

## **Borough of Doylestown**

### **Environmental Advisory Council**

#### **Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, March 15, 2022**

**Attendance:** George Mullikin, Kristin Winters, Karyn Hyland, Wendy Margolis, Steve Nelson, Lindsay Troyer (online), Grant Alger, and guests Nick Zapf and John Zapf (Boy Scout and father)

**1) Call to order:** George M. called the meeting to order at 5:38 pm. The group welcomed our new member Lindsay T. We also have another new member Patricia West who was unable to join us tonight.

**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:**

- George M. noted that at the last meeting we reviewed the draft ordinance and some prior versions. Grant A. has put them together into one document. The group reviewed the updated document. George M. and Steve N. reviewed the purpose of this document and its history for Lindsay T. and our guests.
- We will keep the “whereases” as written. The Borough Solicitor will review the entire document.
- The group discussed the name of the ordinance; since it will be reviewed again (by the Solicitor and others), we will keep it as is.
- We will drop the phrase “eliminate” plastic bags and will just say “reduce the use of”.
- In the definition of “retail establishment” the group decided to keep Grant A.’s rewrite. The old wording will be removed. We will keep the “profit” sentence the way it is.
- The group discussed the definition of “distribute” and removed the definition.
- Under exempted bags we removed the introductory line (“perishable”, “inside retail establishment”) and just will list the bags. Point viii regarding PA establishments was discussed and removed; if there is a need to enforce, we can check with the Solicitor.
- The group discussed the “reusable bags” definition and decided to keep it the way it is.
- The group discussed the timing for when the ordinance will go into effect - will 90 days be enough time before enforcement? We have different types of messaging to prepare for before and after it is approved. We need to make sure that businesses have enough time to transition from plastic bags; it depends how much stock they have. The group decided that 90 days might be too short. There are pros and cons to many different rollout lengths. We will change it to 180 days for now, but it will go through review and can be changed if needed.
- The group discussed “recycled paper bags”; this language was not in our original doc but was from Penn Environment (PE). We will keep this.
- We will keep the \$0.15 fee on bags, which Grant A. had updated (was originally 10 cents).
- We will require businesses to post signage 120 days after the effective date of the ordinance (since the rollout was switched to 180 days). It would be good if the signage could include the Borough and EAC logos.
- We will keep the fines as Grant A. updated them; these are the dollar amounts from PE.
- The group redefined the Effective Date (Section IV) as the day following passage of the ordinance by Borough Council and removed the rest of that section.
- Grant A. will fix any editing errors as needed.

- Steve N. moved that this draft ordinance be submitted to the Environment and Recreation Committee, Kristin W. seconded, and the motion was passed.
- Karyn H. will send the document to the Solicitor to clean it up and then it will go to Enviro and Rec.
- Karyn H. noted we still have the *Bag It* DVD.
- George M. asked re: work that the group can do outside of the meeting. Karyn H. clarified that 3 or fewer members can work together, as long as it is below a quorum.
- Steve N. shared with us his ideas for the rollout plan, which he had sent to the group. It might take us some time to put our talking points together. Wendy M. noted that PE can help quite a bit with our messaging. The group discussed that restaurants may not consider themselves retail establishments; this will require some education. We will need to prioritize which businesses to target, since we may not be able to reach all of them. Discover Doylestown may be able to help us with outreach to businesses. Wendy M. suggested we run this by PE to see what they think and provide any input. She noted that Council has been considering this for quite some time and it is underway, so the message should be that we are providing information and tools to the businesses to help them transition; we are not looking for input from the businesses, since we already solicited this in the survey that was sent a couple of years ago. We can include some info from the survey in our outreach material to the businesses. Steve N. will reorganize the document and add some more info to Phase 2 (after Council approves). We probably also want to include info about who will be doing the outreach work. Karyn H. noted that we should be careful with direct interactions with the businesses; Discover Doylestown could be helpful. Wendy M. suggested that we could send a letter to businesses, offer to meet with anyone who'd like to discuss it in more depth, and offer to bring by any materials like signage. At the April meeting we should discuss this in more depth. We have a list from a few years ago of restaurants, and we've had some contact with them in various ways over the last few years, but there is no group that encompasses all of them. Lindsay T. noted that there seems to be a group that includes some of the businesses; she can look into this some more. Steve N. and Wendy M. noted that Lindsay T. can say we are looking for some ways to interact with businesses. Grant A. will follow-up with PE to solicit their input. Karyn H. said that the original restaurant list came from Doylestown Alive; they may have other businesses as well. Some info may be outdated, but it will be a good starting point. She had reached out to them through the Doylestown Alive website. For now we will just work on our task list, then reach out to them later. Steve N. will clean up the outreach document and reorganize it for the next meeting. Wendy M. may be able to get some help from Enviro and Rec if needed.

