

Borough of Doylestown

Environmental Advisory Council

Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, April 20, 2021

Attendance: Grant Alger, Karyn Hyland, Wendy Margolis, Kristin Winters, Steve Nelson, Victoria Holderer, Dan Caprio (Bucks Co. Dept. of Health), Jack O'Brien, Andrea Strout (Buckingham Twp.), Mayor Strouse, Karen Graziano, David Kapturowski

1) Call to order: Victoria H. called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

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

3) Mayor's proclamation

- Mayor Strouse noted that there is an opportunity to issue a proclamation regarding Earth Day and the environment. The EAC was sent the proclamation, which is still in draft form. It emphasizes celebrating Earth Day every day and recognizing what the Borough and some groups in it have done.
- Grant A. submitted some suggested edits; Karyn H. will forward them to Mayor Strouse.

4) Mosquito control program – Dan Caprio, Bucks County Dept. of Health

- Dan C. spoke to the group about the County's mosquito program, which uses an IPM (Integrated Pest Management) approach; this starts with the least intense methods first, then moves to other methods if needed. The County first encourages management through eliminating mosquito habitat, such as standing water in a backyard. The second and third approaches would be larvicide and then adult insecticide.
- It only takes one source to create a negative effect, so residents can start by looking around their properties for sources.
- Step 2 (larvicide) forms a toxin in the larval gut and is species specific. Step 3 – adulticide – is applied via a truck-mounted sprayer and has a very low toxicity profile for mammals. The County provides notifications for certain applications and will target certain areas; the County has more info about this. The last spray was in 2018. There had previously been protests in 2012.
- Wendy M. asked if the County has a position on some of the insecticides in birdbaths, and Victoria H. asked if they are dangerous for wildlife. Dan C. said some animals are affected, so rather than use an insecticide the County recommends just dumping and replacing the water in birdbaths regularly.
- Dan C. showed the group the information flyer provided by the County, which primarily provides instructions for residents to reduce sources around their properties. Steve N. asked if we should have flyers to hand out at the Farmers Market. Grant A. suggested the info might be useful all year round. The group agreed this would be a good idea for education, and Dan C. said he will send us the flyer.
- Dan C. noted the County is really trying to push education this year.

5) Alternative energy presentation

- Steve N. updated the group on Ready for 100. Also present was Andrea S. from Buckingham Twp. to help answer questions.
- The Borough has done a lot and knows something about the Ready for 100 program; the Borough is aware of the challenges of climate change and what can be done in response. Ready for 100 has been working on getting municipalities to pass resolutions aimed at 100% renewable energy and taking steps to work toward that goal.
- Steve N. took the group through a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview. He reviewed the Sierra Club's goals and operating principles, and some info about climate change and its recent effects. Things are currently getting worse, not better. Bucks County is in one of the fastest warming areas of the country.
- Today we have choices. We can work toward renewable energy. The price of renewable energy keeps falling, which is good news.
- Over 150 communities have passed resolutions through Ready for 100. Bucks County municipalities are lagging behind other counties in the region. Steve N. noted that a collaborative/multi-municipality approach can be cost effective. In our region Bucks County, Buckingham Twp., Doylestown Twp., and Solebury Twp. have adopted resolutions.
- Steve N. asked the EAC for a resolution asking the Borough to work toward Ready for 100, which would go to Council for approval. The next step would be to develop an energy transition plan and timeline, which would include setting goals, making a plan, and taking action.
- Andrea S. said she could break the next steps down into smaller units:
 - In Buckingham they passed a resolution in October 2020. It takes some time. They put together a plan that includes targets and timing; having a target date is important to the Sierra Club.
 - The plan was presented to the Board of Supervisors, and the approval process involved a lot of back and forth.
 - They drew up a press release when the plan was approved. It's good to let people know what is being done, as it has a ripple effect and could also lead to multiple municipalities banding together and sharing knowledge. Ready for 100 has many info resources. Sharing is encouraged. There's a clean energy workshop starting again in the summer that walks municipalities through the process of developing a plan.
 - Look at what other plans are out there; some are ambitious, some are simple, so each group can pick what makes sense.
 - Start gathering data. Solicit help from others to help organize data.
 - Create a matrix to divide up tasks.
 - Make sure there are no impediments in existing ordinances. Check current ordinances before putting it all together.
 - Involve the planning commission and Borough manager asap. They will be key figures in the stakeholder group.
 - Report on progress often to keep everyone informed.
- Karen G. asked if the target in the Borough would be commercial or residential. Steve N. said the goal would be every part of the Borough; in terms of places to start, that varies. He feels starting with government to serve as a leader makes sense - perhaps promoting the new Borough Hall, for instance. We would move on from there to encompassing other parts of the Borough.
- Grant A. asked about the regulatory impact. Steve N. said he doesn't know of any plans that have been made into ordinances. Westchester is the leader, but municipalities are still figuring this out. This is a process - set the goals, then move forward from there.

