

Allentown EAC
Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2021, 5:15 PM via WebEx

Welcome and Introductions

- EAC Members: Tinku Khanwalkar, Jennifer Swann, David Melman, Dieter Kretschy, Holly Edinger
 - Guests: Rep. Peter Schweyer, Karen El-Charr, Lynn Rothman, Maria Ocasio
 - Other attendees: Ali Long, Ashling Wahner, Francesca Jones, Jess Bice, Kyle Ropski, Lacey Pasco, Chris Stroehler, Jane Benning
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- Open Forum with Rep. Schweyer. Rep. Schweyer was on City Council when the EAC was established and wanted to be able to talk to the group about key environmental legislative topics. First mentioned is RGGI which the governor is working to implement without the support of the legislature. Without legislative action the next governor can overturn this action. The AEPS is another way to affect the energy mix in the Commonwealth and thus affect GHG emissions. Rep. Schweyer supports updating the AEPS to increase the requirement for renewables (solar, hydro and other good ideas) and that is generated here in PA. Electric Vehicles are also going to come into the market and we have PA manufacturers (Mack) that will benefit from the expansion of EV's and so we need to do work on charging stations and statewide planning. We need to plan for how EV's may affect the tax revenue that the state uses to pay for roads and bridges because these taxes are generated by a fuel tax which will decrease with more EV's being used.
EAC's can and should support legislative efforts at the state level and help local communities understand how the environmental issues can impact their lives.
 - Review and Approval of February Minutes
 - Approved

Old Business

- Submission of 2020 Accomplishments to City Council (Tinku)
- 2021 Goals Reports
 1. Waste Minimization (Dieter): No update at this time. We should also consider how trash is handled. Do we need pick up 2 times per week?
 2. Micro-mobility (Jennifer and Jess): Refocus because we were approached by ANIZDA to review/ plan for bike share and working with CBW, CAT, Muhlenberg on a plan. Spoke with LANta coordination on mobility hubs.
 3. Muhlenberg Internship/Climate Action (Tinku and Hannah): GHG inventory report is now drafted, and we will work with the city on how this should be made available to the public. Working with city on website access. Also

now compiling inventory of Allentown climate actions categorized as: completed, underway, being considered, not being considered but should be. Future actions (those being considered or not yet considered but should be) will be prioritized based on level of effort required to take the action. This inventory will form the basis for the City's climate action planning.

4. Park Spark Project (Jennifer): Working with four Lehigh students on a prototype to test the concept in Bethlehem.
 5. EAC Joint Event (Holly and Tinku): Moving ahead with all 3 cities and will highlight volunteer opportunities, to be held Earth Day. Chris Stroehler from Wildlands will coordinate involvement.
 6. Create an internship list of LV Sustainability jobs (Holly)- Being developed
 7. Rain Gardens- now Pollinator Garden or Invasive plant removal (Jess) with Muhlenberg- "Plants and People" project summary needs to be done by the end of April.
 8. Create a public repository of sustainability data including the Greenhouse Gas Inventory, Community Sustainability Certification, CDP responses, etc. (Tinku)- city intern with Community and Economic Development is working on the Certification and we are waiting for report back.
 9. Photograph contest about lantern flies this summer- Involve the Iron Pigs for a "stomp contest". (Liz) No update for now.
 10. Build social media following (promote Allentown Vision 2030, education about our trash and recycling programs, invasive species). Build-out to include internships. Get marketing intern help. Talk to city about better posting of the link to FB Page. Create a QR code for EAC. Use that Neighborhood app/ site (Holly): We increased FB followers by 20 people this month – perhaps tie this into the Muhlenberg Liaison Internship role.
 11. Revise EAC By-laws to align with final updates to EAC Ordinance No. 14566 (Dave)- Completed revisions were not yet presented to City Council due to a mix-up on the version of the document. Tinku to address and put back on City Council agenda.
 13. Sustainable Business Survey and Recognition Program – on hold (Tinku)
 14. Get more Council input on EAC activities (Dave) No update.
 15. Invasive Species Events- neighborhoods and parks. Maybe a Hemlock contest on social media (Jennifer)- No update.
 16. Get a budget for the EAC (Dave/Tinku)- No objection raised by City Council to \$1,000 budget for our work.
 17. Food Waste (Jennifer and Holly)- Job description was developed to have a study done by an intern.
 18. Preliminary Review of Allentown Zoning Map (Holly and Jennifer)- No update.
- Reports from EAC Liaisons

1. Parks and Recreation (Jennifer/Tinku): Meeting included a discussion about the dog waste/ dog park discussion. Perhaps have a survey of the park use/ waste and issues for the parks department.
2. Public Works (Liz): Looking to have a meeting in addition to the emails.
3. City Council –Tinku presented 2020 report and 2021 Goals to Council. We also received no objection to \$1,000 budget for the EAC and Councilman Juilio Guridy stated that it was a reasonable request.
4. Planning Commission – Holly (2 minutes): No update
5. Bureau of Planning and Zoning – Tinku, Holly and Jennifer (2 minutes) – Consultants are engaged in background work needed for comprehensive zoning review. EAC will be included in the advisory committee when the community engagement phase begins

New Business

- EAC submission in Sustainable Lehigh Valley booklet – Tinku (2 minutes) (not covered)
- Presentation by Hannah Chiesa at Green Drinks (not covered)
- Responses to CDP Questionnaires – Tinku (2 minutes) (not covered)