

October 2006  
 Volume 3  
 Issue 2



## *Conservation Subdivision Designs in Shohola Township Public Meeting - Peter Wulfhorst*

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The mission of the Conservancy is to promote a better understanding of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed and its ecosystems and to protect, restore and enhance the watershed through proper management and watershed stewardship.

The Shohola Township Planning Commission and Shohola Township Supervisors have taken the initiative to promote the conservation of open lands through the enactment of Shohola Township Ordinances 60 & 61. The article on page 2 (Shohola Township Zoning/Subdivision Changes) provides information on the two ordinances. In order to provide information on these ordinances to the residents of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed, the Conservancy will be hosting a public meeting on Saturday, November 4 at 10 am at the Walker Lake Clubhouse.

The speaker will be Carson Helfrich, Principal of Community Management Associates, a private consulting firm in Paupack, PA. Mr. Helfrich assisted Shohola Township in preparing Ordinances 60 & 61 and will be sharing with us the important concepts in these two (2) ordinances as they pertain to future residential development in the township.

If you are concerned about how future development occurs in our watershed, then you need to attend this meeting to hear how Shohola Township is addressing this issue.

## *Keeping an Eye on Our Lakes - Joyce Laudise*

Members of the TWCWC got out on the last weekend of the month beginning in June and ending in September. They used the probe or a meter to measure temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, suspended solids and conductivity as well as using a Secchi disk to measure the clarity of the water. They also collected water samples to be taken to our consultant's laboratory. Pat and Chet Dawson, John Laudise and Kirk Mackey all volunteered even when the weather was unpleasantly wet. Bill Andrews took the samples to the consultant's lab. Jim Landon



volunteered his boat for sampling on Little Twin Lake. A report will be compiled by FX Browne in time for the November 4 meeting.

Twin Lakes POA, Sagamore Estates POA and Walker Lake Landowner's Association paid for E.coli testing throughout the summer. All results were well below the safety limit for recreational waters.

All three lakes experienced a number of algal blooms this year. Walker Lake hired a licensed herbicide professional to control an annoying proliferation of elodea. High temperatures, lots

of sunlight and an abundance of nutrients stimulate the growth of algae and other aquatic plants. We must be ever mindful of the need to keep nutrients out of our lakes. Septic systems should be maintained properly, fertilizers should be avoided and stormwater should be kept where it falls if we are to make certain the children of these children will enjoy the lakes.

## *Shohola Township Zoning / Subdivision Changes - Peter Loenrigkeit*

Pike County has seen unprecedented growth in the last decade, which has only accelerated since the Terror attacks of 9/11/01. With this in mind our land and water resources are coming under increasing pressure and responsible growth in our cities and towns must be managed properly. Shohola Township is no exception. Land and water stewardship has been on the minds of many of our citizens including our township officials.

This year Zoning Ordinance 60 and Subdivision Ordinance 61 are being proposed to address this issue. These Ordinances are intended to limit impervious surfaces in land development, thereby assuring less water run-off, better absorption and greater re-charge to maintain the township's high quality water resources. Additionally, they will create greater green spaces for the enjoyment by development residents. According to the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, a steady environmental condition exists when less than 15% of developed land is covered with impervious surfaces. This includes not only homes and outbuildings but also driveways, streets, tennis courts, swimming pools etc... Current two acre zoned developments exceed this recommendation and cause problems.

Shohola's new "**Conservation Design**" Ordinances afford options to developers of 10 or more acre tracts of land in the Rural/Forest zoning district. This district comprises about 70% of land in the Township and almost 100% of the Twin and Walker Creek watershed. The proposed Ordinance options include:

40% green space with two acre building lots

50% green space with less than two acre building lots

Conventional development of four acre building lots

Land suitable for development will be established by considering an entire parcel and subtracting a percentage of unbuildable portions such as wetlands and slopes in excess of 25 degrees. The percentage will be determined by multiplying by a set of factors. For "**Conservation Design**" the remainder will be divided by two acres to determine the maximum number of houses which can be built on any given site. For standard development (option three) this acreage will be divided by four acres resulting in considerably fewer houses.

Considerable flexibility has been built into the Ordinances because potential developers will be able to trade or buy development rights in one area of Shohola for a permit to erect houses in another. This allows for more dense development and enables the township to direct growth where it does the least harm to the environment. A feature of this provision is that owners of land who do not want to develop their tracts can extract value from it by selling the development rights.

The Twin and Walker Creek Conservancy has been at the forefront of this issue for some time. We have conducted water quality testing for several decades privately and for the last five years under the Conservancy umbrella. Thus far, surface water in our watershed is of good quality but many conditions exist which could rapidly deteriorate this situation. Many counties throughout Pennsylvania have severe water quality problems with insufficient funds to remediate. We in Shohola want to insure that problems are not created through inaction. We therefore applaud the efforts of our Township Supervisors who have the vision to be proactive on water quality and land stewardship.

## *From the Treasurer - Linda Cioppa*

We would like to thank all of you who have contributed to our support in 2006. The Conservancy continues to need on going financial support from residents of the Watershed and property owner's associations. We recently received a \$1000 contribution for 2006 from the Twin Lakes Property Owner's Association, and contributions from both Twin Lakes Park and Twin Lakes Preserve Property Owners Associations. Our sincere thanks. We have asked Walker Lake Landowners Association for an equal contribution for 2006. The monies are used to continue testing all three lakes and to fund our on going educational activities, and these newsletters.

