



June 12, 2017

Dear Board of Commissioners,

We are bringing to your attention four Township land management issues:

- 1. The ecological conditions of Radnor Parks and Open Spaces - as it stands with invasive plants and vines = need for a sustainable management plan.**
- 2. Radnor Shade Tree Ordinance needs to be updated.**
- 3. Create Master Inventory of Radnor Street, Trail, and Park trees.**
- 4. There is a pressing need for a Township Plan and communication /outreach with residents regarding the on-set of the Emerald Ash Borer Beetle (EAB).**

The Radnor Conservancy's Mission is *To preserve and enhance Radnor's open space and natural assets through engagement and education of the Radnor Community in sustainable environmental practices.*

**1.** Over many years we have been conducting educational programs and events that engage the Radnor Community in sustainable ecological practices. We have found an overwhelming interest and concerns in the community for their Township trails, parks and open spaces. In surveying these Township assets we have concluded there is a very important need to create a Forest Stewardship Plan for the parks, trails and open spaces that Radnor owns. The Active Parks with Ball fields are top notch: mowed, turfed, lined, and mulched. **Yet, the wooded areas around them and the Passive Parks are being neglected and are now becoming unsightly, ecologically unproductive and eventually will lead to areas that are a risk to individuals.**

The Conservancy would like to suggest a management program that would assess the parks, create a short and long term plan for invasive removal and tree planting. Since the Township is not going to hire a full-time employee for park and tree management, these needs would require additional outsourcing of professionals.

The Conservancy has recently developed a Volunteer program called "Friends of Radnor Parks – Invasives & Vine Corps." This volunteer program will schedule clean up dates in the various parks according to the Forest Stewardship Plan. We have already had five very successful clean ups this spring. Many volunteer hours at no expense to the Township. We hope to continue these throughout the year but can only do so much.

So please consider putting money aside for professional help.

**2. The Radnor Shade Tree Ordinance** needs to be updated so that homeowners, developers, Arborists and the Shade Tree Committee are able to clearly adhere to the regulations. This is a Shade Tree Committee task and should be attended to.

**3. A Radnor Tree Inventory** is needed to assess the declining tree canopy and the on-set of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in Radnor. The last nine years the Conservancy has initiated a Big Tree Program that has planted approximately 400 street trees and given away over 500 free shade trees.

**4. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)** is an invasive beetle species and is highly destructive to Ash Trees. In the past, Radnor Conservancy has brought this concern of threat to the Township and its sub committees. In the past two months there has been confirmation that the EAB has been detected in Radnor.

Now that the area has been identified as an infested area, the Radnor Township will have to make a decision of how they want to initiate a plan of action, which will cost money.

First, we recommend that Township Ash Trees on streets, right ways and parks be inventoried. There are ways to record data using GIS software and smartphones. John Hosbach, Radnor Township Arborist, has offered to spearhead and coordinate the bidding process for hiring GIS firms to plot out trees and in-turn, inventory them.

The decision to remove or to treat Ash Trees will need to be carefully evaluated. We recommend that Heritage Ash Trees be treated with insecticide. The cost of treating over a ten-year period is ½ (approx \$1100) the cost of taking a dead tree down (&2200+). Once the Ash Trees have been identified, then a management plan needs to be put in place. DCNR -Bureau of Forestry might be able to help in a management plan as well as hiring a contract arborist.

The Conservancy does not have financial numbers of costs. But this epidemic will cost a substantial amount. **As the Board of Commissioners puts together their 2018 budget, we encourage you to plan for this expense.**

We also, feel it is the responsibility of Radnor Township to let the residents know of this issue through printed material, online information and a possible workshop.

**The Conservancy wants to be a partner and help the Township and its Sub Committees - EAC, Shade Tree Committee and Parks and Rec. moving forward.**

Thank you!

Laura Luker, President Board of Directors

Gretchen Groebel, Executive Director  
Radnor Conservancy