
Environmental Advisory Council
Tuesday, May 24, 2011

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

Present – H. Rauenzahn, A. Molteni, R. Nieves, B. Jennings, J. Drayer, D. Beane

Also present – S. Katzenmoyer, D. Hoag

CALL TO ORDER

Harriet Rauenzahn called the meeting to order at 5:36 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Dr. Jennings, seconded by Ms. Drayer, to approve the April 26 minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

LONG RANGE PLAN REVIEW

No report.

Kate O'Brien from the Berks County Conservation District arrived at this time.

EAC SUMMIT PLANNING

Ms. Rauenzahn stated that a new location must be found. She stated that she contacted Good Eatz and that they can accommodate up to 50 people.

Mr. Molteni expressed his belief that this venue is not large enough for 50 people.

Mr. Nieves suggested the Pike Café as it is ADA accessible and has off street parking.

Dr. Jennings stated that he would prefer the event take place in the City.

Ms. Hoag suggested Canal Street Pub as it is also ADA accessible and has off street parking.

Mr. Molteni suggested holding the meeting outdoors at Angelica Park. There was discussion of the logistics of refreshments.

Ms. Rauenzahn will follow up with Tommy's Café, Pike Café, and Canal Street Pub.

EARTH DAY

Mr. Molteni stated that the event was very successful. He described a similar event held in Philadelphia Freedom Mall last weekend which was also very successful. He stated that he spoke with several people who told him this year's event was the best ever.

Dr. Jennings stated that it was a great event.

Frank Denbowski arrived at this time.

SOLID WASTE GRANTS

Mr. Denbowski stated that Mr. Zolna was unable to attend this evening's meeting. He stated that he is currently researching the grant and will be meeting with the City's grant writer. He stated that an update can be given at next month's meeting.

Mr. Molteni congratulated Mr. Denbowski on the grant recently received by the City. Mr. Denbowski stated that the City received a \$125,000 performance grant.

Dr. Jennings questioned if this grant was to educate through the schools or the general public. Mr. Denbowski stated that it will depend on the grant details.

Ms. Rauenzahn questioned if the EAC needed to follow up or work on the grant. Mr. Denbowski stated that the City's grant writer and other staff would work on the application. Mr. Beane stated that the EAC cannot apply for grants.

RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Ms. O'Brien stated that the workshops were originally intended as a fundraiser to support the Conservation District scholarship program. She stated that the Conservation District partners with the Berks County Prison to make the barrels. The barrels are recycled from the prison (they receive their laundry detergent in them) and the Conservation District purchases the hardware necessary. The

prisoners assemble the barrels. The barrels are purchased by workshop attendees for \$75.

Ms. O'Brien stated that she holds the workshop to teach attendees about installation, use and maintenance of the rain barrel. She stated that the registration fee for the workshop includes the cost of the barrel. She suggested that the workshop be held within the host municipality but stated that there are costs involved in transporting the barrels and suggested that the workshop be held at the County Ag Center.

Mr. Denbowski questioned the cost to transport the barrels. He stated that the City has vehicles which could be used to transport the barrels and noted that many City residents may not have transportation to the Ag Center. He suggested holding the workshop at one of the City rec centers.

Ms. Rauenzahn questioned the cost of the hardware. Ms. O'Brien stated that the hardware costs approximately \$30 per barrel. She stated that funds collected above the cost could be used by the EAC for future projects.

Ms. Katzenmoyer and Mr. Denbowski explained that the EAC did not have a budget line item and could not generate revenue or pay invoices.

Mr. Denbowski suggested that the cost of the hardware be paid from the recycling fund and suggested that the EAC plan for 30 barrels which would be given to attendees. He suggested that the workshop be held at Pendora.

Dr. Jennings questioned the topics covered at the workshop. Ms. O'Brien stated that it was care and maintenance of the barrel.

Mr. Denbowski questioned how the EAC could ensure that registrants attended the workshop if there was no cost. Ms. O'Brien suggested there be a cost even if it is nominal so that attendees value the barrel. She stated that a registration form must be completed.

Mr. Denbowski questioned the target audience. Ms. O'Brien stated that it would be adult homeowners residing in the City.

Mr. Denbowski stated that the City may need to establish guidelines for rain barrels to ensure they are functioning properly and installed correctly.

Ms. Hoag questioned if this issue was addressed in the codified ordinances. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that the only item she could think of was the stagnant water issue. Ms. O'Brien stated that this item is covered in the workshop and that if the barrel is continually used and maintained this is not an issue.

There was discussion of reviewing the codified ordinances and establishing guidelines. Minimum standards must also be established.

Mr. Denbowski stated that he will invite a representative from the City's property maintenance office to the next meeting.

Mr. Beane suggested an ordinance review to determine what is needed and where the guidelines would be placed.

Ms. Hoag questioned if the workshop attendees could be given the barrel and purchase the hardware to assemble themselves. Ms. O'Brien stated that this is an option but that not all attendees may have the necessary tools.

Mr. Beane stated that draft guidelines would be completed by the next meeting.

MEETINGS WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS

Ms. Drayer stated that she has spoken with Mike Lauter from Centre Park. This group will not be meeting again until October. Mr. Lauter stated that there are no environmental concerns at this time and that the historic district has its own gardening club. She stated that there is a problem with rain washing dirt and mulch out of Centre Park.

Dr. Jennings stated that he would be willing to attend a future College Heights meeting as he lives in this area. *Note: College Heights does not meet during the summer months.*

Ms. Rauenzahn and Mr. Molteni will be attending the next First Friday event on June 3.

BERNHART PARK UPDATE

Ms. Hoag reviewed the recent press release. She stated that Exide is currently setting up the air monitoring system. The air monitoring is scheduled to begin next week and must be complete before any earth moving can occur.

SMART GROWTH ALLIANCE

Mr. Beane stated that he and Mr. Nieves attended a recent event hosted by the Smart Growth Alliance. He stated that there is a current opening for City representation on this committee. He stated that he volunteered to bring this information to the EAC.

Ms. Hoag suggested that the qualifications be researched before a decision is made on an appointment.

Mr. Denbowski stated that this would be an Administrative appointment. He stated that staff capacity is limited and that he will follow up with Mr. Kramer. He will report at the next meeting.

BCTV PROGRAM

Mr. Denbowski stated that Mr. Zolna is in need of a guest for the May program. He suggested that Mr. Molteni appear.

Ms. Rauenzahn stated that Kate O'Brien will be the guest on the June program.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council will be held on Tuesday, June 28 at 5:30 pm in the Council Office.

Respectfully submitted by
Shelly Katzenmoyer
Deputy City Clerk