

Borough of Doylestown

Environmental Advisory Council

Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Attendance: Karyn Hyland, Victoria Holderer, George Mullikin, Steve Nelson, Grant Alger, Kristin Winters, David Kapturowski, Jeffrey Reinmiller, Dennis Livrone

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) Ready for 100 (Steve N.):

- Steve N. noted that the heading on the sample resolution sent with the agenda says Bucks Co. Board of Commissioners, but it should actually say Solebury Twp.
- Steve N. said the local Ready for 100 is looking for the EAC to give the green light for them to draft a resolution for the EAC to consider. This is not an ordinance or a law. If Council adopts the resolution it is more a sense of the Council's intentions. It would discuss what is being addressed (the "whereas" section) and the things the Borough has already done would be mentioned. The "Now therefore be it resolved section" would outline the actions the Borough would do and some steps on how to accomplish the goals, either specifically or more generally.
- Steve N. reviewed Solebury's resolution with the group to go over examples that could be included. This resolution was done a year ago. It includes a section asking the Commonwealth to move to 100% renewable energy by 2050. It also includes that copies of the resolution will go to leaders in the Commonwealth government. The resolution also includes dates and specifics re: how goals would be addressed.
- Karyn H. noted that the Borough is currently updating its Comprehensive Plan, which may include some environmental sections. Steve N. asked if the EAC will be involved, and Karyn H. said they are not sure yet – the Borough will need to determine involvement from stakeholders. Energy will be one component of the Plan and will tie in with the Ready for 100 resolution. Karyn H. noted that the Borough has achieved most of the goals in the current Comprehensive Plan. It takes some time to get through this process. The group agreed it would be worth mentioning the Comprehensive Plan in our resolution.
- Steve N. noted that the resolution can be as broad or narrow as the Borough decides. The resolution and Comprehensive Plan could work together, so it will be good to mention the Plan in the resolution.
- Dave K. asked if Steve N. sees any particular tasks that would work well in the Borough. Steve N. said there is no grand scheme in mind. There are opportunities for small scale solar. The resolutions are intended to impact the entire community, not just the government, which is a big task. Typically the government starts by addressing its own operations to go 100% renewable for others to emulate, but there could be ways to involve other levels sooner. There could be ways for residents to use solar, the Borough could put more bike racks around town, etc. Steve N. doesn't see that in the Borough there is enough space to generate the energy needed for all residents, but we could certainly increase sustainable sources. Karyn H. noted that wind energy has been explored but received some pushback due to a connection to seizures. Grant A. pointed out that we are on the grid and can purchase sustainable energy

rather than generating it. George M. agreed – we could buy renewable energy, which would be expensive, but is one route. We don't have to have our own infrastructure.

- Steve N. said this won't be easy, but the resolution is symbolic as much as anything else. It would be an opportunity for the Borough to be a leader. The Borough could help to persuade and educate residents regarding renewables.
- The EAC would make a motion to recommend adoption of the resolution to Council. It would go to a committee first, then Council (two-step process).
- The EAC can encourage the Borough to work toward renewables. George M. agreed that there are limited things we can do, but it's important to think about what we can accomplish and try to put it together so other levels can see our actions, even if we don't have all of the answers. The group agreed it will be good to see something tailored specifically to the Borough.
- Steve N. said he, Grant A., and Karen G. will put together a draft and the EAC can review it.

4) Green Points (George M.):

- George M. said he's been working on the Green Points document. He's proposing some changes and it will need another review. The draft from last time was more broad and some parts may be unrealistic, so he is scaling it back a bit. He's keeping some things in that would be educational or new types of items.
- George M. and Dave K. will look at it again and have a final draft ready for review at the next meeting. They'll email it to the group. George M. asked if we'd like to see the before and after. The group agreed that it would be good to see the changes that have been made.
- Dave K. said he has heard the code update is imminent.
- The group will look at the final draft (before and after) at the next meeting. This review will be streamlined to go over the highlights. George M. will also post the draft to Google docs and the group can look at it ahead of the meeting.

5) Farmers Market (Victoria H.):

- Victoria H. reported the Farmers Market has been going well. She has been making trips to the supermarket to drop off the plastic bags. People are interested in the pamphlets.
- Victoria H. spoke with Kelly from the Bucks Co. Foodshed Alliance about having a flyer posted at the Market stands that the EAC is recycling plastic bags. Some of the stands use plastic bags to hold sold produce, so people could see where to bring the bags when they are done using them. The flyer will say people can bring their bags back to our recycling each week.
- Steve N. reported feedback from Acme shoppers who didn't know that Weis and Giant take bags too. The group agreed the flyer should say that all of them recycle, as well as some other places like Lowe's.
- Grant A. said some people might think we have a special recycling situation, so we can try to clarify that we are just a collection spot.
- The group discussed bike rack locations near the Farmers Market. Karyn H. and George M. said there is a bike rack on State St. near the Market entrance (not sure if it is there now, but it was installed) and there are a few others along State St.
- George M. asked if we still have reusable bags. Victoria H. said it wouldn't hurt to have more, but the supply is ok for now. Grant A. asked if we could get EAC-logo bags. George M. said we might need a kickstarter, and Dave K. said we have a budget that we could consider using.

