

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council
General Meeting
December 7, 2023**

Attendees: EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair - Virtual), Ben Felzer (Vice Chair), Ben Guthrie (Secretary - Virtual), Katie Trembler, Vibhor Kumar (Virtual), Mike Topping (Virtual), Guests/Community Members: Miles Zakos (Virtual), Basel Yandem (Virtual), Steve Olshevski, Peg Church, William Egbert, Lauren Fosbenner (Virtual), Molly Bilinski (Virtual), Xuehua Zhang (Virtual).

Call to Order – 7:00 PM

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Approval of minutes (November):** Motion by Mike Topping, seconded by Vibhor Kumar. Approved unanimously.
- 3. Basel Yandem, Chief of Engineering and Deputy Director of Public Works: Update on the Climate Action Plan Municipal Operations Committee**
 - a. The City now has 100% renewable electricity.
 - b. The City is working on updated HVAC controls at City Hall which will improve efficiency and provide cost savings.
 - c. The City is continuing to pursue fleet electrification. They have installed three chargers at City Hall and have ten more ready to come online when necessary.
- 4. Chair's comments and amendments to agenda**
 - a. The Transportation Committee report is being moved up on the agenda.
 - b. Student Presentations (Ben Felzer) - Karen Beck-Pooley's students at Lehigh University recently gave a series of presentations on sustainability. Presentations focused on increasing green space on the South Side with streetside planters and trees, improving crosswalks at key South Side intersections to improve pedestrian safety, and reducing trash in the South Side through the use of artistic trash cans. Links will be made available on the EAC website.
- 5. Board comments and announcements - None**
- 6. Committee reports**
 - a. **Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (Jane Cook)** – No report.
 - b. **Green Committee (Ben Felzer)** – Taking a break for winter. The next meeting will be held on the second Thursday of March at 7:00 PM.
 - c. **Waste Reduction Committee (Katie Trembler)** – There is an app called Too Good To Go that allows restaurants to sell leftover food inexpensively rather than creating waste. Frey's Better Foods restaurant in Hellertown participates in the app. Councilwoman Kiera Wilhelm is reaching out to the owner to see what their experience has been.
 - d. **Transportation Committee (Update from Miles Zakos)** - Miles Zakos and Steve Olshevski are working to advance a pilot project for pole mounted EV

chargers. Pole mounted chargers can be cheaper to install because they are mounted on existing pole infrastructure. The biggest questions for feasibility are (1) what poles are available to have chargers attached? Needs to meet capacity standards and have connectivity to the internet. (2) Who would own the charger? PPL would be supportive but would not own the infrastructure.

7. External committee reports

- a. **Monocacy Creek Watershed Association (Jane Cook)** – No report.
- b. **Saucon Creek Watershed Association (Mike Topping)** – There were recent tree plantings at the Lower Saucon Sportsman Association. The protective cones were removed in error by members of the Association. After communication, the protection was replaced.
- c. **City Council (Lynn Rothman)** - Councilwoman Kiera Wilhelm met with staff from Nurture Nature Center to discuss the CREATE Connections grant. There is a meeting on Monday. Lynn will attend to represent EAC. There are continuing conversations regarding whether City Council should take a public stance regarding the potential expansion of the former Bethlehem Landfill.

8. Old Business

- a. **Climate Action Plan (Lynn Rothman)** - The presentations from the November 15 CAP Annual Meeting are available online. So far 75 people have registered for the Climate Challenge.

9. New business

- a. **Heritage Tree Program** - The program was started by a previous EAC member. A community member recently submitted a heritage tree to the website. Mandy Tolino is interested in working with the Green Committee to determine next steps.
- b. **2024 Meeting Schedule** - The July EAC meeting will be held on July 11 rather than July 4. The August meeting will be virtual. Meetings will continue to be held at the Northampton Community College Fowler Family Southside Center.

10. Citizen's comments

- a. William Egbert - Raised the issue of trucks parked at the parking lot on Third Street near Banana Factory. It was pointed out this is private property so there is no action that can be taken.

11. Next Meeting

- a. Meeting Date – January 4, 2024

12. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 8:26 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Guthrie, Secretary