

Environmental Advisory Council
Tuesday, April 26, 2022
Virtual

EAC members present – C. Curran-Myers, S. Crothers, D. Beane, A. Sellers

Others present – S. Bachman, B. Ayers-Fisher, S. Harrity, V. Erenberg, A. Funk

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Beane called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm. He noted that a quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Ms. Myers gave background on the communication and outreach efforts surrounding the L-CAP. One of the needs mentioned by the community consultants is a Land Acknowledgement for the EAC and the City to adopt and communicate at meetings. Ms. Myers requested Ms. Funk to share background and information about Land Acknowledgements.

Ms. Funk shared the draft Land Acknowledgement that is in development with Kutztown University.

Ms. Funk shared that Land Acknowledgements must be supported by action, and complemented Reading for having a history of being forward thinking and a Land Acknowledgement could be a helpful and useful practice.

Ms. Funk shared a link: [Land Acknowledgement - Kutztown University](#)

Ms. Myers commented on the link between Climate Action Plans and Sustainability and the idea of elders making decisions with the next seven generations in mind.

Ms. Myers invited questions and proposed a workshop day to develop a land acknowledgement.

Ms. Funk discussed the idea of becoming “indigenous to a place” and becoming stewards and being in relationship with the land, especially for new comers.

Ms. Sellers asked about resources around indigenous stewardship land practices. What historical and storytelling techniques could be applicable. Ms. Myers suggested that the community consultants, David Nazario and Desiree Chesson could assist with the research of this topic. Ms. Funk also suggested the need for K-12 outreach and working with permaculture and foraging education as a way to engage with the community. She also shared the idea that while indigenous land management and stewardship may seem visionary, it is also ancient.

Mr. Beane asked how any work on the proposed Land Acknowledgement would proceed. Ms. Myers suggested that an Environmental Justice committee be formed to address this and other EJ issues.

Ms. Sellers suggested that the Communications would be a good space for the EJ issues.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes by Ann Sellers, Seconded by Cathy Myers, with revisions.

Ms. Myers has a revision to the March minutes: pg. 6 (data base of known toxically contaminated sites, especially ACT 2 sites) Superfund sites can be shared- ACT 2 is a state program with different parameters. (Call Cathy) Superfund is a small subset of sites, and is not inclusive.

SIGNAGE

Ms. Ayers Fisher stated that the signage project is ready to be picked up again and is working with Philadelphia Water Department to finish the design specs for RFP.

INVASIVE PLANTS / NOXIOUS WEEDS

Held on _____ Oak Lane. One of the attendees is from the MP3 committee, and appreciated the education. Additional outreach and advertising of future walks are needed. Ms. Sellers suggested renting a goat herd and combining with an education event.

Ms. Myers reminded for the need for story boards and other outreach materials for outreach events. Ms. Myers did make a story board display for Earth Day at City Park.

Ms. Ayers-Fisher suggested partnering up with other groups doing cleanups for advertising.

NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Beane asked for an update on Becky Noviello's status. Ms. Myers confirmed that they should go ahead and notify Council that the seat is vacant. Ms. Myers also stated that there are young and diverse community members interested in membership. Ms. Myers will email Ms. Smith to confirm to the communication to Council.

Ms. Sellers inquired about the Reading Climate Corp, Ms. Myers and Ms. Ayers-Fisher provided an update: program

Ms. Sellers left the call at 1:14

PLASTIC BAG BAN

Mr. Beane, plastic bag ban- reviewed plastic bag ban materials provided by Nicole Judge. Mr. Beane and Ms. Myers will construct a draft ordinance modeled from Philadelphia. Need for outreach to small business owners for input.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Beane attended the Bar Association Environmental meetings, Environmental Justice was a hot topic. EJ is the lens that DEP is funding projects through. Ms. Myers noted that DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell visited on April 21, and that it is an honor to be recognized, and that the DEP is now taking EJ issues seriously as there are now EJ people and processes in every office and program.

Ms. Myers suggested that the City and EAC make written comments on the new DEP EJ policy by May 11, 2022. She will write and circulate a draft comment.

Mr. Bachmann updated on the process of De-watering at Bernhardt dam.

Mr. Beane brought up outdoor meetings for summer, and expressed a desire out of convenience to keep virtual meetings. Ms. Myers suggested at least one meeting at Pendera Park

June and August meeting will be at Pendora park.

Ms. Erenberg is working on additional urban ag grant writing and projects.

Mr. Harrity noted that Solid Waste has been awarded \$347,000 for yard waste collection vehicles. For the Great American Cleanup, nearly a dozen sites with approximately 350 volunteers, 4tons of trash collected.

Dumpster day is coming in June, volunteers needed for staffing and outreach.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting date is Tuesday, May 24 at noon via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by
Bethany Ayers-Fisher
Sustainability Manager