

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council
General Meeting
November 3, 2016**

Attendees: Present were Council members Fran Cundall, Jack Gambino, Lynn Rothman and Mike Topping. Brian Hillard, a Bethlehem resident, was also present.

Approval of the September Minutes: After a few minor corrections, Jack moved and Fran seconded approval as amended; approved.

Chair's Comments: 4th Annual **Summit for Smart Growth and Sustainable Communities** will take place on December 9th at the Renaissance Hotel in Allentown. The topic is "Local Economies: Powerful Ideas, Practical Actions".

Lynn attended the public meeting at the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) regarding the **Monacacy Creek Watershed Act 167 Plan** update. Act 167 requires counties to prepare and adopt storm water management plans for all watersheds. In 2006 the Act was amended to include water quality as well as quantity. Plans must be approved by the DEP and regulate new development and redevelopment. Municipal ordinances must be adopted from approved plans. LVPC evaluates all plans. Target completion date summer 2017.

She received information on **DCNR grants**. They are accepting applications from Jan. 23rd to April 12th.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge: A public meeting was held to discuss the Vision and Mission of the Bridge. A Vision and Mission Statement has been drafted. The next public meeting discussing uses of the bridge will be held Nov. 14 at the City Hall Rotunda. Brian was very impressed and commented that the vision has expanded from traffic movement & safety to a vision of what the City could become in terms of walkability and other improvements to life in the City. Mike cautioned that each improvement/addition proposed had to be paid for by somebody and that its imperative the project plans include self sustaining aspects to cover the long term maintenance of all proposed facilities. The proposed feasibility study should answer many questions concerning the economics of the bridge and how it will benefit the City. Recently, a similar bridge, which benefited cities at either end, was reconfigured over the Hudson.

Citizens' Comments: None

Sub Committee Reports:

Energy: No report

Green Committee: Fran went to the Urban Tree Workshop and she was impressed and thought it was well done. There followed a discussion during which Mike explained that all street trees planted in the public right-of-way belonged to the City even though the adjacent property owner was responsible for their planting, maintenance and/or removal.

Transportation: The Mayor announced Vision Zero at a press conference on Oct. 11. CTAC is working on an application to become a Bike Friendly City (BFC). A BFC welcomes bicyclists of all ages and abilities by providing safe accommodations for bicycling and encouraging people to bike for transportation and recreation.

External Committee Reports:

Zoning: No report.

City Planning: No report.

City Council: No report.

Lehigh Valley Bird Town Coalition: LVBTC held their bi-annual meeting on September 8th. It was well attended, but unfortunately, no one from Bethlehem EAC was able to attend. Lynn, however, received a copy of the minutes, which are attached.

Unfinished Business:

Potential projects:

Recycling: Lynn spoke with Michael Conway, Director of Recycling. Recycling containers are not in this year's budget. He is waiting for equipment grants from DEP, which have been cancelled for the next 2 years. Full recycling on Main Street and 3rd Street necessitates 52 containers at a cost of approximately \$790–\$990 per container. As tourism increases, the need for recycling increases. A letter from the EAC to the Mayor and City Council would be helpful in highlighting this issue and bringing it to the forefront for the time when funding is available. EAC members questioned why the containers cost so much and asked if there was a special feature, which added to the cost. Is there more than one source for such containers (a different catalog) and could the City place just a few in a limited area to start the program. Lynn will ask Kalyna to write a letter in support of the program while also asking the Administration for more information concerning any problems.

Comprehensive Parking Plan: City Councilman Shawn Martell had inquired whether the Planning Commission had followed up on our suggestion for a comprehensive parking plan (EAC letter regarding the proposed 3rd Street garage). Lynn spoke with Darlene Heller, who believes that the studies done for two garages on the south side serve as a comprehensive plan for that area, particularly as both were conducted by the same consulting firm. There is a study planned for the north side of Bethlehem and Darlene will contact the EAC for their input.

Monocacy Creek Watershed: Lynn attended the review of the planned Monocacy Creek Stream Restoration project on Oct. 20th. Key issues to be addressed include erosion, habitat loss, and streamside management. Construction is set for the summer 2017. Efforts will focus on enhancing the natural habitat and fishing opportunities. Kristie Fach from the Wildlands Conservancy offered to attend one of our next meetings to review the project.

Embankment on Conestoga Street: Jane Persa confirmed that this is private property. However, as a result of our bringing this site to the City's attention, they are in discussion with the owners to remediate.

Weed Ordinance: Nothing new.

Windmills: It appears that the local residents are against the proposal in the Bethlehem Watershed and that the Township ZHB will rule against it. If they wish, the applicants could appeal the decision to the county court in which the township is located.

New Business:

Year End Report to City Council: See attached letter.

Membership: John Brunner told Lynn he would like to join the EAC and that he was concerned with the future makeup of the Parks Dept. and also interested in trail development and transportation issues.

Sustainability: Brian recommended a new committee to study sustainability in the City, which could include recycling, carbon use, invasive plants and all the other aspects of daily life, which can affect the environment.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM.