

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council
General Meeting
March 1, 2018**

Attendees: Council members: John Brunner, Jack Gambino, Kathy Fox and Mike Topping. Also in attendance: Martha Christine from Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife, Elisabeth Cichonski and Katrina Prutzman,

Approval of February Minutes: Moved by John; seconded by Kathy; approved.

Chair's Comments: None

Board Comments: John announced that May 5th will be Monocacy Park Day with various activities including a creek critter study and a presentation on the restoration plans for the park by Wildlands Conservancy.

Jack reminded everyone that we still need another member for the EAC and that anyone interested should apply to City Council through the City Clerk's Office.

Committee Reports:

Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (BBFW): Martha reported that they received a \$10,000 grant from the Community Foundation most of which went towards the development of a conceptual master plan for the Bethlehem Rose Garden grounds. City planner, Christian Brown, drew the plan with community input from area residents. The plan includes multiple paths meant to draw people into the park and tree plantings, gardens, a bike rack and the use of native plants in order to make the area "greener". Arbor Day is April 27 and City Forester Cindy Smith will help area school students place identification tags, indicating the value of the pollution removed by the tree, on each tree.

Transportation: None

External Committee Reports:

City Council: None

Planning & Zoning: None

Unfinished Business:

Climate Action Plan: Jack presented a draft information sheet about the City of Bethlehem's Climate Action Plan and asked for comments. A discussion followed concerning the timeline for meeting the various commitments in the Compact of Mayors and it was agreed that the baseline energy data for government operations should be completed in 2018 and that a community wide effort should begin to establish green house gas emission data.

The information sheet and a survey will be available at the April 5th meeting at which Lynn will give a short introduction.

The proposed topics for the May and June meetings will be Energy and Green Buildings respectively. Due to summer vacations, July and August are open at this time but one of them could be scheduled for a presentation by Wildlands Conservancy. The

September meeting will probably be concerned with Transportation. Future meetings will discuss Waste & Recycling and Green Infrastructure. Each of these topics is subject to change or alteration, but this meeting list is an attempt to notify the public as to our intentions so that they may take part in the discussion of those topics in which they are interested. People should check with the City website or a member of the EAC for the latest information on meeting dates and subject matter.

New Business:

Kathy went to a Sustainability Conference at Lafayette and learned about the concept of a sustainability fund. The idea is to set aside, in a separate account, any savings from an energy efficiency project in the City. This has been successful in Pittsburgh and could be implemented here in the City by the Public Works Department whenever they construct a public improvement using energy efficient methods such as pervious paving materials or other green infrastructure ideas.

Kathy and Martha both questioned the appropriateness of an agreement allowing the PennEast Pipeline to cross the Bethlehem Watershed Authority property. This appears to be in conflict with the basic philosophy of the EAC and encourages the continued use of fossil fuels for energy. Although in agreement with their concern, John pointed out that the PennEast people have made some concessions on the placement of the pipeline and Mike indicated that the industry as a whole has made a number of improvements in their methods since the early days when little or no regulation of the industry existed. Everyone agreed that the pipeline would benefit primarily the industry with the gas to be distributed to the highest bidder. Therefore, at the very least, PennEast management should offer to support the City with some type of environmentally sustainable program. Kathy offered to have something for the EAC to consider at our next meeting.

Meeting adjourned 8:47