

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council
General Meeting
July 7, 2022**

Attendees: EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair), Ben Felzer (Vice Chair - Virtual), Ben Guthrie (Secretary), Mike Topping, Katie Trembler, Vibhor Kumar
Guests/Community Members: Kathy Fox, Doug Roysdon, Councilwoman Kiera Wilhelm, Maddie Schaller, Sara Aldarondo, Mark Harris (Virtual), Madeline Watts (Virtual), Emily Newman (Virtual), Corena Munroe (Virtual), Vicky Bastidas (Virtual).

Call to Order – 7:00 PM

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Approval of minutes (June):** Motion by Mike, seconded by Vibhor. Approved unanimously.
- 3. Chair’s comments and amendments to agenda**
 - a. Presentation on environmental justice will immediately follow board announcements.
 - b. Residents are invited to participate in We Build Bethlehem on the City’s website to help the City set priorities. The site includes opportunities to provide feedback on the implementation of the Climate Action Plan.
- 4. Board comments and announcements – None**
- 5. WeConserve PA Roundtable: EACs and Environmental Justice (Vibhor Kumar reporting)**
 - a. Presentation was given by Miica Patterson, Communications Director and Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer with Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area on May 25, 2022.
 - b. Key concepts:
 - i. Fair treatment - No group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies.
 - ii. Meaningful Involvement: People have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health; the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; community concerns will be considered in decision making process; and decision makers will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.
 - c. Suggestion to consider alternative meeting location for future EAC meetings – City Hall, Fowler Center, Hispanic Center.
- 6. Citizen’s comments – None**

7. Committee reports

- a. **Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (Jane Cook via email)** – The next Hoover Mason Trestle at the Steel Stacks work session is this Saturday, July 9, from 9 to 11 am. On June 24, 22 student interns from PPL and Air Products worked enthusiastically for almost two hours, removing weeds and thinning out overgrown plants in 5 of the 10 beds. They loved getting out of their offices on a beautiful summer day. This was organized by Julie Booth at the Volunteer Center of the Lehigh Valley.
- b. **Solar Committee (Lynn Rothman)** – Presented revised language to address previous concerns regarding standards for tree removal.
 - o Motion by Ben G. to recommend the revised ordinance language to City Council. Seconded by Ben F. Approved unanimously.

8. External committee reports

- a. **Monocacy Creek Watershed Association (Jane Cook via email)** – With help from the County with materials and excellent carpentry skills of an amazing volunteer plus many volunteer hours, we built a safe walkway above the terraces that are part of the stream bank restoration project at Gertrude Fox Conservation Area, near Center Street and Route 22 in Bethlehem. The pedestrian loop trail through that area is almost complete. Signage will be ordered next month. We read a letter at the Bethlehem Township Planning Commission meeting on June 27 to express our concerns about the proposed Wawa at Linden and Oakland Road, as we did at two prior meetings. It has been approved and goes on to the next step soon.
- b. **City Council (Councilwoman Kiera Wilhelm)**
 - i. **Southside Permaculture Park** – The group has requested water resources. The City have made a temporary source available. The group may host a fundraiser for a permanent water source. There will be a permaculture event at the Ice House on Wednesday, July 13.
 - ii. **LERTA** – City Council is considering a possible linkage fee for industrial development. One potential option would be rooftop solar installations. Lynn will forward previous research from solar committee.
- c. **Saucon Creek Watershed Association (Mike Topping)** – The SCWA recently approved a riparian buffer and planted trees near the sewage treatment plant.
- d. **Planning & Zoning** – Tracy Samuelson will streamline process to send plans to EAC earlier in the process.

9. Old business

- a. **Climate Action Plan**

10. New business

- a. **EAC Open Position**
- b. **Biking City (Doug Roysdon)** – Doug is proposing a community forum with 4-5 groups to discuss making Bethlehem a biking city. There will be a planning meeting at the Ice House on July 21. The EAC is invited to participate.

- c. **Bethlehem Township Wawa (Vicki Bastides)** – The Nature Center/Land Trust at Archibald Johnson Preserve is concerned about the environmental impact of the proposed Wawa on Linden Street. The preserve includes wetlands/bogs and 71 identified springs that are tributary to the Monocacy Creek.

11. Next Meeting

- a. **Meeting Date** – The next EAC meeting will be held on Thursday, August 4, 2022.
- b. **Meeting Location** – The meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held at Illick’s Mill. Members will investigate alternative locations for future meetings.

12. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Guthrie, Secretary