

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council  
General Meeting  
May 4, 2023**

**Attendees:** EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair - Virtual), Ben Felzer (Vice Chair), Ben Guthrie (Secretary), Katie Trembler (Virtual), Vibhor Kumar (Virtual), Mike Topping (Virtual)  
Guests/Community Members: Josie Miserendino, Christain Martinez, Violette Bonvallet, Esther Cisneros-Ramos, Tessa Dougan, Lauren Hagerty, Louise Bugbee, Isabella Jacavone, Councilwoman Kiera Wilhelm (Virtual), Molly Bilinski (Virtual), Jon Zeller (Virtual), Robert Booth (Virtual),

**Call to Order – 7:05 PM**

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Approval of minutes (March):** Motion by Ben F., seconded by Ben G. Approved unanimously.
- 3. Chair’s comments and amendments to agenda - None**
- 4. Board comments and announcements - None**
- 5. Lehigh University student presentations**
  - a. Miyawaki Garden: Esther Cisneros-Ramos, Isabella Jacavone, Tessa Dougan, and Laruen Hagerty. For information on the project visit:  
<https://amongthestatelytrees.wordpress.com/2022/12/13/planting-mini-forests-in-eastern-pennsylvania/>
  - b. Air Quality: Christian Martinez-Abraham, Violette Bonvallet.
- 6. Committee reports**
  - a. **Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (Jane Cook)** – Our regularly scheduled Hoover Mason Trestle maintenance events have been well-attended and include new volunteers who are getting the message on social media, so thanks to Katie T for her help with that! The next work session is on Tuesday, May 9, from 10 to 11 AM. It’s working well for the regular attendees to have “adopted” one of the 10 bed areas to focus on, with the new volunteers helping in those or other beds. The City crews have been very helpful by picking up the large debris piles that we created on April 4 and April 25. That heavy work of removing winter plant debris is now complete, with regular weeding now the priority. Things are looking very good up there, and this rain has really helped out a lot. The irrigation system is operating, but there’s nothing like ample rain to bring out the best in these beautiful plantings
  - b. **Waste Reduction Committee (Katie Trembler)** – The committee is continuing to work with Councilwoman Wilhelm to answer any remaining questions about the recommended plastic bag ban.
  - c. **Transportation Committee (Ben Guthrie)** – No update

- d. **Green Committee (Ben Felzer)** – The committee completed prep work at Madison Park at On April 15. The planting will be done in the fall. The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 11 at 7:00 PM.

## 7. External committee reports

- a. **Monocacy Creek Watershed Association (Jane Cook)** – Recent and future events include a Monocacy Creek Cleanup on April 8, when about 120 people did an amazing job collecting all manner of trash and litter from south of Burnside up to Illick’s Mill Road. We estimate that the City crews hauled away over 2000 pounds of stuff that will not be going into the Creek! Four area business groups helped in addition to the EAC: Stitch Fix, ADP, Guardian Insurance, and Morningstar Rotary plus a few dozen individual volunteers helped out. On April 22 in Bath Borough, 14 people gathered lots of litter, debris, tires, etc. from along the creek stream banks through the town. A local Girl Scout troop is doing a sheet mulching project to protect the 30+ native trees and shrubs along the upper walkway at Gertrude Fox Conservation Area, near the Panera on Center Street. They will finish this work on Monday, May 8. On this Saturday, May 6, over 100 native trees will be planted along Monocacy Way Trail and along the Monocacy in Bath Borough, all trees from the Million Trees for PA project that began last fall. Volunteers are still needed. See the MCWA Facebook page for details.
- b. **Saucon Creek Watershed Association (Mike Topping)** – There was a noise violation on the railroad tracks at the end of Fire Lane. SCWA has been working with the City’s code office to resolve the issue.
- c. **City Council (Councilwoman Wilhelm)** - A Climate Challenge is planned for the fall. It will be run through the We Build Bethlehem website. The Environmental Justice Committee has been hosting a series of visioning meetings on the southside in conjunction with Community Action Bethlehem Development. There are several new community gardens that will be available to residents soon.
- d. **Citizens Traffic Advisory Meeting (Lynn Rothman)** – No report. Lynn was unable to attend the most recent meeting.

## 8. Old business

- a. **Northside Alive Block Party (Lynn Rothman)** - Katie, Lynn, Ben F., and Vibhor will be tabling at Friendship Park on May 20, 2023 at 4:00 PM.
- b. **Bird Town PA (Vibhor Kumar)** – 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. They are currently in the process of identifying potential speakers, potentially to discuss the CAP.

## 9. New business - None

## 10. Citizen’s comments - None

## 11. Next Meeting

- a. Meeting Date – June 1, 2023

- b. City CAP Environmental Justice Committee: Janine Santoro, Director of Equity and Inclusion
- c. Update on Friendship Park improvements: Celina Diddaro, Northside Alive Coordinator

**12. Adjourn** – Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Guthrie, Secretary