

## **Borough of Doylestown**

### **Environmental Advisory Council**

#### **Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, June 15, 2021**

**Attendance: Karen Graziano, Karyn Hyland, Victoria Holderer, George Mullikin, Kristin Winters, David Kapturowski, Grant Alger, Steve Nelson**

**1) Call to order:** Victoria H. called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm.

**2) Approval of minutes:** George M. moved to approve the minutes of the last meeting, Dave K. seconded, and the minutes were approved as written.

#### **3) Green Points (George M.):**

- George M. had emailed the documents in the Google folder. He reviewed some highlights of the updates with the group.
- George M. said he had wondered what would be the average points someone would get and so he did a test run with some sample items. He came up with 18-19 points. Karyn H. said that seems like a fair number; there's really no average, but this seems reasonable. 50 is the max. The points apply to particular permits, so it's a little difficult to compare between projects. Most of the points and savings tend to be with the building permit. In the test run George M. had assumed things like energy star appliances, HVAC equip, some landscaping. You'd have to do a larger project and include something like solar to get to the 50.
- Grant A. asked about the scale – is 5 a large number of points for an item? Karyn H. said she'll test drive it on a couple of projects, especially ones that have already received green points, to see how it works; ones that already got points should come in lower, indicating that newer projects will score higher. 5 is generally a big number. Some of the items don't apply to the code (e.g. using 50% reclaimed lumber), they're just a good thing to do. Lot coverage is a tough one to do well on, since most lots in the borough are undersized. The Borough doesn't really regulate impervious coverage through its zoning ordinance. The terminology used here for lot coverage matches the terminology in the zoning ordinance.
- The group agreed to keep plants and turf as separate items from each other. There is not a lot of site work in the doc, so it would be nice to keep it in as an incentive. Grant A. noted that one of the points of this program is to serve as an incentive, and the group agreed.
- George M. noted that radon IRC and active radon were listed as two separate lines. In this section they're all stand-alone items. EPA verified home is a new item. Grade 1 insulation is not in the code; it's new to our doc. If someone does the insulation to grade 1 it means that the builders have installed it specifically this way and it's a better insulation system; this was defined by RESNET, a group that defines standards for rating homes. Most homes have grade 3 fiberglass insulation.
- George M. said that raised heel truss is not a code requirement but is encouraged. It allows you to take insulation all the way to the exterior wall. George M. noted he separated out Energy Star EV charger from verified home. There are some additional new items.
- George M. noted that there was a large section in the previous document about passive solar; it was fairly complex, since the street needs to be just right and a lot of it has to do with the orientation of the building. George M. removed this item and replaced it with adequate roof area (enough to put solar panels on). Karyn H. suggested it might be worth keeping passive

solar, even though George M. noted it's a very large section and tough to minimize. Wendy M. asked if there's a standard we could refer to in order to keep things simpler; Karyn H. noted there's a green building code (ICC). George M. will look for the green building code. Kristin W. asked if we'd just have a reference to it in the item; Karyn H. said we could simplify it in the reference, and it would be good to keep passive solar since it's a worthwhile thing to aim for.

- The PV system item was reduced from 20 to 10 points. George M. had felt 20 was a fairly high number of points, and there is not as much of a barrier now to PV systems because they are less expensive. Steve N. asked if we see a lot of PV permits; Karyn H. said they do see them coming through. She noted the Borough is a SolSmart community and we are big on incentives for this. Karyn H. said the Borough waives the electric installation fees for PV installation for a building permit; if you need to upgrade the roof to accommodate the PV system, the electric permit is waived and the building permit would be waived. If it is part of a larger project including solar among many other things, only the electric involved in the solar installation would be waived, but the points would apply to the entire building permit. George M. reported that previously we had a scale ranging from 8 to 20 points for PV. Wendy M. noted we may see more of the non-panel solar materials in the future, e.g. roofing.
- Grant A. asked if this would push people to do things beyond what they were already going to do. The group discussed that it generally would just be things that people are already going to do, but there are a few things (maybe appliances, landscaping) that they'd add on.

#### **4) Ready for 100 (Steve N.):**

- Steve N. reported that he, Karen G., and Grant A. will try to have a draft resolution to the group by July for review. Steve N. will send an email to Karyn H. to ask what the Borough is already doing so it can be included.

