

Borough of Doylestown

Environmental Advisory Council

Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, July 19, 2022

Attendance: Karen Graziano, Steve Nelson, George Mullikin, Kristin Winters, P.R. West, Grant Alger, Karyn Hyland (Borough staff), Wendy Margolis (Borough Council), Dennis Livrone (Borough Council)

1) **Call to order:** George M. called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

2) **Approval of minutes:** The minutes were approved by common consent.

3) **Single-Use Plastics - Public Outreach:**

- The group reviewed the outreach list that Steve N. had put together to discuss priorities and to start delegating responsibilities.
 - *Dear Businessperson letter.* P.R. W. had drafted the letter to be appropriate to send prior to ordinance adoption, so it is generally ready to go; a second more detailed version will be created and sent after the ordinance is adopted. Karyn H. reminded the group that we discussed making this an invitation to the public meeting, so we need the date of the meeting in the letter. The group agreed we will tentatively target the September EAC meeting on 9/20 as the public meeting date and the meeting time will be 7 pm. The Dear Businessperson letter will be snail-mailed to businesses.
 - *Talking points.* There should be two sets of talking points, one for before the ordinance is adopted (to create support) and one for after (with more info). These will be used when speaking to people in person and for outreach, the website, etc. P.R. W. and Steve N. will work on the talking points.
 - *List of businesses.* Karyn H. said the list for the center of town is nearly complete. The outer areas are also being worked on. She feels they are on track if we want to send the Dear Businessperson letter out in mid August. The business list will be on a spreadsheet.
 - *Supportive/impacted businesses.* Kristin W. uploaded an Excel sheet to the shared Google drive so everyone can edit it. EAC members should include their initials and anecdotal evidence for businesses they have frequented; this is strictly for recording personal experiences with the businesses, not direct visits or discussions with businesses as EAC members. The spreadsheet is not meant to be an official list of businesses' practices or to be publicized; instead it is intended to help us develop talking points to speak generally about the businesses and anticipate where we might seek or provide additional support. Wendy M. said that Mayor West and a Council member have been having some discussions with businesses and getting a sense of what their response will be. Karyn H. said it would probably be helpful to reach out to some businesses that would likely be supportive; they could come to meetings, give feedback, and lend support. The group also decided the anecdotal spreadsheet will not be combined with the business list spreadsheet, which could become unwieldy.
 - *Community business organizations.* George M., Grant A., and Steve N. will meet with the community/business organizations. Wendy M. and Dennis L. will help with this, too. This will

occur after the first letter goes out, and they will probably meet in the first week or two of September. The groups are Discover Doylestown, the Farmers' Market, the Car Show organizers, and the local merchants association.

- *Website info.* Grant A. showed the group a website for Delaware's recent plastic carryout bag ban. The group agreed it contains good info and could contain resources for consumers and providers (retailers) of plastic bags. The first info to go on our website will just be about the public meeting, then we can add more info after the meeting and after Council adopts the ordinance. Grant A. shared the info he is putting together; it can be more general to start (why we are considering the ban, when the meeting is, etc.), then can have more info later. Karyn H. showed the group the News/Information section of the Borough website; the public meeting will be announced here and will be put on the public meeting schedule. More detailed info would go on the EAC web page under the Environmental Info link; Grant A. noted that the info he's been writing would go here. P.R. W. asked about the wording for the News/Info page, and the group agreed that the letter has a lot of the info that would be helpful for this posting; Grant A., P.R. W., and Wendy M. will put the info together and Karyn will review it one more time before posting. Wendy M. also noted that there should be a contact person listed and she said we can put her contact info there. Grant A. noted that the plastics info on the EAC page is 4 years old and should be updated; Wendy M. will review it and provide input. Grant A. also noted that the Delaware website includes posters; we could perhaps have a contest (maybe school students) to create our own poster, and will discuss this after adoption.
- *Dmail.* This info will be fairly similar to what is on the News/Info page. Grant A., P.R. W., and Wendy M. will develop this as well.
- *Press release.* Again, this will be similar to the News/Info page. Grant A. is developing a press release. P.R. W. will find info about studies.
- *Prioritizing businesses for 1:1 conversations.* George M. will do this.
- *Informally contact businesses.* See the outreach spreadsheet.
- *Farmers' Market.* Karen G. said we can set up a table to provide info before the public meeting. She can pick a date beforehand; she'll send it out to the group to see if anyone else can help. The Art Fest is the second weekend in September. We could potentially do a table 8/27 and then 9/17. We are looking to get the Dear Businessperson letter out the 2nd or 3rd week of August (perhaps 8/15 or 8/16), so this fits with the market. The letter date also allows Enviro and Rec to discuss it at their August meeting. Dennis L. said he as a Council member will sit at the market table to help answer questions.
- *Remainder of spreadsheet list.* The remaining items will occur after the next EAC meeting.
- George M. noted we should start working on the presentation for the public meeting soon. Steve N. said he will be one of the speakers and he can create an outline. Karen G. said she can make the presentation look professional on Power Point, and Kristin W. said she can also help if needed.
- Karyn H. noted that the info should be very straightforward, probably a bulleted list. She will be at the meeting to help answer questions.
- Steve N. will have the outline for the group to review at the August meeting. The length of the presentation will be about 20 minutes, so there should be no more than 20 slides (probably fewer). Grant A. noted that Haverford's presentation is in the shared drive for reference. Wendy M. noted that pictures of bags (allowed/not allowed) should be included, and we could bring bag examples to the public meeting.
- The purpose of our August meeting will be to discuss the public meeting. Karen G. said we should have the presentation as done as possible by the August meeting for review as well.
- Wendy M. said we need to consider that mostly people who are against the ordinance may show up to the public meeting; we should be prepared for that.

