

Borough of Doylestown

Environmental Advisory Council

Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, January 15, 2019

Attendance: Mike Moscherosch, Karyn Hyland, Kristin Winters, George Mullikin, James Baldassarre (Doylestown Township EAC), Neal Gale (Abington Township EAC, representing Ready for 100), Joe Wallace, Steve Rubenstein

1) Call to Order: Mike M. called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

2) Approval of Minutes: Joe W. needs to be added to the attendance list for the November 2018 meeting. Joe W. made a motion to approve the minutes as otherwise written, Mike M. seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved with the change noted.

3) Presentation:

Ready for 100 Initiative

- James B. said Bill Sabey had visited their EAC to discuss the Ready for 100 Initiative. The Doylestown Township EAC has gotten started on the initiative and wanted to talk to other local EACs about it. 2035 is the time frame.
- Neal G. noted that he would be presenting the Ready for 100 information to our group for Bill S., since Bill S. was at his own EAC meeting tonight.
- Neal G. described Ready for 100's tenet that it is possible to address climate changes and its impacts. The Initiative's message is being spread throughout this area. Ready for 100 is based on a combination of increasing efficiency and switching to renewable energy. The group supports communities with their local goals.
- Mike M. asked how a community defines its emissions targets, and Neal G. said this has to be individualized for each community. There are ways to figure out a baseline and build on it, so the community has somewhere to start. James B. described how there could be a regional energy transitional plan, assisted by experts in the field.
- There are other plans that have other numbers besides 2035 and 2050, but the idea is to give communities a framework to use. Neal G. feels very optimistic about this program, with its emphasis on taking one step at a time and maintaining focus. He noted that support for converting to renewable energy in PA is bipartisan.
- Our group would need to talk to Borough Council to implement the initiative. Ready for 100 has worked with all different types of community groups to give them the tools to work towards these goals. There are many other local communities and community groups discussing or working with the initiative, including 4 Central Bucks schools and 1 Quakertown school.
- Ready for 100 can provide groups with sample resolutions. As the process gets started, more people in the community come on board. An example would be an energy transition plan; while developing our local plan, we could use many other communities' plans to help us get started. All of this leads to action in various forms. An important part of the initiative is maintaining justice and equity among the members of the community. Communication with stakeholders is key. The initiative can be implemented using a phased/step by step approach – it doesn't have to all happen at once.

- Mike M. noted that cost savings can be an important part of such an initiative. Neal G. confirmed cost savings are a good way to illustrate the benefits of the plan.
- One community's example is the plan for Philadelphia through their Office of Sustainability, which is a highly developed plan. Help is available; often the more highly developed plans have been created in coordination with consultants.
- We can contact Neal G. and Bill S. with questions.
- Karyn H. noted that the Borough has hired an energy transition consultant (Johnson Controls). The Borough's been working on several programs - converting to LED lights, for instance, and the incentive program for construction projects. The Borough started the process in the mid-2000s for Borough-owned facilities. We have an active community. Karyn H. noted we have a solar protection ordinance limiting the height of buildings for solar panel protection. She mentioned that the Borough was accepted for the Sol Smart program; we're two check marks away from silver, and qualifying would make us eligible for some resources and give us publicity. Kristin W. noted that we could perhaps include some of this info in a column in the newsletter.
- The group discussed what Ready for 100 can do for us at this point. One suggestion is help with the development of a resolution for the Borough Council to review and adopt to emphasize our commitment. It would also be good for residents to see the things that are already happening in the Borough.
- James B. noted that the Doylestown Township group is interested in partnering with someone at Delaware Valley University to help them with resources and a long-term plan, and on a long-term basis. He noted that PECO is talking to them about rebates and conservation, they're learning from the Montgomery County EAC community, and they're talking to energy transition consultants at the CB schools.
- Mike M. asked if there is a list of what communities are doing, as well as what worked/didn't work to use as a resource. Neal G. will send us this info.
- Sierra Club involvement is primarily local at this point. James B. noted that many EACs in this area are very active and are doing a lot. Neal G. noted that the groups don't get together on projects very often; having an opportunity to work regionally on something like this makes a lot of sense. There will be an EAC organizational meeting in April for EACs from all around the state. James B. said there will be a local meeting in June this year; it was at DVC last year.

4) Old Business:

Maplewood Meadow

- Joe W. brought sample signage he created. The signs avoid the use of word meadow and emphasize other functions of the space.
- The sign is well designed for the public, with the words "in progress" emphasizing that the project will take some time. The group really liked the design of the sign, including the colors used and its readability. It will be 18"x12".
- The group liked the sign with more info on it, such as stormwater management and pollinator habitat. It was agreed that fossil fuel reduction will be removed to reduce the chances that some might view the sign negatively. This is really designed for the public - "in progress" emphasizes that the project will take time.
- Public works will be able to make the sign.

- Mike M. asked if the sign needs to be approved, and Karyn H. said the cost will need to be approved by Council.
- Right now we may be able to mark off the squares to leave unmowed; Karyn H. will follow up on this.
- Kristin W. noted it would be helpful to see what grows in the unmowed areas for a year. This information will help with planning and the maintenance program, which Kristin W. will develop.
- The group asked if Council approves of the signage and proceeding, can we go ahead and leave the areas unmowed and put up signs? Karyn H. would like us to get feedback from Council. It's likely we may be able to do this for the previously described test areas/assessment areas this year, but we'll stay tuned.

Recycling label

- Joe W. created a sample recycling label working off of the samples we viewed at the last meeting. The group agreed that the graphics of the labels look good and they contain helpful information. Joe W. will increase the font size and will add to avoid recycling soiled food containers like pizza containers. The phrase "if in doubt throw it out" will also be added.
- The group discussed how food contamination of items means that some recycleable items end up in the trash at the facility, since they can't be processed. On the other hand, overwashing items is also not environmentally friendly, since it uses water (often hot water) and cleansers.
- The group discussed some other items that could be mentioned in a letter accompanying the label, so the label itself can be kept simple. Information included in the letter could address plastic bag recycling, electronics recycling, and avoiding overwashing food containers, for example.
- Karyn H. noted that she did not hear back from her contact, so we weren't able to meet the grant deadline.
- The group also discussed the availability of local sites to which residents could bring their recycling, rather than using single stream recycling. There may be a site in Wrightstown, but nobody in the group was aware of any other local drop-off locations. Residents can search "Bucks County Recycling" to try to get more info about this. The group noted that often it may be more environmentally friendly to just use the single stream recycling rather than driving a vehicle to a drop-off location.

5) Adjournment: George M. moved to adjourn the meeting, and Joe W. seconded that motion. The meeting was adjourned by common consent at 9:00 pm.

6) Next Meeting: The next EAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 19, 2019 at 7:30 pm in the Doylestown Borough Hall.