- Dennis L. asked re: amenities at the market. His wife had seen a patron saying that there weren't any trash cans. Karyn H. confirmed that there are trash cans in the vicinity. Karyn H. said the Farmers Market is run privately so the Borough doesn't give them trash cans, but there are others nearby.
- Victoria H. will email the flyer to be posted to Karyn H. for printing. Karyn H. will prepare them and put them in the shed.
- Victoria H. said some questions have come up regarding our previous plastics initiative. Karyn H. reviewed the initiative for the group. The EAC had recommended to Council that they ban plastic bags and straws (single-use plastics). This effort was stopped by a PA legislature ban on ordinances. The ban on ordinances happened very quickly and is still being reviewed. Takeout containers were not included in the initiative since this put a burden on businesses and we wanted to start with other items first. Previously the EAC had door-knocked to solicit information and interest; some business owners were reducing plastic use already, while others were not doing anything. The goal at that time was education. The question now would be if this is something that we want to take on again. Some businesses might be reluctant since they are barely staying afloat; the group agreed it's too soon and to keep the initiative on the back burner for now. Kristin W. noted that Lambertville is a good resource for when we get back into the project.
- Karyn H. noted that unfortunately plastic bags were used for the tree giveaway on Arbor Day due to miscommunication; she'll make sure there are no conflicting messages next year. It is good to have the EAC and tree giveaway tables together. Grant A. asked if the trees were used up, but the group was not sure. There were four types of trees given away this year.

6) Waste Haulers (Victoria H.):

- Victoria H., Grant A., and Dave K. had no updates. We should have more info soon.

7) Outreach & Communication (Grant A.):

- Grant A. has been working on a proposed action plan. He first wants to understand the communication venues we have, like Dmail, Facebook, and perhaps newspapers? Karyn H. said we rarely put ads in the paper, usually just meetings and the occasional press release. There's also Twitter and the website. Grant A. noted would be good to understand when we use each of these routes.
- Dmail is restricted generally to crucial info so it doesn't overwhelm readers. Facebook and Twitter present a more generous amount of info because people can scroll by. Not too many people go to the website, so that is not really the place for announcements. Kristin W. asked if the Borough would consider including brief announcements on Dmail beyond what Dmail usually includes, since some people don't use social media. Grant A. agreed would be nice to see some more of this on Dmail. This could be where some EAC announcements could go.
- Victoria H. said an attendee reported having some difficulty finding the link to meetings. Karyn H. said the link is on the website. It will be up to PA to determine how long we are allowed to have virtual meetings. Karyn H. said it's not clear how the setup would work to ensure public participation if meetings were held both in person and online simultaneously. There is some PA legislation right now regarding this and we're not sure how it will play out.
- Dennis L. said he's on the Parks and Rec board, and they've discussed that the meetings are advertised on the website. There is an expectation that people will come to meetings again when the meetings are in person, since they did so before remote meetings were available.

- George M. asked about the content of the outreach we are discussing. Grant A. said it will focus on the EAC. George M. said we collected emails that we can use.
- Grant A. asked if we should make communications a recurring agenda item. The group agreed that this would be good idea. Karyn H. also noted that this is where all of the agenda items come together.
- Grant A. will do a website audit of our info and ID info that needs to be updated. He will try to do this by next month. He can communicate any consolidated audit notes to Karyn H.
- Grant A. suggested we could use Instagram, since it is very popular. Kristin W. supported this; Instagram has a very wide audience.
- Grant A. will also look at our logo and maybe swag. Karyn H. reviewed that the group had looked at creating a recycling sticker and also bags. Grant A. suggested a swag committee would be helpful if people are interested in producing any of these.
- Grant A. asked if there's anything that we want to communicate right now. Steve N. said that based on his and Grant A.'s morning at the Market, finalized info about trash haulers and info about plastic bag recycling locations would be helpful.
- Steve N. said it was very educational for him to do the shift at the Market. He noted that it would be good to share the questions that come up, how many people we interact with, etc. Kristin W. suggested putting this info into a Google doc. Victoria H. will set up the Google doc.
- Karyn H. will work on sharing an EAC folder with the group and we can each add to it.

8) Old/new business

- Steve N. followed up on last month's discussion about the green aspects of the Borough Hall project. Karyn H. said it would be good to take everyone on a tour. It is estimated that we could do this by the end of the year.
- Steve N. asked re: the EAC's role in the project. Karyn H. noted the EAC discussed making the roof solar ready and Dave K. helped secure vehicle chargers for the parking lot.

9) Public Comment

- Dennis L. said he was happy to hear about the Ready for 100 work.

10) Adjournment: Steve N. moved to adjourn the meeting and the meeting was adjourned by common consent at 8:59 pm.

11) Next meeting: The next EAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 7:30 pm.