- The 9/20 public meeting at 7 pm will be structured basically like an EAC meeting. Karyn H. will make sure we have nameplates. Karen G. noted we should invite neighbors/friends. Kristin W. asked about the meeting minutes; Karyn H. suggested and the group agreed that a staff person will take the minutes of the public meeting. She also noted that George M. should review at the beginning of the public meeting the procedure for attendees to participate in the meeting.

4) Reports:

- **Farmers' Market Report:**

- Karen G. reported there was a great turnout at the Master Gardeners table, and she brought some EAC materials. She spoke to about 40 people directly about their garden issues. She is going to ask Bird Town if they want to be at the 8/6 table.
- There was a soil scientist at the table one week who provided info about Doylestown soils. On 8/6 the Master Gardeners will be discussing invasive plants and will have samples.
- The Master Gardeners table is not currently at the Farmers' Market every week, but the schedule will be more regular in the future.
- George M. asked about additional upcoming topics, and Karen G. said that when Alex (Farmers' Market representative) sends market info out she includes a summary of the Master Gardeners table topics.
- Wendy M. suggested we could bring samples of bags (perhaps mounted on foamboard) to the market to show what is allowed/not allowed under the ordinance when we are ready to do this, and the group agreed this is a good idea.

- **Outreach & Communication Report**

- Grant A. said George M. sent updated DEP recycling info which will be uploaded to the website.
- Grant A. met with Heidi Shiver and Jim Baldassari re: the Township's work on plastic bags to share info. They discussed that there may be an issue with how much retailers have to charge for reusable bags; what we wrote is meant to capture paper bags, so we may need to look at this if the issue is raised.

- **Bird Town Report**

- Kristin W. will keep the group updated re: a fall bird walk. Karen G. will ask Heidi Shiver about the 8/6 table at the Farmers' Market.
- Wendy M. and Karen G. have a lot of Bird Town materials for the market.

- **Comprehensive Plan Update**

- Kristin W. summarized the Borough's July Comprehensive Plan meeting. The two primary topics of discussion were branding and the survey. Kristin W., Grant A., and George M. as well Shade Tree and HARB representatives were in attendance and contributed input re: the survey at the meeting. George M. had also summarized the EAC's priorities from our last EAC meeting and sent them to the Borough Planning Commission prior to the comp plan meeting. During the comp plan meeting the survey questions were edited and further developed, and the EAC members in attendance were satisfied with the way our group's priorities were captured in the questions. The survey will be sent to anyone connected to the Borough, including business owners.
- The next comp plan meeting is the second Tuesday in August (8/9) at 7:30 pm. Steve N. will plan to attend, and Kristin W. will attend if he is unavailable. The survey questions will be finalized at this meeting.

