
Environmental Advisory Council
Tuesday, July 12, 2016

The regular meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council was held on the above date for the transaction of general business at Pendorf Park.

EAC members present – D. Beane, P. Ignozzi-Shaffer, C. Curran-Myers, A. Molteni, C. Kern

Others present – S. Katzenmoyer, D. Hoag

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Curran-Myers called the meeting to order at 12:08 pm. She noted that a quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Ms. Curran-Myers announced that this would be Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer's last meeting before she relocates to Florida. Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer stated that there is a "send-off" on Thursday, July 28 at the Doubletree beginning at 5 pm.

Ms. Curran-Myers welcomed new member Chris Kern. Mr. Kern introduced himself and gave a brief background. All members and staff introduced themselves as well.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Beane, seconded by Mr. Molteni, to approve the May 24, 2016 minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that the agenda has been reorganized to move through the topics more quickly. She stated that updates should be brief to allow discussion on the old and new business topics.

UPDATES

- City-owned dams – Ms. Hoag reported that staff will be meeting with the new Managing Director shortly to bring him up to speed on the projects.

- Storm Water Issues – Ms. Hoag reported that DEP has recently held MS4 trainings. She stated that the local DEP contact may be changing.
- Smart Growth – Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer stated that a new liaison is needed. She stated that the next meeting is Friday, July 22 at noon at the Reading Berks Realtors office. Ms. Curran-Myers stated that Ms. Sellers is active in this group.

Mr. Slifko arrived at this time.

- Plan Review – Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that Council recently had an update on the draft Comprehensive Plan. She stated that the administrative transition delayed adoption. She stated that Council has not yet received the Plan for official adoption. Ms. Curran-Myers stated that she will be scheduling a meeting with the Mayor to introduce herself and update him on what the EAC does.

BCTV PROGRAM

Mr. Beane stated that due to unforeseen circumstances he is having difficulty managing the program. He suggested that either the number of shows be reduced to quarterly or that others assist. He stated that there needs to be one main facilitator and contact for BCTV staff.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer suggested that each EAC member plan one show per year.

Mr. Beane stated that he has also had problems coordinating guests. Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer stated that members would be responsible for planning their own shows and confirming their own guests.

Ms. Curran-Myers suggested that there also be several “stand-by” topics and shows when problems arise.

Ms. Hoag agreed and suggested that the topics be scheduled but reorganized as necessary to remain flexible.

Ms. Curran-Myers suggested that the alternative energy and riparian buffer ordinances be reviewed along with the green infrastructure committee’s work.

Two members of the public – Sheila Perez and Evelyn Morrison – arrived at this time.

Mr. Beane stated that BCTV staff is great to work with.

Mr. Molteni volunteered to be the facilitator.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer suggested that the Comprehensive Plan be a future topic.

Mr. Beane reminded all that the show is the 4th Thursday of every other month at 6:30 pm.

Ms. Curran-Myers requested that all consider their topics by the next meeting. She noted the need for the schedule to be flexible as necessary.

Mr. Beane and Ms. Hoag will continue to work to have a program with Mr. Harrity and electronics recycling as the July topic.

Ms. Curran-Myers suggested that the alternative energy ordinance be the November topic. Ms. Hoag suggested that Mr. Rye and City trades inspectors be guests. This topic may be two shows – one to explain the regulations and one to walk through the permitting process.

Ms. Curran-Myers suggested that the green infrastructure committee's inventory be the topic of the September show. She volunteered to head this show. She stated that she will invite Mr. Kelly and Ms. Sellers.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that the members must decide the committee structure. She questioned if there should be standing committees, ad hoc committees or both.

Mr. Molteni stated that it is more flexible to have ad hoc committees.

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that currently there is only the Green Infrastructure committee. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that the Steep Slope regulations are also unfinished.

Ms. Curran-Myers suggested that there be a standing committee for legislative review.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer questioned if committees were mentioned the in the bylaws.

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that they are not.

Mr. Beane suggested that there be a standing committee for legislative review as there has been at least one item annually for this committee. Ms. Curran-Myers agreed and stated that this would allow legislative items to move forward quickly. This committee will be Mr. Beane, Ms. Curran-Myers, Ms. Hoag and Ms. Katzenmoyer. Ms. Hoag stated that others may be added based on technical needs and backgrounds.

Mr. Slifko questioned if committees were open to the public. Ms. Curran-Myers stated that as long as a quorum is not present and no official action is taken that subcommittees do not need to follow the Sunshine Law. She stated that others could serve on subcommittees without being members of the EAC.

