

## Borough of Doylestown

### Environmental Advisory Council

#### Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, February 15, 2022

**Attendance:** George Mullikin, Kristin Winters, Karyn Hyland, Wendy Margolis, Steve Nelson, Karen Graziano, Grant Alger

**1) Call to order:** George M. called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm.

**2) Approval of minutes:** Steve N. moved to approve the minutes, Grant A. seconded, and the minutes were approved as written.

#### **3) Single-Use Plastics (Grant A.):**

- Grant A. had sent out a draft resolution with recommended changes. The old resolution focused on a fee (not ban), while Penn Environment (PE) had recommended a ban/fee hybrid (the fee would go to merchants). The group discussed the language and also agreed to leave straws out.
- George M. asked re: the layout of the resolution - if the Borough has a standard layout or if we can use the PE layout. There are some differences. Karyn H. said that what we have been using is not a Borough standard (our version was from Narberth), so we can use the format that makes sense. The new format from PE might be more consistent with other municipalities. Karyn H. noted that the Borough Solicitor will review what we put together.
- Steve N. noted that in the “whereases” our document mentions the constitution. The Solicitor will review this as well. Karyn H. said that the Solicitor may wish to have the reference to the constitution and a legal case in the document.
- Karen G. asked how the document will be made available after approval and who it will target. Karyn H. said that this will be an ordinance (law) to be considered by Council; if approved it will be enforceable. It would be advertised in the Intelligencer. We would provide outreach to the community to make sure it is understood. The rollout plan will be an important step after we finish putting together the ordinance.
- George M. noted that we previously used the term *commercial* instead of *retail*. This would impact how we include Borough-sponsored events, which should be included. Steve N. noted the PE ordinance includes this type of event under the definition of retail. The group discussed whether commercial is broader or if retail makes more sense. There are some exemptions. The PE ordinance clears up a lot of this info in the definitions. The group discussed that including Borough-sponsored events makes sense, but we should exclude non-profit/church events (they would receive education but would not be subject to enforcement). We could make the terminology broader and just enforce as best we can. Steve N. suggested that part of the rollout could be that we put together a flyer to give to non-profits to educate them. The group agreed to use “public and private events on public property” and include them with retail in the document, and to remove the rest of the previous “non-profit/church” sentence.
- The group agreed to use PE’s definition of reusable carry-out/single-use plastic bag. The group also agreed it would be good to use the same terminology throughout the document. Karyn H. said the Solicitor will pick up on things like this.
- Karen G. asked re: the charge per bag and effective date. Council will discuss this, as well as the rollout plan. PE indicated that timing is important; Philly’s rollout was longer and led to some confusion. The group discussed having a 90-day rollout vs. 6 months. Once we send the

document up through Council, we'll have about 2 months before approval by Council. Steve N. noted that there are two messages; first we need to provide info to Council to show them why it should be approved, then after approval we need to educate businesses and the public. Wendy M. said that Council will not be supportive unless they know that due diligence has been done with the businesses. We need to show that we've reached out to businesses and share the feedback they've provided, to confirm that businesses will be supportive. We should at least talk to a few key businesses/organizations, such as the Doylestown Business Alliance and perhaps the Doylestown Foodshed. Wendy M. has told the Borough Park and Rec Board (which it will go to first) that we're working on it and it will be coming through as a recommendation, and there is support from them. Karyn H. suggested we put together the rollout and we include it with the proposed ordinance, then it will likely move through committee fairly quickly.

- As far as the effective date, we should probably just think about the timing between the adoption and the enforcement; we don't need to specify the exact date it will become effective (this will be worked out as it goes through). The rollout is the key to timing.
- Fine amounts: PE calls for \$50, \$100, and \$200 fines for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and higher # violations. The group agreed with PE's fines.
- Grant A. will create a clean version and we can aim to finalize it at the next meeting. Our goal will be to define our rollout plan and write a draft of the cover letter (addressed to the Park and Rec Board). Hopefully by the meeting after that we'll be able to hand it off to committee. Grant A. will post the clean copy to Google docs. Everyone should come to the meeting with some ideas about the cover letter and rollout plan.

