

Allentown Environmental Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
November 8th, 2021
5:15 PM via Zoom

Members in attendance: Tinku Khanwalkar (chairperson), Dieter Kretschy, Holly Edinger, Jon Stanley, Jennifer Swann

Guests: Matt Tuerk, Ge Xu (Lehigh U.) Marsha Akoto (Lehigh U.), Maddie Tschauner (Lehigh U.), Shanice Clarke (resident), Jacob Kidd (jkidd@muhlenberg.edu), Jeremy Taylor (jeremy@somaxhtc.com), Julie Thomases (resident)

Welcome and Introductions: See above

Approval of November Minutes: Passes

Decision on December Meeting: No meeting needed.

Date for Strategic Planning Session:

- We will include Julie Thomases to bring input on Civilian Climate Core as representative of Promise Neighborhood
- Date for the planning meeting will be circulated via email.

Old Business

2021 Goals Reports

1. Waste Minimization/Food Waste – Holly Edinger/Dieter Kretschy/ Jakob Kidd
 - a. Jacob finished calls with grocery stores and found that many are already donating what they can to local resources/ food kitchens.
 - b. There is waste food/ non-edible that is probably going into the landfill.
 - c. Look to find a way to gather food waste from local institutes and keep it out of landfill. Possibly use it as pig feed or other farm resource.
 - d. Installation of an anaerobic digester to serve the institutes of the city, expand on the city's wastewater treatment plant (LCA). LCA is interested but, the economics don't work to haul waste to the system. Add this to 2022 goals.
2. Allentown Civilian Climate Corps (Tinku)
 - a. Feasibility Study is being developed by Promise Neighborhood to have a neighborhood engagement corp. that would support clean and safe neighborhoods.
 - b. Possible Americorp employees that would/could do this work.

- c. Lehigh University Graduate students are establishing guidelines for community based litter cleanups, develop tools to have more cleanups, identify materials needed, how to engage Allentown residents who may have language/ free time challenges, and determine how to engage with Citizen Climate Corp.
 - d. Penn State LV Chance is the sustainability group at PSULV and they may be a good partner.
3. Litter/Invasive Plant Removal Events
 - a. 401 Cleveland- Neighborhood based cleanup where we tried to connect and did a lot of cleanup with the support of the Public Works employees
 - b. Big Brothers Big Sisters- To be held Nov. 13, 11am-3pm, 41 S. Carlisle Street, Allentown. Jon is helping get support/ equipment from city.
 4. Create a public repository of sustainability data and build social media following
 - a. Could we have a monthly blurb on/ in a news outlet to share progress of EAC or talk about a topic that we are working on?
 - b. Monthly blogs... could feed news to news outlets, then
 5. Sustainable Pennsylvania Communities Certification (Tinku)
 - a. City finished the review and Irene will share it with EAC
 6. Sustainable Business Survey and Recognition Program – (Dieter)
 - a. Another meeting is planned. Look for a 2022 “launch”
 7. Preliminary Review of Allentown Zoning Map – Holly and Jennifer
 - a. No update

Reports from EAC Liaisons

- a. Muhlenberg College – Lacey/Sadie
- b. Parks and Recreation – Jennifer /Tinku - met about the 401 Cleveland Cleanup
- c. Public Works – Tinku- mostly also about 401 Cleveland Cleanup
- d. City Council – Dave- no update (Dave not here)
- e. Planning Commission – Holly- no update
- f. Bureau of Planning and Zoning – Tinku, Holly and Jennifer

New Business

- Litter education and community engagement – Dieter is talking with Baum Art School and possibly middle schools to bring litter prevention lessons.
- Solar Cooperatives (Tinku) – Solar United Neighbors will make a presentation about success stories. Green Drinks November meeting hosted by Citizen’s Climate Lobby at 6:30

- Energy Efficiency Program for Low-income rental units (Julie Thomases and Tinku)- work to be done through Civilian Climate Corp.

For 2022:

Organics waste plan for the city- beyond food recovery

2022 Cleanup Plan- when, where, with what partners?

Data Repository/ Blog/

Sustainable Business Survey and Recognition Program

Support work of the Civilian Climate Corp.