

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council
General Meeting
September 3, 2020**

Call To Order @ 7:02 PM

Attendees: EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair), Mike Topping (Vice Chair). Elisabeth Cichonski (Secretary), Beth Behrend, Brian Nicas, Ben Guthrie, Ben Felzer. Brian Hillard (Sustainable Energy Fund), Rachel Rosenfeld (Sierra Club), Jane Cook (Monocacy Creek Watershed Association), Audrey Dai (Moravian Academy), Maclaine Oskin (Moravian Academy).

1. **Approval of minutes (August):** Motion to approve the minutes made by Mike T., seconded by Brian N., and approved unanimously.
2. **Place citizens' comments on agenda:** Katherine Targett Gross from the Office of Sustainability at Lehigh University (LU) could not attend tonight's meeting but reported that Lehigh is moving forward with a consultant, The Stonehouse Group, to help them create a Climate Action Plan (CAP). LU intends to collaborate with the City on their CAP and is also offering student support to any EAC committees.
3. **Chair's comments & amendments to agenda:** Lauren Fosbenner (Nurture Nature Center) interviewed the Chairs of Bethlehem, Easton and Allentown's EACs last month and recently published the article on EACs, their roles and recent efforts in their cities. Article can be found on NNC's fb page or website.
4. **Board comments and announcements:** None.
5. **Committee Reports:**
 - a. **Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (BBFW):** Bethlehem has been recertified as a nationally recognized NWF Community Wildlife Habitat.
 - b. **Green Committee:** The City of Bethlehem's Tree Inventory was originally set for July but instead is beginning this week (8/31- 9/4) and will be performed by Arbor Pro.

The Southside 2020 bids were opened on August 24. This work includes tree removal, planting, concrete/sidewalk work. No information on whether bids have been awarded yet for this project.

Monocacy Creek Cleanup: On August 15th there was a cleanup along Monocacy Creek after Hurricane Isaiah. Roughly 15 people showed up to help from various organizations like the EAC, Monocacy Creek Watershed Assoc., Coalition for Appropriate Transportation, Councilman Reynolds, Moravian Academy students. Roughly 15 garbage bags and 3 pick-up trucks worth of garbage were cleaned up. There was a lot of positive feedback and interest from community members—even those that could not attend. Thank you, Jane, for partnering with us, providing snacks and beverages and helping to publicize the event.

Brian N. mentioned revising the ordinance relating to tree plantings/street trees. Jane serves on the Shade Tree Advisory Board for Hanover Twp., which has a list of acceptable street trees and will forward this information to Lynn or Brian.

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6. External Committee Reports:

- a. **City Council:** Lynn attended. No report.
- b. **Planning & Zoning:** 1355 Easton Rd. Phase 2; 2105 Creek Road: On September 15th, Beth will read the EAC's letter in front of City Council opposing a Use Variance to allow development on the Creek Road property, which lies on a flood plain. On September 23rd, the developer of these properties will be on the agenda at the City's Zoning Hearing Board to request a Use Variance. The Monocacy Creek Watershed Association also wrote a letter pertaining to the Creek Road property which they would like read aloud at this meeting.

7. Unfinished Business:

- a. **Climate Action Plan:** The second public engagement meeting for the City's Climate Action Plan will be held virtually on Wednesday, October 7th.
- b. **Table at Rose Garden Farmers Market:** The August 26th Rose Garden Farmer's Market was cancelled due to threat of thunderstorms. The EAC would like to reschedule a table for Saturday, September 26th. We have 200 flyers, seed packets, EAC brochures to distribute.
- c. **Touchstone Theatre:** Student presentations on topics related to sustainability will be held in the outdoor amphitheater behind Touchstone Theatre on September 19th at 6 PM.

8. New business:

Community Clean-ups: Opportunities for another community clean up were discussed. Potential locations included Sand Island and Monocacy Creek. Last year, Lehigh Valley kayaking and canoe club, Trail Tenders, Guardian and Trout Unlimited participated in the Sand Island clean up. Unfortunately, some groups are not sending out volunteers to participate in many activities due to the current pandemic. Oct. 10th seemed to be the best option for most people to participate.

Water Defenders: Rachel Rosenfeld. Program shut down due to COVID-19. They were writing letters, articles to help amplify issues. Rachel will no longer be co-leading this group. Rachel will be moving to a new position with the Sierra Club and will no longer head the Water Defenders as part of her duties. Mark Pinsley, Donna Kohut and Tom Pritchett are now leaders of the Water Defenders group. If you have any questions, you can reach out to Rachel at Rachel.rosenfeld@sierraclub.org.

9. **Agenda for next meeting (Oct. 1):** The Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Association will be presenting at next month's EAC meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM