

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council
General Meeting
July 6, 2023**

Attendees: EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair), Ben Felzer (Vice Chair - Virtual), Ben Guthrie (Secretary), Vibhor Kumar, Katie Trembler (Virtual)
Guests/Community Members: Doug Roysdon, Steve Olshevski, Janice Schmidt, Shelby Carr, Amy Zimmerman, Molly Bilinski (Virtual), Steven Glickman (Virtual), Lauren Dougherty (Virtual), Basel Yandem (Virtual), Audrey McSain (Virtual), Jack Osborne (Virtual).

Call to Order – 7:00 PM

1. **Welcome**
2. **Approval of minutes (June):** Motion by Ben F., seconded by Vibhor. Approved unanimously.
3. **Basel Yandem, Chief of Engineering and Deputy Director of Public Works: City Climate Action Plan Buildings Committee Update** - The City is currently considering or working towards several initiatives reduce emissions, including upgraded HVAC and boiler at City Hall; pursuing grants for installation of solar panels on City-owned buildings; and installing additional vehicle charging stations at City Hall. The City currently has five charging stations, and with electrical updates they expect to have ten spaces in the near future.
4. **Lauren Dougherty, Lehigh University: “Environmental Injustice on the South Side: How Planting More Trees Can Promote Equality”** - Lauren is a recent graduate of Lehigh University. She presented her research regarding the inequitable tree coverage within the City and the negative health impacts on neighborhoods that lack equitable tree coverage.
5. **Chair’s comments and amendments to agenda**
 - a. **Iacocca Global Entrepreneurship Intensive** - On July 6, 2023, Lynn and Ben F. gave a presentation on the City’s EAC and Climate Action Plan.
 - b. **Rose Fest** - Lynn, Katie, and Mike tabled at the City’s annual Rose Fest.
 - c. **Letters** - This week the EAC sent two letters to the City regarding land development projects. The letters can be found on the EAC website.
6. **Board comments and announcements - None**
7. **Committee reports**
 - a. **Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (Jane Cook)** – The summer schedule is still in full swing for weeding and maintaining the 10 garden beds up on the Hoover Mason Trestle at the Steel Stacks. Plans are in the works to put a new bench at the Greenway Meadow on the Southside to honor Ilse Stoll. It will be placed at the west end of the Meadow, facing eastward, with a view of the native perennials and new Redbud tree recently planted there. There is a delay now for getting

benches through the Easton company that the City of Bethlehem uses for all its park benches, so it will be a few months before the bench and plaque are installed. Ilse's family and friends are paying for the bench and plaque.

- b. **Green Committee (Ben Felzer)** – The Land Use and Greenspace Subcommittee met on May 25, 2023. They discussed ongoing projects related to land use and green space. City staff continue to work on finalizing the SALDO. The City is also working towards the further extension of Monocacy Way and the acquisition of the trail gap between the South Bethlehem Greenway and the Saucon Rail Trail. The Forestry Master Plan is now complete.
 - c. **Bird Town PA (Vibhor Kumar)** – There is an opportunity through Bird Town PA for a \$500 mini grant. Interested groups should forward the completed application to the EAC.
 - d. **Waste Reduction Committee (Katie Trembler)** – Lynn reached out to the Director of Recycling. He offered to give EAC members a tour of the recycling center on a Monday when it was closed. He suggested September 11 or September 18. She asked about community recycling containers in the downtown areas and he indicated that the City has opted not to install them due to concerns about contamination. The City has a full time inspector dedicated to issues related to trash and incorrect recycling.
 - e. **Transportation Committee (Ben Guthrie)** – The Lehigh Valley Walk Audit is an initiative in coordination with United Way GLV, LV Planning Commission, and AARP PA. A Community Walk Day will be held in Bethlehem next Wednesday, July 13. The group will meet at Sand Island at 9:30.
- 8. External committee reports**
- a. **Monocacy Creek Watershed Association (Jane Cook)** – The revised MCWA info brochure is now in hand, and we will be using it for all future tabling events and activities. The Gertrude Fox Conservation Area will be one of the featured stops on the Northampton County Parks staff bus tour on Friday, July 21. On Tuesday, July 11, the Hanover Township Planning Commission meets to consider a proposal to build a warehouse on the land that was a Best Western Hotel. The MCWA is encouraging all concerned residents of the Monocacy watershed to attend this meeting.
 - b. **Saucon Creek Watershed Association (Mike Topping)** – No report.
 - c. **City Council (Councilwoman Wilhelm)** - Councilwoman Wilhelm was unable to attend, however, Ben F. gave an update regarding the landfill on her behalf.
- 9. Old business**
- a. **Climate Action Plan** - Lynn attended the recent meeting of the Environmental Justice Committee. There was some discussion of installing water fountains at community parks. The EAC has also been invited to participate in CAP Public Engagement Committee.

10. New business - None

11. Citizen's comments

- a. Shelby Carr and Amy Zimmerman - Seeking study participants for an interview study regarding trash and trash haulers in South Bethlehem. Those interested in participating should email kaj322@lehigh.edu.
- b. Doug Roysdon - Doug is continuing to work on climate outreach efforts in the local schools. The Sierra Club has started a food waste recycling committee.

12. Next Meeting

- a. Meeting Date – August 3, 2023
- b. The EAC has agreed to an extended contract with NCC to continue hosting our monthly meetings through December 2023. The EAC is grateful that NCC has made the room available at no cost.

13. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Guthrie, Secretary