops/overlooks. For example, TLC's board has approved the trail engineering plan for its property, and conversations are still ongoing regarding a potential resting stop (i.e., an ADA-accessible bench with plantings) in lieu of an overlook. In light of public feedback, the consultants will also be reducing the size of the other overlook.

The team is also finalizing mitigation measures for native tree loss with native understory and canopy trees, riparian buffer tree plantings and native understory plantings within the median. These measures will enable the Township to restore and revitalize the currently ecologically-degraded creek riparian corridor during the process of trail construction. Further, the team is exploring the economics of reclaiming wood from the site for use in construction. Other mitigation measures involve the presence of bog turtle habitat adjacent to the project area. The team is currently working with the US Fish & Wildlife Service on this mitigation.

From a permitting perspective, the consultant team has submitted plans and memoranda to several regulatory agencies, including Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), US Fish & Wildlife Service, and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). DCNR has issued a clearance letter for the project, noting no impact to the species of concern per the recommended conservation measures. These conservation measures will be added as notes in the final plans. Due to some of the previously surveyed historic resources (above ground structures) in the area, the project needs to be reviewed by the SHPO as part of the permitting process. In addition, the SHPO will review the project area as it relates to potential archeological resources. That review is ongoing and the team anticipates a review letter from SHPO in early February. There is potential that the SHPO may require an archeological investigation.

It is anticipated that the final design of the trail geometry and major components as well as the coordination with the regulatory agencies will be completed by the end of February provided no archeological investigation work is required. At that time, the consultants will review a progress set of construction plans and construction cost with Township management. One additional public meeting will also be held after that review.

Subsequently, the consultants will complete the hydrologic and hydraulic analysis for final trail design work, stormwater, grading, culvert extensions and utility coordination (approximately April 2022). At that time, permit applications will be submitted to the following agencies: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Chester County Conservation District. Permit reviews, revisions and resubmissions would then follow. After permitting approval, it is anticipated that construction plans, bid documents and specifications will be completed by August 2022.

As the supervisors are aware, the CFA MTF grant for this project expires in June 2022. As a result of the extensive final engineering work and permitting that has been completed, GMS Funding Solutions have advised the Township to seek a final grant extension to June 2023 for project completion. This engineering work, as well as submissions for reimbursement for that work, will serve as the basis for the grant extension request.

3. Kennett Collaborative Annual Report

Kennett Collaborative has released their 2021 Annual Report for review by the public. Kennett Collaborative changed their name from Historic Kennett Square in a rebranding effort in 2021 which was announced at their State of the Square Event. The mission of Kennett Collaborative is to make Kennett Thrive. Kennett Township and the Borough of Kennett Square are funders of Kennett Collaborative. Annual report is linked below.

<https://historickennettsquare.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/KC-Annual-Report-2021-8.5-x-11-in-2.pdf>

4. Spar Hill Task Force

There has been a request by some Township residents to create a Spar Hill Task Force. This request was presented at a public meeting in 2021. The Board has not debated whether to create this task force but will likely do so in the coming weeks. This task force would supplement a Spar Hill task force that existed in 2019 and made recommendations for the use of Spar Hill farm. Township staff is working with the Township Engineer and our insurance company to develop short term solutions to address the dilapidated structures.

5. Roger Retiring

After over 40 years of service to Kennett Township, we are both excited and sad for Roger Lysle to retire as the Kennett Township Public Works Director. We are excited for Roger to embark on the next chapter of his life, enjoying time with family, friends, and especially fulfilling his role of "Pop-pop." However, we are also sad because Roger is truly irreplaceable.

"Not only is it rare to have an employee stay with one organization for 40+ years, it is even more rare that that employee would perform their job so selflessly and be such a positive asset to the organization. That is Roger Lysle," says Supervisor Chair Dr. Richard Leff.

"The staff will surely miss Roger, but I think the residents of Kennett Township will miss him more. In his years working for Kennett Township, he has without doubt forged many relationships." added Supervisor Vice-Chair Scudder Stevens.

Roger's last day was, Friday, January 14th. Newly elected Supervisor Geoffrey Gamble, Esq. noted Lysle's work ethic as he took Gamble on a tour of the Township the day before his last day. "To be this close to retirement and still care enough to teach me all he can about our Township is remarkable."

While all can agree Lysle is irreplaceable, the Township will begin a search for a new Public Works Director in the coming month. Until then, the rest of the Road Crew will be running day-to-day business. For any questions or concerns, please call the Public Works Garage at 610-444-5130 and leave a message. One of our Road Crew will get back to you. You may also email pj.groff@kennett.pa.us.

Respectfully Submitted.

Eden R. Ratliff
Township Manager