

Allentown EAC
June 8, 2020 Minutes

Meeting was convened at 5:20 PM.

Present - Jennifer Swann, Alejandra Soler, Arundhati Khanwalkar, Josh Siegel, Joe McMahon (City Council representative), Holly Edinger, David Melman

Welcome and Introductions

May Minutes were unanimously approved

Reports on Goals:

•**Micro-mobility** — Progress was halted by the COVID stay at home order. Now that city council is having regular meetings, Josh will make sure that a resolution will get to city council once we have a working document.

⇒ **Liz and David will draft a resolution for review.**

•**Muhlenberg Internships** — Tinku and Kalyna met with Joe McMahon and members of Public Works Department. Craig Messinger and Joe McMahon would like to see the business case for Allentown to enter into partnerships with vendors who would provide dockless bikes, etc. They suggested to keep the scope small enough, identify where is the low-hanging fruit, likely route to success. Developing the business case could be a good project for a Muhlenberg intern. However, there has been no progress due to COVID,

•**Park Spark Project** — Jennifer - Need students for this project. Tinku and Jennifer met with professor Shankar before the shut down and he was quite interested.

⇒ **Jennifer will follow-up with Professor Shankar.**

•**Community Gardens** — Alejandra – knows a beekeepers who could teach classes without compensation. While the plans for the community gardens were scrapped because we lacked the resources, this might be possible since it will require less space and upkeep.

⇒ **Alejandra will put a plan together to bring to the monthly meeting with Parks and Rec**

•**Single Use Plastics** —

- Mark Pinsley is pushing an ordinance for the county on a fee based approach. The EAC is taking a different tactic and working on an incentive based approach.
- The EAC plan has 3 stages – The first stage is the plastics assessment questionnaire that each business fills out. Once completed they will receive a certificate from the city signifying, they have met the standards. During the second stage businesses set their own goals to reduce their consumption. In stage 3 businesses will be inspected to see if they have met their goals.
- First and second stage are digital, no funding is needed. The third stage will require leg work. For this we will include students from Muhlenberg. They will need to be accompanied by others – students were not well respected in this role in Bethlehem. It was suggested that there are grants available for this and we should apply for them.

- When the proposal is ready, Alejandra will make a presentation at City Council following an introduction by Dave.
- Holly suggested that the next step is to discuss this with Ann Saurman (waste removal) to insure we have staff support.
- Joe suggested we look into what other cities have done with businesses (the closer the better) and add this to the benefits to the environment to support our work. Could start with a pilot stage.

⇒ There was discussion about the need for more action on riparian buffers particularly along the stream at cedar beach park. A preliminary decision was made to include this as a 2021 goal. An EAC lead on the goal would need to be determined.

Keep Allentown Beautiful — Liz – not present so no report.

•**Environmental Data Reporting and Climate Action Plan** — Tinku reported no progress since the shutdown. Joe suggested Tinku meet with Irene Woodward and Ann Saurman in solid waste and someone from planning. Tinku and Alejandra will coordinate to reach out to them.

•**Public Awareness of EAC** — Alejandra suggested that this be removed as a regular meeting item. There is not much to do. If something is happening those involved should send pictures to Alejandra to post.

- Are there tabling events or other things that can bring people in?
- Is our link shared on other websites eg. Audobon?

•**Updates to EAC Bylaws and Ordinance and next steps** — Tinku and Dave - Will meet with Josh to review the amendments and then Josh will meet with Cece to see if she will be willing to cosponsor the amendments. Then the amendments will go to the floor for a vote.

•**Josh will also check into city council's vote to approve Holly's appointment to the EAC.**

•**Food Waste** — Alejandra, Jennifer and Holly - deferred for discussion next month. Note the shut down and low gas prices makes it difficult to generate the capital necessary to turn food waste into energy. Adding waste to our digester will increase the cost.

Reports from EAC Liaisons:

•**Parks and Recreation** — Jennifer – has been unable to schedule a meeting with Karen El Chaar. Perhaps should meet with Rick Holtzman. Joe McMahon can make the introductions.

•**Public Works** — Liz was to have regular meetings with public works but there have been no meetings since the shut down. However, public works has provided status reports via email to the EAC. These reports included information about an RFP that the City will be issuing for green infrastructure. Tinku asked whether anyone on the EAC would be interested in leading an EAC review of these projects. As there was insufficient interest, this will not be added to the EAC's 2020 goals at this time.

•**City Council** — Dave - No council meeting June 1st. Next meeting is June 15th

⇒ **Dave will attend**

- **Planning Commission** — Holly - Nothing pertinent to the EAC was on their agenda.

Old Business:

EAC Review of Zoning Map — Tinku noted that the Vision 2030 report has included conducting a comprehensive review and revision of the City's zoning map. We need to go over that with Leonard's office. The Allentown EAC has not been plugged into the zoning review yet. Looking into zoning that compliments economic development and does not overburden the infrastructure. Livable city is built into vision 2030. Josh will check with Leonard to make sure the EAC is involved moving forward. Holly will be our point person for this.

City representation on EAC — Tinku confirmed with Josh that he will be the liaison from city council.

New Business

- **Joe will send the link to PML sustainability so that Alejandra can make progress**

Next meeting July 13th.

Meeting adjourned at 6:38.