We currently have \$6182.47 in our account. Less than 50 residents have made contributions for this year. We would hope that substantially more of you would recognize the importance of what we do and help with your contributions. We intend to contact businesses within our watershed and ask that they also contribute. PLEASE JOIN US IN OUR EFFORTS!!

## *Planning the Future of Shohola Township - Peter Wulfhorst*

It is important for municipalities like Shohola Township to comprehensively plan for the future in a coordinated and integrated way that promotes the welfare and well-being of the community. It is also important that Shohola Township coordinate this planning with its neighbors because of the impact development has on its neighbors. Recognizing that local municipalities are sharing athletic and recreational ventures, churches, service clubs and commercial areas, it is a natural step for local municipalities to plan together for development and conservation measures that will affect the quality of life for residents and businesses that already share the activities of daily life.

Recognizing that working together will better address growth and development in their respective communities, the Shohola and Lackawaxen Township Supervisors have formed a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to develop and adopt a Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan. The CAC is comprised of 4 representatives from each township including a Supervisor, Planning Commission member and 2 at-large members. In addition, there are alternates for each representative. The CAC has developed a Request for Proposal for planning services to develop the comprehensive plan in conjunction with the CAC and Shohola and Lackawaxen Townships. The CAC and Shohola and Lackawaxen Townships will be looking for state grant money to help pay for the comprehensive plan. The timeframe for the development of the comprehensive plan will be approximately 18 months.

## *Weed is a Four Letter Word - Dr. Ralph Cioppa*

A plant in a lake or on the shore becomes a weed when it becomes a problem. "Too many weeds, we can't swim, my propeller gets fouled, I can't navigate, I can't fish, these weeds have invaded." On the other hand, "the weeds are very pretty to photograph, paint and view, weeds provide oxygen and places for fish to hide, weeds stabilize the shore, weeds keep the geese off my property." Everyone is correct until: weeds eliminate other plant species, progress too far from the shore, are represented by aggressive, obtrusive, non native, ugly or toxic species. At that point, something may have to be done. If it is determined that the weed bloom is the result of a normal natural cycle, then they will disappear and only disrupt for a short time.

Next year the problem may be gone. Maybe not. It depends upon the species of aquatic plant in question. "If it appears in a limited area and is non-native, then treat it aggressively and quickly, whether by means of a drawdown, mechanically pulling it out, applying permitted herbicides, putting a bottom or top barrier, adding biological control (weed eating fish or bugs). Once a non native species becomes established, it is going to be very hard to eradicate it" (Volunteer Monitor).

Weed blooms are often the result of human activities: too much nutrient entering the water from excessive fertilizer use near shorelines, storm runoff, septic discharges, land clearing, lakes becoming shallower.

Here is a list of the undesirable weed species seen in Northeastern lakes. The floating include: American Elodea, Water Milfoils, Water Lilies, Duckweed, Pennyworth, and Watershield. The submerged are: the Pondweeds, the Naiads, Waterstargrass, Wild Celery, Tapegrass, Eelgrass, the Milfoils, Coontail, Water Buttercup, Bladderwort, American Elodea. The emergent weeds are: Cattail, Spikerush, Bullrush, Creeping Water Primrose, Purple Loosestrife, Arrowhead, Pickerelweed, Waterwillow. Various algae may also be present. Some of these algae are toxic. Weeds or algae don't belong in our water in overabundance. It is importance for people who live near streams and lakes to be concerned about the spread of non native plants or over abundant native plants. A better understanding of what is natural in our waterways is appropriate for appropriate action.

Sources: [The Volunteer Monitor, the National Newsletter of Volunteer Watershed Monitoring](#), Volume 12, No.2, Fall 2000., "How to Identify and Control Water Weeds and Algae, Applied Biochemists, 4th Edition, 1990. [Aquacide Company Bulletin](#), Aquacide Company, 2005, [Reflecting on Lakes, A Guide for Watershed Partnerships](#), Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts.

**From the President:** After the Conservancy's last meeting, it was decided that instead of annual memberships, that a contribution to the Conservancy will be for 5 years. So if you join for a family membership of \$15, you will pay the \$15 only once instead of \$60 (\$15 X 5 years). We encourage the residents of the Twin/Walker Creeks watershed to take advantage of this opportunity to contribute to the Conservancy.

Twin & Walker Creeks  
Watershed Conservancy

100 Walker Lake Road  
Shohola, PA 18458  
570-296-2244  
Www.twcwc.com

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U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT #15  
SHOHOLA, PA 18458

*Next Meeting 10 am—  
November 4, 2006 at the Walker Lake  
Clubhouse*

Resident  
RR 1  
Shohola, PA 18458

## 2007 CONSERVANCY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

*I am concerned with the future quality and quantity of the water resources in our neighborhood and would like to support the conservation efforts of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy through a yearly membership.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in learning more about volunteer monitoring efforts

**Check type of membership**

5 yr. Senior/Student—\$5.00       5 -yr. Individual— \$10.00

5 yr. Family— \$15.00       Yearly Corporate— \$50.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Number in family

In support of the Conservancy's efforts, I would like to provide an additional gift in the amount of  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with check payable to:

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100 Walker Lake Road  
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