

## Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council General Meeting Agenda

Attending: Lynn Rothman, Brian Nicas, Mike Topping, Beth Behrend, Elisabeth Cichonski

Guests: Kathy Fox, Cathy Bailey (facilitator Lehigh Valley GreenFaith Circle, GreenFaith.org) , Catherine Kimock (works with LVAlliance for Sustainable Communities), Lisbeth A. (student), Jane Cook (Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife and Monocacy Creek Watershed Assoc.)

Location: virtual zoom meeting

Date: August 5, 2021

Time: 7:00 pm

Call to order

1. Welcome
2. Approval of minutes (July) – Beth motion, Mike second; Minutes approved unanimously.
3. Chair's comments & amendments to agenda
  - Lynn met with Steven Fernstrom, new Executive Director Parking Authority.
  - Ribbon cutting for new garage at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Polk Street Aug. 17 at 10 am. Parking lot sustainable design. Motion for a letter of support for putting solar panels on garage and installation of EV charging stations as part of sustainable design – motion passed (Brian seconded Mike).
4. Place citizens' comments on agenda
  - Kathy: Forming a Green team for Bethlehem Food Co-Op. Bring environmental concerns of Co-Op members to property manager and building owner. Try to mesh with Climate Action Plan (CAP). Let Kathy know if interested in being on team.
5. Board comments and announcements
6. Committee reports
  - a. Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife
    - Jane: Hoover-Mason Trestle weeding and maintenance. Next: Wed. Aug. 18 at 6:30 pm (instead of Aug. 14 due to Musikfest). Weeding not appropriate for children, clean-up better activity.
  - b. Energy Committee
    - Elisabeth: Reach out to technical assistance partnership for sample solar ordinances and engage City Council members in conversation to make it easier for Bethlehem companies to install solar.
  - c. Waste Reduction Committee

- Beth: Documents: sample ordinance from PennEnvironment for banning single-use plastic bags  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12Gjx63NCfkAuyGMuaNgMGDPajSwxogP3/view>) and original proposal sent to City Council in 2019  
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e10fe42b135de2d59b88551/t/5e15007791794e052b0a9cb2/1578434679888/plasticbagordinance.pdf>
  - Need to evaluate differences between the two. For example, ban plastic bags and charge \$.10 per paper bag at point of sale versus PennEnvironment suggestion of \$.15 for paper bags (increase after 10 years). Fines for non-compliance. Do we want to include restaurants and bakeries (No – due to pandemic)? Discussion: Mike – all retail stores with exceptions – provide detail. What about other in-store plastic bags, like produce bags (a little thinner)? Lynn – exceptions for participants in food assistance programs? EAC members will review documents and provide comments to Beth for the Waste Reduction Committee's review by Thursday Aug. 12 Education campaign and buy-in from businesses and residents will be important. Beth – By law allowable effective date Dec. 8, which is 6 months after emergency order expires. Part of CAP to phase out plastic bags. Decision: give City Council heads up we are working on this. Email docs to all of us.
- d. Green Committee
- Brian: 6 trees planted in Rose Garden; key is access to water for new trees in Rose Garden; still trying to figure out PA pollinator program – Mike suggests talking to someone from Wildlands Conservancy. City Forester (David Schaeffer) interested in Easton concept of microforests for educational purposes. Saplings planted in Saucon Park – not growing well, but those closest to creek growing best (Mike).

## 7. External committee reports

- a. Monocacy Creek Watershed Assoc. (MCWA)
  - Jane: Sat. Sept 25 from 9-11:30 cleanup from Burnside Plantation to Union Blvd. Shrubs and trees (34) being fostered for planting end Sept/early Oct. near where Creek crosses Center St. 1200 plugs of native grasses from Kindearth – stored at greenhouse in Bridal Path farm. Brian – add EAC as co-sponsor and forward us flyer to advertise.
- b. Planning & Zoning
  - Stefano's Restaurant development (downsizing with apt. building) comments due Aug. 9. Westgate Mall standard comments – send additional comments to Lynn. Mike and Lynn may go to Planning Office to view documents. Also 404 Mechanic St. Follow up with Wawa development which we already commented on. Kathy – Martin Tower video of development. Plant 498 trees (20%) but lots of asphalt still.

8. Unfinished business

9. New business

a. Purple air monitor

- These inexpensive monitors measure PM2.5 and PM10. Require internet access and electricity. Several are installed throughout Bethlehem, including at Ben F's house in north Bethlehem. Breena Holland, Joan Ramage, and Hyunok Choi would like to install one at the Charter High School for the Arts on 3<sup>rd</sup> St. in the South Side. Suggestion to also install at St Lukes new parking garage (part of school system and Lehigh connection). Charter High School of Arts not public school so would need to locate head of private school, but can EAC request from private school or should that be coming directly from Lehigh personnel? Talk to Dr. Roy and principals about installing at public schools (e.g. Broughal, Doneghan). Add educational component to letter. Mike will do one at his house. How many others will Lehigh fund?

b. EDF Event at ArtsQuest August 10

- 8-10 am, Environmental Defense Fund at Steelstacks to celebrate important climate work that is being done across the Lehigh Valley. EAC representative will table at the event with wildflower seeds to give away and flyers. Supposed to register.

10. Sept.2<sup>nd</sup> meeting

- a. Agenda (Lehigh students on anaerobic digester for dog waste in parks)
- b. Location (Remain on-line – Welcome to return to Illick's Mill in the future.)

11. Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Felzer