#### **4) Renewable Energy (Steve N.):**

- Steve N. was waiting to hear back from PE at the last meeting. He forwarded the email he received to us. PE deals with info at the State level, while Sierra Club Ready for 100 deals with info at the local level. We've defined advocating for renewable energy (RE) as one of our goals. We need to decide how we want to approach this. We'd also like it to be part of the comprehensive plan.
- Wendy M. said that there is definitely an environmental component to the comprehensive plan and we will have an opportunity to have input on this.
- Steve N. asked if a resolution to recommend to Council regarding RE would be worth pursuing. Wendy M. said we could make it more generic and say that the EAC recommends that certain goals be considered as we move forward with the comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan will absorb a lot of the things we're talking about, so we can think about what we would want included in the plan. The group agreed that it would be good to discuss our goals and objectives regarding RE, as well as other environmental goals, so we can suggest to Council that they be included in some form in the comprehensive plan. We could include this in a letter to Council, rather than a resolution.
- Steve N. noted that it would be good for us to have info about the Borough's current RE status as a basis on which to build our recommendations. It's important to know what's already been done. Phil Ehlinger would be able to provide info about this. Wendy M. said that the EAC could send someone to Public Works to get info; Wendy M. could also share our questions with them. The group will try to come up with a list of objectives/projects we'd like to see addressed in the Borough, so we know what questions to ask to find out what's already been done. The group will need to plan to devote a lot of energy to giving input on the comprehensive plan. We need to define what our goals are.

- Steve N. will develop some ideas about how the Borough can use alternative energy and conserve energy, which we can use to develop some questions for Public Works.

#### **5) 2022 Goals and Objectives (George M.):**

- At the last meeting we developed some broad goals; George M. asked if anyone had any other ideas. Grant A. noted that we could develop some outreach re: the Farmers Market. Karen G. agreed it would be good to have specific outreach planned for the market. We'll have new members who can help too.
- The group had defined our broad goals as: plastics, RE, the comprehensive plan, and engagement.
- George M. asked if we want to have a goal addressing climate change. Renewable energy is directly related to climate change. The group discussed that we will always be mindful of how our work is related to climate change, rather than developing a specific goal related to climate change. We can try to ensure that climate change is addressed in the comprehensive plan. We can include climate change in our education not just through government but to residents. We could do a greenhouse gas emissions measurement for the Borough.
- Karyn H. noted that it might be a good idea to ask Council for their input on what our goals should be. Wendy M. noted that plastics and our input into the comprehensive plan would be valuable.
- The group developed the following objectives for the goals:
  - Plastics objectives: develop ordinance and supporting docs, send to committee, rollout to community after Council approval.
  - Comprehensive plan objectives: develop key issues/objectives to be included in the plan.
  - RE objectives: we should look at developing a baseline, so we know what areas to target. (As noted above, Steve N. will develop some info to help guide our questions for Public Works.)
  - Engagement objectives: programmatic planning for the Farmers Market (could include a lot of other topics like BirdTown, plants, etc.); we should attend the EAC summit; we can ask for items to be included on DMail and Facebook; we can also include info on the website; we can attend the EAC Network Conference 2022 (sponsored by We Conserve PA; Wendy M., Steve N., Grant A., and possibly George M. will try to attend) and participate in relevant conferences; we could consider email communications/eblasts.

#### **6) Outreach & Communication (Grant A.):**

- Grant A. proposed that we could include info on the website re: the electric car charging stations. The info could also go out in DMail.

#### **7) Old/New Business:**

- We are getting two new members soon. Grant A. suggested it would be good to have some basic info to give to them. It would be good to give them info about ourselves and some minutes from previous meetings, plus some basic info about the rules of order. The group agreed.

**8) Adjournment:** Steve N. moved to adjourn the meeting, Grant A. seconded, and the meeting was adjourned by common consent at 7:36 pm.

**9) Next meeting:** The next EAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 5:30 pm.