**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council**

**General Meeting**

**April 13, 2023**

**Attendees:** EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair - Virtual), Ben Felzer (Vice Chair), Ben Guthrie (Secretary), Katie Trembler.

Guests/Community Members: Karen Berry, Josie Miserendino, Ann Gastinger, Jane Cook, William Egbert, Steve Olshevski (Virtual), Molly Bilinski (Virtual).

**Call to Order – 7:05 PM**

1. **Welcome**
2. **Approval of minutes (March)**: Motion by Ben F., seconded by Katie.. Approved unanimously.
3. **Chair’s comments and amendments to agenda**
   1. **Bethlehem Corner** - The EAC was invited by Angela Stein, the Director of Mayor’s Initiatives, to participate in an episode of Bethlehem Corner in conjunction with Climate Month. Lynn was recently interviewed to appear.
   2. **Upcoming Lehigh Valley EAC Network Forum event** - The LV EAC Network Presents a Free Forum, “Funding Municipal Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Programs”. The program will be held on Wednesday, June 7th, 2023 from 6:30-8:30 PM at Univest Public Media Center.
   3. **Opportunity for Media Coverage** - Molly Billinski is a new reporter on environmental matters for LehighValleyNews.com. She has started contacting Lehigh Valley EACs to initiate a working relationship. We can contact her for any of our upcoming events.
   4. **Lehigh University 2023 Earth Month Speaker** – Attorney Ruth Santiago will be speaking on Tuesday, April 18, at 7 p.m. in Sinclair Auditorium. The topic will be “Climate, Environmental Justice and Distributed Renewable Energy in Puerto Rico and Beyond”. The event is free and open to the public.
4. **Board comments and announcements - None**
5. **Committee reports**
6. **Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (Jane Cook)** –Just yesterday, the irrigation system was turned at the Hoover Mason Trestle. Good timing due to recent hot weather. The drip irrigation system runs five days a week on timers. 8 of the 10 beds have been cleaned up so far. Next work day is April 25.
7. **Waste Reduction Committee** **(Katie** **Trembler)** – Councilwoman Wilhelm will be speaking with the City Council and the Administration to see if there are any remaining questions about the proposed plastic bag ban or the research paper the committee put together. There was a lot of discussion by concerned citizens about the progress of the plastic bag ban and recycling efforts by the city.
8. **Transportation Committee** **(Ben Guthrie)** – Committee member Steve Olshevski wrote a summary of the City’s ongoing efforts related to EV charging. We are waiting for feedback from the City Planning Bureau. We also contacted LANTA to inquire if they are aware of federal funding for battery powered buses. They are aware of the funding opportunities. There is an upcoming WorkshopLV meeting hosted by the LVPC regarding pedestrian safety.
9. **Green Committee** **(Ben Felzer)** – On April 15, committee members will be meeting at 10:00 am to prepare the ground for planting native perennials at Madison Park. The southside cleanup will be the same morning at 9:00. The MCWA will be hosting a planting event along the creek north of Schoenersville Road on April 29.
10. **External committee reports**
    1. **Monocacy Creek Watershed Association (Jane Cook)** – The MCWA hosted a Creek Cleanup event on Saturday, April 8, that had more than 100 participants. There were groups from ADP, Stitchfix, Guardian, Rotary Club, police cadets and explorers. The public works department came in and picked up all the bags. The Monocacy Farms Festival will be on May 13. The MCWA is cosponsoring a Creek Cleanup on Saturday, April 22, from 9 to 11 in Bath Borough. Volunteers will meet at the Bath Borough Hall parking at 121 S. Walnut Street. Garbage bags and gloves will be provided.
    2. **Saucon Creek Watershed Association** – No report.
    3. **City Council -** No report.
    4. **Citizens Traffic Advisory Meeting** – No report. The April meeting was canceled.
11. **Old business**
    1. **Bird Town PA** – Vicki Bastides offered to host an annual Bird Town event at Camel’s Hump on May 27, 2023, to fulfill one of the requirements - she was the initiator of Bethlehem Bird Town years ago.
    2. **Climate Action Plan (Lynn) -** The Environmental Justice Steering Committee is hosting a series of visioning meetings on the southside in census tracts that Community Action Development of Bethlehem identified as the most in need of resources and representation when it comes to environmental justice. The purpose of the meetings is to listen to the concerns of the residents and recruit volunteers for an Environmental Justice Committee to report to the Steering Committee. The first two meetings occurred in March and April. There are two additional upcoming meetings.
12. **New business**
    1. **Report on State EAC Network Conference (Ben F.)** - There was a session on pollinator friendly ordinances. One potential resource was also information about gardenthoughtfully.com.
    2. **Northside Alive Block Party (Katie)** - Will be held at Friendship Park on May 20, 2023 at 4:00 PM. The EAC has been invited to host a table at the event.
13. **Citizen’s comments - None**
14. **Next Meeting**
    1. Meeting Date –May 4, 2023
    2. Lehigh University Student Presentations
15. **Adjourn –** Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Guthrie, Secretary