- Karyn H. noted the Borough has various pieces of this in place. The Borough's focus is not entirely on energy consumption or transitions; there are other pieces and the focus is broader.
- Wendy M. noted that commercial/industrial use of energy shown in the presentation is high, and wondered if the data has changed since the 2015 data shown. Karyn H. said industrial uses are dwindling, but they tend to be the most intense users. Steve N. said the sector is commercial and industrial, so it also includes offices. That sector includes all retail and probably government too. Steve N. is not sure we'll see an update to the numbers (from DVRPC) within the year, since updates may have been postponed in 2020. Wendy M. noted it might be hard to make some points in the press without current data.
- Karyn H. asked there is any documentation from Ready for 100 to summarize what they have been doing and what municipalities have accomplished. Karyn H. noted a proposal from our group would go through committee to Council; it should include a cover memo, summary, the recommended resolution, and some supporting literature. The EAC might want to see more info as they're putting everything together. Steve N. noted the EAC should consider the resolution and take the time to get it right. This would involve a couple of months of prep before we even send it to committee.
- The group that Steve N. and Andrea S. are working with is an informal collection of EAC members - a Bucks County unofficial group so towns can learn from each other. What's most important isn't the Sierra Club focus, but that municipalities move toward goals and recognize what has already been done. Karyn H. said a previous concern was whether our goals would align with the group. Andrea S. said it's important to not get hung up on numbers; municipalities need to do what works for them. They should use this as a basic framework that needs to be different for everybody.
- Wendy M. noted Phil E. in the Borough has talked a lot about what will be done in the new Borough Hall. Karyn H. said she can talk to him about that. Wendy M. noted it would be a good baseline to work from. The group agreed this would be good info to have, so Karyn H. will talk to him.
- Grant A. asked if there are some top resolutions the group can look at. Steve N. will put some together and get them to the group. There are differences between them, but the overall goals are similar. He'll send them to Karyn H. and she'll send them to the group.
- Wendy M. asked if the Sierra Club addresses concerns about wind energy and bird migration. Andrea S. said she's not aware of a stand from them. Steve N. said there was a birder from Audubon who was recently involved who would have info about this.
- Steve N. asked about next steps, and Karyn H. asked what the next steps usually are within an EAC. Andrea S. said their group is happy to share any info they have. The County resolution had info that could help us. Steve N. will send the resolution(s) as discussed above, Karyn H. will distribute them, and that will help us get started. Steve N. asked if there was a sub-committee; Andrea S. said her group mostly worked together, while Doylestown Township had a subcommittee. It's very helpful to have a few committed people on this to focus on the steps. Andrea S. noted there's a role for everybody; there are those who specialize that have useful expertise, so there will be multiple people writing parts of the plan.

6) Farmers Market

- The Farmers Market started last week and will continue through November. Victoria H. sent out the sign-up. Slots are for the full duration; just let her know if you're not able to stay the whole time.

- It was chilly last week, but there was a lot of interest.
- Generally the shed should be unlocked so we can get supplies out, including the table, folding chairs, the bin with EAC info, and the big plastic bag collection box. Take the supplies out and set everything up in our area. The chalkboard is in there too and can be put out to catch people's attention and give people some info. The signs on the bin are tattered so it is time to replace them; Victoria H. will provide lamination sheets, so we need new copies, and it would be good to take care of this soon.
- It would be good to have more information sheets available: e.g. types of plastic bags collected, trash hauler list, agenda from our meeting, Ready for 100 info. Wendy M. said the charge for the EAC is on the Borough website; it could be laminated and put on the table. Also we'll now have the mosquito flyer. Wendy M. has former member Steve R.'s tub of Birdtown info; she'll look through and see if there's anything that would be good to include.
- Grant A. noted that the early sessions are probably important, since people might not visit again.
- Steve N. asked about setup. Victoria H. said there's no tent, just a table; at some point we could look into a budget for a tent. The table is set up on Hamilton close to State St. near the Farmers Market sign.
- Steve N. said he can stop by Borough Hall to pick up copies of the mosquito flyer. Karyn H. could also print them and put them in the shed. The group agreed she'll put them in the shed. Karyn H. said if there's anything else we need from the Borough to let her know.
- Grant A. asked about the plastic bag collection; Victoria H. said to let her know if it's getting full so she can pick them up and drop them off at the supermarket. Grant A. said he can help with dropping off the bags. Victoria H. said people have asked about where they go, and she explained that we just collect them, and then they go to the Giant or a place like that. It would be good to keep a list of questions people ask so we can become more informed and give them the answers they're looking for.
- Wendy M. asked about the bags George M. has stored in his garage. Karyn H. said the group had talked about Trek getting us a bench as a sample to show people, but instead we used the compost bin from Mayor Strouse. George M. has been getting the bags weighed at Giant; it's an honor system. It takes a long time to collect enough bags to earn a bench from Trek and there is a time limit. Wendy M. noted it would be good to coordinate with George M. to see if we are still trying to track the weight. Victoria H. will reach out to George M. to check this and will let everyone know.