5) Old/New Business:

- **DEP Local Climate Action Plan Update**

- George M. summarized this plan, which we had discussed at the last meeting; we had said if staff were able to support it, we could proceed. Karyn H. and George M. met with the DEP

liaison to discuss the LCAP. They had a good meeting and came to understand that this will be a significant undertaking.

- George M. said the first half of the LCAP program year should be fairly straightforward; his primary concern is the second half of the program year involving community engagement and time spent meeting with stakeholders (utilities, wastewater, business community, residents, etc.). We want not just to inform but to engage them, perhaps to help draft the plan. He noted that the first half (research) is more doable; we need to determine if we have the manpower/resources to complete the second half of the year. It may crowd out other things we are committed to and will be a lot of work. George M. and Karyn H. summarized:
 - Reasons against:
 - Requires a lot of time
 - More challenging for a community like ours because we're ahead of the curve and we've already tackled the low-hanging fruit (DEP likes goals to align with State goals); e.g. the Borough already converted the streetlights to LED; things we want to implement will be more challenging and expensive
 - Reasons for:
 - Important enough that it should crowd out other projects
 - Encompasses a lot of our goals/concerns
 - We've waited a long time to do something about climate change and we need to act
 - Comp plan may benefit from our participation
 - We know the Township wants to work with us/can share resources; a combined group may help us get the attention of others like utilities and connect to resources that we want to invite in for info
 - There is not a requirement for the draft plan to be done at a particular time (although the students are only available for the school year); DEP said it's expected that we would go past the time frame and even if we can't complete the community engagement within the time frame we can prep for it (to occur afterwards); also, the DEP continues to serve as a resource for communities after the students are gone
- Karyn H. noted the DEP said most municipalities opt to address operational goals (not private property goals), so it's not for the entire Borough in that sense.
- The group discussed whether the LCAP would benefit the comprehensive plan. Dennis L. and Steve N. said that in their experience a comprehensive plan can go as deep into topics as we want it to. We should communicate with the Borough Planning Committee (rather than the County PC) regarding the LCAP if we apply for it.
- George M. noted that our participation in this project would show that the Borough is addressing the most important topic, climate change. Steve N. added it provides an opportunity for public education and that everyone in the Borough can have an impact.
- Wendy M. noted that there are tasks coming up for the Borough (such as new water standards from the State) that will require a lot of staff time. The comprehensive plan, rather than the LCAP, may be the way to address climate change so the Borough can balance its manpower resources.
- Karen G. said a benefit of doing the LCAP is that it may help support the comprehensive plan. Grant A. said the Middletown LCAP looks really useful. Dennis L. said it would be helpful to provide education to the public.
- Karyn H. noted it would be useful, but the question is will the Borough get enough out of it to justify the time? Karen G. asked what would be set aside, and Karyn H. described as an example some projects Public Works would like the EAC's help with on Borough properties. She

also said that John Davis, the Borough manager, felt that next year might be a more appropriate target for applying for the LCAP. Staff will put in the time needed if we apply, but it will be a significant amount of work. Steve N. said he would be willing to work with George M. to put the time in on the project and he has experience with similar plans. The group discussed the pros and cons of the LCAP, including the importance of involving the community. Kristin W. noted that she will certainly support the project if the group votes for it, but that based on everyone's input she was uncertain whether or not it is the best use of our group's and staff's time.

- George M. made a motion that the group apply for the LCAP, Steve N. seconded. The motion passed with 5 yay votes and 1 abstention (Kristin W.).

- **Other**

- Wendy M. said the New York Times had an article about light trespass. She is planning to work on a resolution to educate people about the problem. The group discussed instances of light trespass/light pollution in the Borough and how they have been addressed..
- Wendy M. also raised the topic of gas-powered lawn mowers/leaf blowers. Karen G. said Chevy Chase, MD, provided incentives for residents to convert to non-gas-powered tools, and it worked. Providing education to residents would be important; this could potentially be done at the Farmers' Market. Karyn H. and Kristin W. noted the discussion should include that some situations require more power than battery-operated tools generally provide.
- The group agreed to continue discussing both of these topics.

6) Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by common consent at 8:27 pm.

Next meeting: The next EAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 16, 2022, at 5:30 pm.