

The stated meeting of the Public Affairs Committee of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Wednesday, February 5, 2020 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA, with Commissioner Bowman presiding.

**CALL TO ORDER:** 7:47 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Commissioners BOWMAN, BRODSKY, LUKER, MYERS, CARSWELL

Township Manager MANFREDI  
Assistant Township Manager WEHMEYER  
Township Solicitor CLARKE  
Director of Engineering MONTGOMERY

Also Present: Commissioners SPIEGELMAN, HECKER, SCHREIBER, ROTHMAN, THOMPSON, BOLE, ZAPPONE, DiPLACIDO, WINEGRAD, VAHEY

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Bowman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Brodsky to approve the minutes of the Public Affairs Committee Meeting of December 4, 2019.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Item PA-02-021320 – Pursue LEED for Cities recertification. Current LEED certification expires in June 2020:

Ms. Cakky Evans, EAC member, said in 2016 LEED for Cities certified Abington Township as a sustainable community and a high level summary of Abington’s STAR Communities assessment was presented. STAR Communities merged with the USGBC (United States Green Building Council) in 2018 and the Township’s STAR certification will expire in 2020. USGBC’s new LEED for Cities began in 2018 and recommended applying for a grant from USGBC/Bank of America funding for cities. This process would be in sync with Vision 2035 Comp Plan development process. Assessment encompasses economic and social indicators; however, LEED for Cities is more weighted on environmental aspects especially energy. Prerequisites of the program were also presented along with credits, strategies and outcomes.

Commissioner Bowman asked who funds the grants?

Ms. Evans replied Bank of America and they require one of their branches to be located in the municipality and we have one.

Commissioner Bowman asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Thompson commented that LEED is losing traction in the market, which is a sustainability rating system mainly focused on the built-environment and not necessarily the community itself, and he asked the EAC to look for other options of rating systems that are more holistic in terms of our community.

Ms. Evans replied she has done that. WELL Building Standard for communities is more about how the building interacts with the environment and requires one WELL registered building; however, it is still in pilot. In terms of sustainability, she feels LEED is the way to go and it is a good program.

Commissioner Thompson noted that WELL has other interesting categories called, MIND, which provides access to mental healthcare, substance abuse and addiction services and access to green spaces, so it is more of a holistic system that we should consider before committing to renewing LEED status. He would like the EAC to make a comparison between LEED and WELL and then make recommendation to the Board of Commissioners.

Ms. Evans replied she has done that analysis and LEED is her recommendation as of now.

Commissioner Carswell asked for the purpose of the rating systems and about the grant.

Ms. Evans replied it is an assessment to look at best practices. The grant is from Bank of America that would save money in recertification; however, if we want to recertify without the grant, it will go to the USGBC because there is an entire verification process.

Item PA-01-021320 – Resolution No. 20-007 – Circuit Trails – Complete 500 miles of Trails in the Greater Philadelphia Region by 2025:

Manager Manfredi said this is a request by the MCPC with DVRPC as a resolution of support for circuit trail system 500 miles with signage to be installed by Public Works Department as necessary.

Commissioner Bowman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Luker to adopt Resolution No. 20-007 supporting – Circuit Trails – Complete 500 miles of Trails in the Greater Philadelphia Region by 2025 by committing Abington Township to do all that it should as part of that plan.

Commissioner Bowman asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Myers questioned whether this is the plan that was presented a few years ago.

Manager Manfredi replied no. It is a separate plan by the County.

Assistant Township Manager Wehmeyer added that this plan is different from the Walk, Park, Train Plan.

Commissioner Myers said she is in favor of trails and suggested that the Board see where this trail will be in Abington prior to voting on it.

Manager Manfredi replied they would show us before installing signage and this resolution is to support it and nothing more. He will ask for a trail map.

Commissioner Bowman withdrew his motion on the floor and the second on the motion was also withdrawn.

Commissioner Bowman made a MOTION to TABLE this matter until further notice, seconded by Commissioner Luker.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT - general matters relating to Public Affairs.**

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, commented that she asked about Manor Woods as well as contingency expenses and she did not get an answer.

Manager Manfredi said in regards to the matter of LEED recertification; will the committee be taking any action?

Commissioner Bowman made a MOTION to TABLE the LEED recommendation - Item PA-02-021320 for further information on cost of the other program mentioned by Commissioner Thompson, seconded by Commissioner Luker.

Vice President Hecker said Township filed for the grant application and notice will be provided within two weeks and we would need to respond by March 1<sup>st</sup> as to whether or not to accept the grant. He agreed with Commissioner Thompson to study which certification the Township should be aligned with going forward, but why stop the process now until we make a determination, and if recertification is essentially free as a result of this grant, he would not want to put a “stop” to all of the work that the EAC has done while we figure out what we want to do going forward. He suggested allowing this to move forward and then request that the EAC come back before the Board with defined recommendation.

Commissioner Thompson shared sentiment of Vice President Hecker to move forward with it.

Commissioner Bowman withdrew his motion to TABLE and the second on that motion was also withdrawn.

Commissioner Bowman made a MOTION in support of LEED recertification and to apply for the grant, seconded by Commissioner Carswell.

President Spiegelman echoed sentiments of Vice President Hecker and Commissioner Thompson in support of moving this forward as well.

Commissioner Bowman asked for any public comments.

Ms. Evans said she will need assistance as there is a difference between WELL certification for buildings and as opposed to WELL for communities.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Minutes Secretary