7) Green Points evaluation

- George M. and Dave K. have been working on this. Dave K. said there's nothing new to report right now. As far as he knows PA still has not adopted the 2018 code, so we're still early. We are fairly close to having our point suggestions put together.
- Grant A. asked if there is a deadline. Karyn H. said we try to keep aligned with the code adoption, so right now we're ahead of schedule.

8) Waste hauler update

- Victoria H. has been working on the spreadsheet and just sent it out to the group. She is still gathering some info for a few haulers and is having trouble reaching them. She asked if there is anyone who'd be able to follow-up with these haulers: Whitetail, Waste Management, and DelGuerico's. Dave K. will contact Whitetail. Waste Management was absorbed by Advanced

Disposal and they are being phased out in the Borough. We will remove Advanced Disposal from the spreadsheet and will keep Waste Management on the spreadsheet. Grant A. will try to contact Waste Management. DelGuerico's may possibly be contacted through Facebook; Grant A. will try to contact them. Wendy M. suggested emailing them, so Grant A. will try that.

- Victoria H. said Enviro Green is the only place she contacted that answered right away and they were very helpful.

9) Separation of tasks

- Karyn H. noted that the group has changed over time and the agenda has grown. Probably every agenda item should have an owner who is responsible for it and can see it through. Victoria H. said she sees the efficiency in doing something like that. It makes sense for people to work on areas they feel comfortable with.
- Steve N. asked if the idea would be that for any topic there would be an EAC member that would manage it. Karyn H. noted that this would be the idea. Having subcommittees would be difficult with such a small group for most items, so there would generally be someone in charge of a topic. Either way any task would benefit from everyone knowing what their job is. Karen H. said it also would allow for someone to delve more deeply into a particular subject rather than everyone doing a little bit. Victoria H. noted there could be multiple leaders on some topics, while others might have one leader. Kristin W. suggested some items could have one leader and a helper.
- Some might be finite tasks, while other might be ongoing.
- Steve N. will work on for Ready for 100 and Karen G. will assist.
- The Farmers Market would need some people to make sure there are supplies and we have what we need. Victoria H. will lead on the Farmers Market and Grant A. will assist as well. Kristin W. will help with dropping off the plastic bags and will check with George M. how this works.
- Dave K. and George M. have been working on the Green Points. We'll discuss with George M. at the next meeting what he'd like to do and if he's ok to lead on Green Points with Dave K. assisting.
- Victoria H. will lead on the waste haulers info.
- The County mosquito info is an example of a one-time item. Karyn H. will make copies of the flyer. If the EAC feels this requires longer term attention we can assign someone to the topic, but we don't need to now.
- Karyn H. noted that PR and outreach are two areas that have been piecemeal and could use a lead. This would include website updates, media, and newsletters. Grant A. said the website is something he could help with, and he could do a website audit to help us decide what to put out there and what info would be important. Karyn H. noted we'd also need to make sure we're not diluting other Borough messaging. Victoria H. said she could help with social media output; Grant A. will help as needed. All posts right now are made by staff and the group would need to work with staff on this.
- Wendy M. noted that there has been discussion in the past about expanding the group. Karyn H. said that's something Council would need to discuss, and Wendy M. asked if we want Council to consider expanding the EAC. We have 7 members, which is full. We have an opening for a student member and could consider filling this. Wendy M. could ask Council to add more people. The group will consider the options.

10) Adjournment: Steve N. moved to adjourn the meeting and Grant A. seconded, and the meeting was adjourned by common consent at 9:10 pm.

11) Next meeting: The next EAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 7:30 pm.