

Minutes
Allentown EAC Meeting
May 11, 2020

Attending: Tinku, Holly Edinger (time keeper), Alejandra Soler, David Melman Elisabeth Cicohonski, Faran Savitz, Stephanie Wein, Jennifer Swann (Secretary and note taker).

Welcome and Introductions

Minutes from the April meeting were approved

Reports on Goals:

- **Micro-mobility** — Draft resolution for City Council and next steps -- Liz and Dave are still working on the draft. Tinku and Kalyna have met with Public Works and Joe McMahon to discuss how to move this forward with city council. Public Works seems supportive and should be consulted before moving forward.
- **Muhlenberg Internships** — (Tinku) -- Carbon inventory is on hold. PADEP has indicated they will accommodate any additional time we need. The delay may affect the plan to start in the fall and finish in the spring.
- **Building 21 Project** — (Tinku) – Remains on hold as students must stay at home and work digitally. Discussion to remove it from EAC's 2019 goals as this project cannot be done digitally. **Unanimous vote to remove.**
- **Park Spark Project** - (Jennifer) -- Jennifer will get back to Rudy Shankar about the project to see if he is interested in starting in the fall.
- **Community Gardens** — (Alejandra) -- Tina Amado keeps a running list of the location and state of the community gardens in Allentown. Alejandra is more interested in finding and connecting those volunteers interested in starting a garden. Irene Woodward may be able to help with this through Vision 2030.
- **Single Use Plastics** — (Alejandra) -- Proposal for the business certification – to create a city wide 3 step process to reduce single use plastics. Will create a directory of businesses that meet the criteria. Second step is for each business to create its own plan for reducing single use plastics. The EAC could work with businesses to help them with their plans. Third step is verification that the business is following its plan. Need to create a list of individuals (Lehigh ambassadors or students) who can conduct the inspections to see if they have achieved their goals and if not, to provide the resources necessary to achieve their goals. Wein offered to put us in touch with those in Philly with experience and will share plans from others. A certificate of recognition from the mayor may be a good incentive. Elisabeth invited Alejandra to the Bethlehem EAC to explain the plan and to align programs. Public is interested in reducing waste and plastic bags. Alejandra would like to meet with the chamber of commerce or the Lehigh valley business council. Liz has the contacts with the Allentown Chamber of Commerce so Alejandra will meet with Liz to strategize next steps. Incentives are less problematic than a ban. The state currently has a prohibition on municipal bans of single use plastics. Such bans could

also violate the ADA. For example, some people with disabilities may need plastic straws. Some ordinances include “on request ordinances” to allow people to request straws.

Stephanie Wein – knowledge of what we are doing is helpful in moving forward across the nation. As part of Environment America (removed Styrofoam cups in several cities) the field they work in is ordinances. It took 200 cities and counties to sign on in order for the state to take action. Incentives are good – need both the carrot and the stick. Should apply to all businesses so that no one business incurs the cost. July 2nd there will be a move to renew the state prohibition of bans on plastic bags.

Tinku – perhaps fees could be incorporated into the program but this would be a long term battle. EAC would ask the students to do the work that had to be done and not require resources from Public Works.

Jennifer – would like a fine on straws and plastic bags

David – would like us to look at Styrofoam and hospitals as well

- **Keep Allentown Beautiful** — (Liz) not present - no discussion
- **Environmental Data Reporting and Climate Action Plan** (Tinku) -- no further discussion has been had with ACEE and CDP. Materials from the all EAC conference included a survey by PA DEP which the Allentown EAC can do as a group. So we will do this at the June meeting
- **Public Awareness of EAC** (Alejandra) -- other EAC's are using a variety of social media to communicate. Alejandra would like to be able to text the members. (Holly will collect phone number so she can create a group text). Also any pictures of members activities would also help.
- **Updates to EAC Bylaws and Ordinance** and next steps (Tinku). Motion to approve recommended changes passed. Next steps are for David to contact City Council and Tinku to contact the Mayor's office to officially change the ordinance.

Reports from EAC liaisons:

- **Parks and Recreation** (Jennifer) - no meeting scheduled. Tinku will send the mayor a note to see if we can meet with her second in command
- **Public Works** (Liz not present) – Jennifer read the notes below
Some updates which may interest the EAC include:
Bulk trash collection is suspended until further notice. (See first attachment).
All Spring educational outreach events have been cancelled to include: Envirothon, Hydromania, Earth Day.
Engineering is working on an emergency repair of the Lehigh Canal – timeline TBD.
Status of plan review for Barnes Lane – still has not been reviewed by the LCCD, the approving authority for SWM/SC.
Status of EPA Administrative Order Projects.
 - This is an item on City Council's Agenda on Wednesday, 4/15.
Click: <https://allentownpa.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> [allentownpa.legistar.com]
 - See also the second and third attachments.
- **City Council** (Dave) has not attended – will do so when the shelter in place is lifted.
- **Planning Commission** (Holly)

- **Barnes lane**- Alejandra will attend to remind them that the EAC will weigh in again once the environmental issues are addressed.
- **Holly** – tomorrow the planning commission will address the Atiyeah and Rohrbach properties to re-designate it as a non-conforming parcel. (neighborhood is very active and may attend). Rather than doing this one at a time, we should add to our agenda the zoning map for 20-21 to see the big picture.
- **Tinku** - The planning commission is required to check with the EAC as the zoning comes up but they do not. We should press our lack of city presence on the EAC with the mayor. EAC should also be part of the Allentown 2030 zoning review.

Old Business:

Atiyeah and Rohrbach properties (Tinku — 1 minutes) – discussed above

Barnes Lane — (Tinku - 1 minute) – discussed above

New Business

- **Food Waste — Elisabeth Cichonski** Easton market has a Food waste bin. Idea was to have participants bring their food waste to the market drop it off and then pick up fresh produce. She is trying to connect with American bio-solids to get pricing to see if this something that restaurants would want to connect with or if this a community food waste plan. Easton does not like having food waste at compost center.
 - **Tinku** – could talk to Anne Saurman to see about programs in the city of Allentown that would incorporate food waste in hauling and disposal with waste management – not sure when contract comes up for renewal
 - **Motion made and passed that food waste reduction be a 2020 goal for the EAC.**
 - **Alejandra** – would there be an industrial composter?
 - **This will be on the agenda for June (Jennifer, Alejandra and Holly are the committee)**

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM