

**Abington Township
Environmental Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes for July 8, 2020**

Call to Order: 7:31 pm

Attendees:

Members: Cakky Evans (CE), Michele Kaczalek (MK), Karin McGarry-Rosen (KMR), Sue Myerov (SM), John Sorrentino (JSo), Jim Webb (JW)

Associate Members: Neal Gale (NG), David Bell (DB)

Others Present: Ashley McIlvaine (AM, AT Communications Manager)

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the June 2020 meeting were approved.
2. **Amendments to the Agenda** – None
3. **Reports:**
 - A. Chairperson’s Report – Approved
 - B. Treasurer’s Report – Approved
4. **Committee Reports:**
 - A. Policy – Approved
 - B. Programs – Approved
 - C. Engagement – Approved
5. **Active Business**
 - A. **Sustainable Abington/USGBC LEED for Cities Program/Grant Award:** AM and CE will schedule a zoom session with our USGBC contact to review issues requiring assistance on the Crosswalk/Project Plan for effective roll out, a press release about the grant award, and a possible video for the Township TV. Issues include whether the LEED for Cities will accept the 2015 DVRPC Abington community greenhouse gas inventory. CE is seeking student intern assistance.
 - B. **Comprehensive Plan updates: EAC Sustainability and Equity Resources for Vision 2035 Comp Plan**

As per AM's recommendation, CE submitted this compendium of sustainability and equity best practices for developing comp plans to Rita Stevens, Mike Narcowich, and SM for the Vision 2035 Comprehensive Plan. The EAC advised that the compendium should be reviewed and prioritized with a subset of the most valuable/useful resources and tools. SM will review the APA listed resources and CE will update the latest version and confer with SM about how to present to the Comp Plan team. One best practice is the Albany, NY comp plan including a climate action plan and other sustainability elements that NY State noted as high impact in its Climate Smart Communities Certification program.
 - C. **Development Plan Reviews:** Nothing to report.
 - D. **Energy Initiatives:**
 - CDP 2020 Cities Disclosure Questionnaire: CE reported that the disclosure is due August 26. Due to the current priorities of our LEED for Cities recertification and developing a Township Clean Energy Plan through the Ready For 100 training program, she plans to rely as much as possible on the 2019 disclosure. Ashley agreed that this sounds reasonable. CE added that it would be helpful if the BOC were to pass the Climate Collaborative of Greater Philadelphia Resolution before the due date. A discussion ensued about upgrading the resolution's GHG reduction targets from the 2015 Paris Accord (80% by 2050) goals to the 2018 IPCC GHG reduction targets (including net-zero by 2050). The EAC decided that resolution be revised with the IPCC target. CE will revise the resolution as needed and submit revisions for the EAC to approve.
 - Ready for 100 updates: Community Energy Plan for Prosperity and Resilience Opportunity (CEPPR) - NG & CE provided an overview of this opportunity and CE, NG, MK, JS, and JSo have agreed to serve as the project team. The team requirements are to attend weekly trainings and complete assignments provided by Rf100. Rf100 is offering this program to municipalities or community environmental organizations with the goal of each participating entity creating a community energy strategic plan for electrification aspects by mid-November. The cost is only \$50 and requires the Township to release energy data. While the EAC could serve as the official signer for the CEPPR agreement form, it would be more advantageous for the Township be the sponsor to best assess energy consumption and make efficiency and clean energy recommendations. AM, MK, and CE will attend sessions on the data submission and other requirements in order for the Township to make an informed decision.
 - E. **Rain Barrel program:** KMG discussed plans to purchase RB components in the near future and the need to acquire more drums to meet orders. KMG also discussed doing another virtual rain barrel workshop.
6. **New Business:**
 - A. PA Municipal League June 23, 2020 Sustainability Conference – CE shared the salient opportunities, including climate action/mitigation funding from the US Army Corps of Engineers, PA DEP local climate action support, and the equity toolkit and resources for developing equity policies and practices. She will share the Army Corps grant info with the STC and AM.

- B. **PA DEP Local Climate Action Program (LCAP) Opportunity** – Montgomery County, through the Montgomery County Consortium of Municipalities, will be one of the 20 jurisdictions to receive extensive technical assistance and student support to develop a community greenhouse gas inventory this fall and a climate action plan next spring. If there are no other sufficient municipal or regional governmental interests spread out across the Commonwealth, then the Township might be able to be selected for this program. If not selected, LCAP will provide free access to ICLEI's Clearpath GHG tool to any municipality for free but without student support and technical assistance. The EAC has agreed to pursue the more extensive DEP opportunity. The Township must agree to participate and CE will follow-up with AM once the LCAP DEP liaison notifies CE toward the end of July. CE will explore local colleges and universities for student support.
- C. **Draft EAC Equity Statement** - CE shared that many other environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club/RF100, Wissahickon Trails, the USGBC, and local affiliate, Green Building United, have published equity statements. The EAC agreed that she should draft an EAC statement.
- D. **MOM's Organic Market donation offer** - EAC agreed that we cannot accept a donation offer under the terms and conditions set forth by this organization. JW will connect MOM's contact with Township Manager, R. Manfredi, to see if there are other Township-related entities that could work legally with them.

7. **Citizens' Comments** – None to report.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm

Next Meeting – August 12, 2020 ([virtual](#))

Acronym Key:

AT – Abington Township

BOC – Board of Commissioners

CDP – Carbon Disclosure Project

CEPPR – Clean Energy Plan for Prosperity and Resilience

CP – Comprehensive Plan

DEP – Department of Environmental Protection

EAC – Environmental Advisory Council

GHG – Greenhouse gas

ICLEI – International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives

LCAP – Local Climate Action Program

LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

PA DEP – Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

RB – Rain barrel

Rf100 – Ready for 100

USGBC – U.S. Green Building Council