#### **5) Farmers Market (Victoria H.):**

- Victoria H. reported that Grant A. will be at the market this weekend and Wendy M. next weekend. Anyone who wants to be at the booth can sign up through the Sign-Up Genius.
- Victoria H. will draft a flyer to put up at the stands for the other vendors to show shoppers they can recycle the plastic bags they use. She will get it approved by the Foodshed Alliance contact then send it to Karyn H. for printing.
- Wendy M. said we are almost out of reusable bags. They were from Penn Community. Grant A. and Karyn H. noted that we have discussed printing them. Karyn H. said we have \$250 in our budget for the year. We can look into printing bags.
- Karen G. noted it was an attraction to have the tree giveaway to bring people to the table. We can think about ways to draw attention.
- George M. asked if we could sell bags. Kristin W. noted we could sell the recycling stickers the group had previously designed. The payment would be a donation. Our budget was cut in half this year due to an overall reduction and based on what we've spent. George M. said we can get bags for as low as \$2. Wendy M. said the bookstore is giving away bags and might want to give us some. The bags are a conversation starter; it's good to have partnerships with businesses in town to donate bags.
- Karen G. suggested that maybe once a month we could have a conversation starter. George M. said we could put out a dog bowl with water to attract dog walkers.

- Steve N. asked about the bike rack near the market. Wendy M. had checked; it was just being repaired and has now been replaced. Dave K. asked when the charger along Hamilton will be put back; he said that as of last week it's not there (Bosch one). Karyn H. will ask about this.
- Wendy M. suggested we could encourage people to bring reusable bags to drop off; the group agreed this is a good idea. We'd want to just make sure they're clean.
- Victoria H. summarized that we'll look into bags/stickers, and also dog biscuits.

#### **6) Waste Haulers (Victoria H.):**

- Grant A. spoke to someone at Waste Management. The person had a lot of information, but she didn't know a lot of the details for our area since the headquarters is out of state; then the phone call was disconnected. He will call again to get the rest of the info and will add it to the spreadsheet.
- George M. finished gathering info for Republic. He did not receive a lot of info for Whitetail. Dave K. has also traded calls with Whitetail and not gotten much info from them; he will continue to try.
- The group decided that we will go with the info we have as of the next meeting and post it. If we get more info it can always be updated.
- Wendy M. noted that a book she is reading about recycling provides a lot of info about the process.

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

- Grant A. sent a website audit and an Instagram example to the group. He noted there is a lot of work to be done on the website on the EAC and enviro issues pages and on the links to stormwater, if this is applicable. One thing that should be done is to eliminate dead links – the links can just be dropped if they don't work or replaced with new links. We could think about having more "evergreen" material (material that won't go out of date). Grant A. said the overall tone of the website is very positive, it just hasn't been touched in a while. Karyn H. can update it if we tell her what to edit. We could send write-ups, new links, etc.
- Karen G. asked if EAC info is posted on the Facebook page; Karyn H. said it is, and it gets a lot of traffic. We could promote EAC on Facebook. Grant A. and Kristin W. noted the benefits of using Instagram, which the Borough currently does not use. The group discussed the benefits of a social media presence, but also that the Borough's staff time is very limited so we can't overextend this use. We'd need to decide how the info is going to get to whichever platform we decide to use. Karyn H. can post things that we send to her. Grant A. will control the outflow of information as the communications person.
- Wendy M. suggested that we should come up with a schedule for how things would be posted.
- George M. suggested we could use the email list we have to target our enviro population. Grant A. could consolidate our info and send it to Karyn H. to send through the vehicle we choose. Karyn H. noted we have done branding and showed examples to the group.
- Wendy M. suggested EAC could have a branded section of the website with our logo. We could post some more news on the website and could drive people there through Facebook and other venues. We could put a logo on the EAC page. We could include links, but would need to make sure they're not dead links. Wendy M. said the person who helped update the website before would probably be able to help us take it to the next level.
- Grant A. will work on outreach items, and Karen G. and George M. will help him; Kristin W. can also help as needed. The group will look through the docs Grant A. sent and provide feedback.

## **8) Old/new business; public comment**

- Steve N. asked about the status of the updates to the Borough's Comprehensive Plan. Karyn H. said work is progressing and she will make sure the EAC is represented on it. Karyn H. summarized that the Borough's Comprehensive Plan will show where we want to go in terms of the environment, land use, housing, commercial trends, etc. and how the doc can be used to steer where the Borough is headed. The Borough will use this doc to assess and update our ordinances. It allows us to make sure that what we are regulating is getting us where we want to go. It's a multi-year process. There has been a consultant that helps with this in the past; it's likely that may happen again. Staff wear many hats so it will take time. Steve N. noted there is also typically a lot of public engagement. The existing plan is from the late 1990s.

**9) Adjournment:** Steve N. moved to adjourn the meeting, Karen G. seconded and the meeting was adjourned by common consent at 8:59 pm.

**10) Next meeting:** The next EAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 7:30 pm.