

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council
General Meeting
September 6, 2018**

Attendees: Council members: Lynn Rothman, Kathy Fox, Brian Hillard and Mike Topping. Also in attendance: Ed Gallagher, Beth Behrend, Greg Cook and Jackie Cook.

Approval of August Minutes: Moved by Brian; seconded by Kathy; approved.

Chair's Comments: Lynn reported that Councilman Reynolds has recommended to Mayor Donchez that funds be allocated in next year's budget for a consultant to write the Climate Action Plan. Councilman Reynolds also talked to Mike Alkhal concerning their efforts to obtain base information from PPL and UGI for the plan.

A new recycling coordinator has been hired for the City and this position will include some sustainability responsibilities. Councilman Reynolds also recommended that everyone look at the Philadelphia Climate Action Plan, which has been posted on our facebook page (Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council). Councilman Reynolds is the chairman of the Environmental & Human Resources Committee, which will hold a public meeting in December.

EAC Promotional Materials: Amy True will have information at our next meeting.

Monocacy Creek Watershed Coalition: Their next meeting will be September 11 at 7:30 pm here at Illick's Mill and Kathy, Brian and Greg plan to attend. Greg reiterated that the purpose of the meeting is to develop a relationship with other organizations and EACs upstream to address our common concern for the welfare of the Monocacy Watershed. Recent flooding has made it obvious that what Bethlehem does alone will have little impact on the flooding in the City. Mike stated that the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) would be a good organization to contact to see if they could organize the various municipalities and their EACs etc. to join together in this effort. Brian noted that the Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce is having a meeting on October 18th There will be a forum on title "Stormwater Solutions for Emerging Weather Patterns: Lehigh Valley Opportunitis" sponsored by Citizens Climate Lobby LV, Lehigh University Environmental Initiative and Lehigh Valley Sustainability Network. In November the Allentown EAC will panel discussion on regional watershed cooperation at the monthly Green Drinks mixer.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LVGreenDrinks/>

EAC Projects: Lynn noted that the EAC may have to develop committees for the various projects we have discussed so far. The climate action plan contains the following topics: Energy/Renewables; Green Bldg. Design/Energy Efficiency; Transportation (including EV fleet and charging stations); Green Infrastructure (Tree Ordinances, land use, & MS4 Regs) and Waste & Recycling. She stated that it was now time to decide which of these topics the members would like to follow up on and develop recommendations for regulations or procedures, which the City could use.

Beth proposed that the EAC recommend an ordinance to City Council that limits or controls the use of "single-use" plastic, such as bags and straws, and styrofoam containers. One option would be a ban on the use of plastic bags etc., another would be to require a fee for

their use. The fee could be used to help offset the cost of recycling these products. If a fee is charged, people would be more likely to use reusable bags and less likely to waste multiple plastic bags when only one is needed. She noted that manufacturing paper bags produces more waste and uses more fuel during shipping due to their weight when compared to plastic bags. It was also noted that Lehigh University has recently decided to ban plastic straws. Everyone agreed this was a good idea and the EAC could form a committee to research and explore options. The final form of how to proceed will be discussed at our next meeting.

Mike recommended that the EAC also consider looking at the tree ordinance for the City. Lynn recommended that the BBFW could form a committee to study this.

Councilman Callahan had asked the EAC to review the study that had been done regarding an inflatable dam on the Lehigh River, which would help create slow moving and deeper water for certain activities such as rowing for the Lehigh crew team and possibly motor boat use. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

Energizing Small Communities: Brian handed out a two page synopsis of a “Guide to Greater Energy Independence and Economic Resiliency”, which promoted energy efficiency and how to gain community acceptance of the need for ending wasteful practices in the home as well as the community as a whole. Energy audits would be helpful in the home as well as in schools and commercial buildings.

Recycling: Electronic items recycling will take place on September 8th at the Ice Rink on Illick’s Mill Road. Lynn will contact the Mayor and City Council, as well as the new recycling coordinator, to discuss our previous recommendations concerning recycling containers in the downtown areas (See minutes 4/6/17 under Unfinished Business).

Citizens Traffic Advisory Committee (CTAC): Lynn attended the August 7th CTAC meeting. In accordance with the Complete Streets initiative to make travel safer for pedestrians & bicyclists, 126 streets in Bethlehem have already been inventoried.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 PM.