

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council  
General Meeting  
June 1, 2023**

**Attendees:** EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair), Ben Felzer (Vice Chair - Virtual), Ben Guthrie (Secretary - Virtual), Katie Trembler, Vibhor Kumar  
Guests/Community Members: Councilwoman Kiera Wilhelm, Josie Miserendino, Ann Gastinger, Jane Cook, William Egbert, Steve Olshevski, Peg Church, Janice Schmidt, Celina Daddario, Molly Bilinski (Virtual), Audrey McSain (Virtual), Janine Santoro (Virtual)

**Call to Order – 7:02 PM**

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Approval of minutes (May):** Motion by Katie, seconded by Ben F. Approved unanimously.
- 3. City CAP Environmental Justice Committee: Janine Santoro, Director of Equity and Inclusion** - The committee hosted a series of four meetings in census tracts that have been identified as having frontline impact from climate change. Lynfield (3/23), Southside Lofts (4/11), Broughal Middle School (4/25), Cathedral Church of the Nativity (5/9).
- 4. Friendship Park Improvements: Celina Daddario, Northside Alive Coordinator** - Northside Alive is a community-driven neighborhood revitalization process happening in North Bethlehem. First called Northside 2027, the program coincided with the 2017 designation of the area as a Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) property tax abatement district by the city, Bethlehem Area School District and Northampton County. There are plans to redesign Friendship Park. The city is hoping to begin construction in 2024. See <https://www.northside2027.org/>
- 5. Chair's comments and amendments to agenda - None**
  - a. Lehigh Valley EAC Network Event** - June 7 at PBS Center
  - b. Rose Fest** - EAC will be tabling on June 24th
  - c. Mayor's Forum** - Lynn attended the recent Mayor's forum. Mayor Reynolds mentioned EAC
- 6. Board comments and announcements - None**
- 7. Committee reports**
  - a. Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (Jane Cook)** –The summer schedule is in full swing for weeding and maintaining the 10 garden beds up on the Hoover Mason Trestle at SteelStacks. About 125 interns from area corporations will be working there on Friday, June 16 from 9 to noon, learning about and doing the weeding and other work that is regularly done by the volunteer team. In honor of Ilse Stoll, a native plant pioneer who influenced many gardeners throughout the

Lehigh Valley, a group of friends and family planted a redbud tree in the Greenway Meadow on the South side in late April. Native perennial flowers were also planted around the tree as a remembrance of all that Ilse did to educate the public about the importance of using native plants as much as possible in residential and commercial spaces.

- b. **Waste Reduction Committee (Katie Trembler)** – The committee met on Tuesday, May 23. Council has continuing concerns regarding the plastic bag ban, and it is not likely to move forward in the near future. There may be opportunities for public education related to plastic bag use. The committee is also investigating other initiatives, including public recycling receptacles, reusable bag exchanges, public drinking fountains, and composting, potential deposit/return policy for recyclables.
- c. **Transportation Committee (Ben Guthrie)** – The CAP Transportation and Mobility Committee met on Thursday, May 25. Topics included Bike Bethlehem, safe routes to school, implementation grants for the Broad Street Active Transportation Plan, building a bicycling culture, and EV charging. Steve Olshevski also flagged a potential grant opportunity (Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) program).
- d. **Green Committee (Ben Felzer)** – The next committee meeting is scheduled in August, to prepare for planting work at Madison Park at On April 15.
- e. **Bird Town PA (Vibhor Kumar)** – Bird Town event was held at Camel’s Hump on May 27, 2023. Vibhor represented the EAC.

## 8. External committee reports

- a. **Monocacy Creek Watershed Association (Jane Cook)** – MCWA finished planting the 100+ native trees and shrubs along the Monocacy Creek between Illick’s Mill and almost to Schoenersville Road, plus along the creek in Bath Borough and along the walkway above the creek at Gertrude Fox Conservation Area in Hanover Township. These trees were part of the Million Trees for PA project last fall. MCWA had a table at the Monocacy Farms Spring Festival on May 13 and gathered info from about 40 residents who are interested in assisting MCWA in future creek restoration projects, helping with the garden beds at Illick’s Mill, and being notified about land development proposals that impact the creek.
- b. **Saucon Creek Watershed Association (Mike Topping)** – No report.
- c. **City Council (Councilwoman Wilhelm)** - Upcoming vote on a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to clarify the definition and parameters for Environmental Education Centers, Community Recreation Centers and Nature Preserves. This would have a positive impact on Camel’s Hump ability to operate programs for children.

## 9. Old business - None

## 10. New business - None

## 11. Citizen’s comments

- a. Josie Miserendino - Could traffic enforcement/speed enforcement mitigate the impact of truck traffic? There are localized air quality concerns in the vicinity of the Hill to Hill Bridge.

**12. Next Meeting**

- a. Meeting Date – July 6, 2023

**13. Adjourn** – Meeting adjourned at 8:26 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Guthrie, Secretary