Mr. Slifko suggested that there be a recycling and solid waste subcommittee. He stated that the City needs the EAC's input on this important topic. Ms. Hoag stated that generally recycling and solid waste issues are handled by staff with updates to the EAC.

Mr. Beane suggested that this topic go to the Legislative Review committee when Council receives ordinance amendments.

Mr. Slifko stated that it is important for these items to be reviewed by others beyond staff.

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that the EAC generally gets word about issues informally and that they are never official approached for reviews. Mr. Molteni agreed with the need to request formal comments.

Ms. Curran-Myers expressed the belief that there is much community interest in recycling. She suggested that the EAC assist the City in drafting its Waste Minimization Plan as noted in the Zero Waste resolution. Ms. Hoag stated that she is unsure if this Plan is moving forward.

Mr. Slifko stated that yard waste is also an issue. He noted the need for ongoing conversation and research. He suggested that the EAC proceed and make recommendations to Council.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer expressed the belief that the City forgets about the EAC and does not utilize it fully.

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that many topics need attention. She stated that issues are discussed as needed. She stated that recycling has many parts and noted the need not to duplicate efforts.

Mr. Beane suggested that Ms. Curran-Myers discuss this issue with the Mayor.

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that the EAC has not received an update on the recycling litigation for some time.

Ms. Perez stated that recycling costs are astronomical. She suggested that the EAC request a forensic audit of the recycling fund. She questioned where all the money goes.

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that the EAC can raise questions but cannot order an audit. She stated that the EAC would not attack its sister City agencies and that it has no budget. She stated that the EAC is a respected voice.

Ms. Perez suggested that education also be focused on Spanish speakers. She suggested that the BCTV program be duplicated in Spanish on local radio.

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that a recycling flyer is sent to every household and that it explains recycling in both English and Spanish. Ms. Hoag stated that the City is also working on door hangers about recycling that will also be in both English and Spanish. She stated that they are very user friendly. She explained that when flyers are placed in water bills the information does not always reach the tenant.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer suggested that block captains be established.

Ms. Hoag suggested that there are many who could translate the BCTV content.

ORDINANCES

Mr. Slifko questioned how the EAC developed its ordinances. Mr. Beane explained that it begins with national research on the issue. Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer agreed and stated that once information is collected and PA laws on the issue are reviewed, the regulations are adapted to Reading's needs.

Mr. Slifko stated that this is a model approach and commended the EAC on their work.

STEEP SLOPE ORDINANCE

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that a meeting is necessary to move forward.

WEB AND FACEBOOK

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that a social media presence is important.

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she would review this issue with the City Solicitor.

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that if it is determined that the EAC can have a separate identity and not be linked to the City's website, a member must create and maintain it. She stated that if the Solicitor determines that a separate site cannot be created, she will approach Council.

TRASH COLLECTION SYSTEM POSITION STATEMENT

Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that this request was made in light of the upcoming changes to the City's trash collection system. She stated that the amendments currently before Council are minor. She stated that she will keep the EAC updated as this process moves forward.

OTHER MATTERS

- Idling Buses

Ms. Morrison stated that buses continually idle during Performing Arts Center events along Walnut St. Ms. Curran-Myers and Mr. Beane stated that this is in violation of the Clean Air Act. They stated that idling cannot occur for more than five minutes.

Ms. Hoag suggested that PennDOT be approached since Walnut St is State owned. She suggested that perhaps signage regarding idling can be added.

Mr. Beane stated that he will research enforcement of this provision.

STATEWIDE GREENWAY AND TRAIL SUMMIT

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that Reading has been chosen for the location of the summit in 2017.

Ms. Curran-Myers suggested that a topic include the 18th WONDER project.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that the committee held its first meeting. She stated that the committee decided that an inventory of green infrastructure would be their first project. She stated that green credits should be given to those who have green infrastructure and that this will assist with the City's MS4 requirements. She stated that once the inventory is complete, a map and rain garden contest are possible future projects.

Ms. Curran-Myers stated that she helped to create the Schuylkill Action Network when she was employed by DEP. She expressed the belief that it is time for them to focus less on agricultural issues and more on urban storm water management. She stated that Ms. Sellers is very active with the Schuylkill Action Network.

Ms. Ignozzi-Shaffer noted the need for markers at rain gardens and recognition plaques on buildings with green infrastructure.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council will be held on Tuesday, August 16 at noon at the lower pavilion of Pendera Park (S 18th and Forest Sts).

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Shelly Katzenmoyer, CMC
Deputy City Clerk