#### **4) Renewable Energy:**

- Steve N. had volunteered to talk to Phil Ehlinger (Public Works) to find out the current Borough use of renewable energy. He sent a list of questions to the group for review, then Steve N. and George M. met with Phil E. last week and discussed what the Borough has done over the last 10 years or so. It may be good to advertise some of the many things that have been done. For instance, the Borough uses 100% wind energy for its utilities and the traffic lights and streetlights are LED. There are many other things that the Borough has done and Steve N. will post a list from his notes to the EAC Google Drive.
- When Steve N. asked if there are particular ways that the EAC can help with the Borough's efforts to use renewable energy, Phil E. said we need to install more EV chargers, particularly in private parking lots, at the library, at the Mercer, and at the Doylestown Shopping Center. We

could also help to figure out how solar might work on Borough Hall. We could look at grant sources for projects; anything that will cost the Borough money will probably need to be pushed to 2023.

- Wendy M. said that what the Borough is already doing to save energy would be good info to put on the EAC website at some point. The group agreed: the Borough is doing a lot and it would be good to advertise it. Perhaps we could talk about it at the Farmers Market.
- There has not been an energy audit in the last few years. It might be helpful to do an audit on the new Borough Hall in a year or so.
- We can look at helping with solar and look into some grants. Applying for a grant would take time, so we'd want to start applying soon. George M. asked if it would make sense to contact a solar provider to find out if they know if any grants are available and to give an estimate of how much it would cost to put solar on Borough Hall, and Steve N. said this sounded like a good idea. The roof and electric system are ready to receive solar. Steve N. noted that West Rockhill installed solar.
- Steve N. noted that there are still some areas related to renewable energy that we can explore; we will plan to discuss them in April.

#### **5) Outreach and Communications:**

- Karyn H. updated the meeting time on the Borough website to 5:30 pm.
- Kristin W. noted that we should update the Bird Town logo on the EAC page and can add some more info about Bird Town. She will send the logo and info to Grant A. and Karyn H. to be updated.
- Grant A. added a note to the matrix that we should update the plastics info. We will take the previously recommended plastics ordinance down until we can upload more updated info. The survey will stay on there. He also added info to the matrix about some of the renewable energy notes that could go on the website.
- Karyn H. sent the Google Drive link to the new EAC members.
- The Arbor Day tree giveaway at the Farmers Market is April 30<sup>th</sup>. The goal is to get the trees planted in the Borough; we are still figuring out how try to ensure that more of the trees go to Borough residents. Perhaps signage could be posted. Lindsay T. said she is happy to help if needed. Karyn H. said if we get the trees, she will let us know. Usually the work is split between EAC, Shade Tree Commission, and Council. The trees will be wrapped in plant sheets instead of plastic.

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

- Kristin W. provided some updates from Bird Town. She met with Heidi Shiver from Doylestown Township, who runs the Bird Town working group for our region and is on the Doylestown Township EAC. Kristin W. noted that it would be helpful to have more people involved in Bird Town; Heidi S. had suggested we could reach out for volunteers through Facebook, emails, or an event calendar. Lindsay T. said she'd be interested in helping. Some other municipalities' Bird Town groups are very active. Kristin W. reported that Heidi S. had suggested a few potential events on which the Borough and Township groups could collaborate:
  - Bird walk at Fonthill on Sat. 5/21 or 6/4 from 8:30-10:30 am; Heidi S. would find someone to lead it. The group discussed that it might be better to do bird walks at Veterans Park or Chapman Park since they're in the Borough (easier to coordinate) and they might have more birds than Fonthill.

- Bird boxes at Fonthill; volunteers could help build/install/maintain, and Heidi S. would be the primary coordinator. The group felt we should discuss this some more, since bluebird boxes in the Borough tend to be taken over by other bird species.
- Native plant pop-up garden with info and signs, maybe a plant sale or giveaway; Kristin W. had suggested to Heidi S. that maybe we could coordinate this with the Farmers Market outreach we are discussing. Kristin W. will discuss all three of these topics further with Heidi S. and will include Lindsay T. on the correspondence.
- Kristin W. also noted that Heidi S. said the Township has 4 associate members on the EAC who help with projects and fill in temporarily when a voting position is vacated; should we consider having associates? The group discussed that we can request this but it's not in our ordinance; we'd have to ask Council for this, and could also ask Council to add members.
- George M. said Adam Howell (previous EAC member) contacted him and he has reusable bags. We can give them away at the Farmers Market. He'd like them out of his garage. There are 2 big boxes. George M. will pick them up and put them in the shed at the Farmers Market.
- George M. emailed the new member orientation info to us. It includes EAC-specific info, info about where to find the minutes, and info about the members. Grant A. asked about the rules of order; George M. said it would make sense for them to look this info up themselves. He will fix two small typos in Kristin W.'s bio.
- The group discussed how we can shorten the length of our meetings. We can try to keep each section to 15 minutes.

**7) Adjournment:** Steve N. moved to adjourn the meeting, Kristin W. seconded, and the meeting was adjourned by common consent at 8:09 pm.

**8) Next meeting:** The next EAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 19, 2022, at 5:30 pm.