

**Abington Township
Environmental Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes for January 12, 2022**

Call to Order: 7:03 pm

Attendees:

Members: Cakky Evans (CE), Michele Kaczalek (MK), Sue Myerov (SM), Andrea Soo (AS), John Sorrentino (JSO), Jim Webb (JW)

Associate Members: Peaches Cooper, (PC), Jennifer Sherwood (JSh)

Others Present: Nathan Vasserman (IT Officer, Abington Township)

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the December 2021 meeting were approved.

2. **Amendments to the Agenda** – None

3. **Reports:**

A. Chairperson's Report – Approved. JW also announced that David Bell (EAC Associate Member) will be stepping down from his position to pursue other interests. The EAC recognizes and celebrates David's time and dedication to our council.

B. Treasurer's Report – Approved

4. **Committee Reports:**

A. Policy – Approved

B. Programs – Approved

C. Engagement – Approved

5. **Active Business**

A. **Climate Action Draft Plan (CAP) and Shared Energy Manager Program Update** – CE mentioned that AT is working with WES (DEP's Shared Energy Manager contractor) on prioritizing energy efficiency for Ardsley Community Center and the Township building. WES will conduct a site visit from 1/25-1/27 with AM to provide info, as needed. WES engineer, Nathan McIntyre, is working on benchmarking energy usage for these two facilities via the PECO Smart Energy Usage Data Tool (PSEUDT).

B. **Other Energy and Climate Action Initiatives**

1. Ready for 100 Abington Clean Energy Plan Team (ACEPT) Update – CE mentioned that the Sustainability Manager of Ann Arbor, MI presented an excellent CAP presentation which CE would like to share on AT's cable station with approval from the EAC and AT.

2. Update on Level 2 EV Charging Stations Rebate Program application – Nothing new to report. See meeting minutes from December 8, 2021.

3. Municipal Energy Procurement and Efficiency Next Steps – JSO, AM, and CE interviewed several energy brokers and a municipal energy management consultant to select McHale Energy to analyze AT energy accounts and solicit bids from reputable companies. CE shared that AM has since calculated that not renewing with Constellation and using a broker to switch to AEP Energy saved AT approximately \$100K over two years.

4. Climate Change Legislation/Strategies – AS previously discussed in our Dec 2021 EAC meeting, CE explained the USGBC has a recent "pilot credit" which are new modifications they want to pilot for new construction. Using the iTree planting calculator, new buildings will get credit in an area where they would increase the carbon sequestration by 10% of the trees of the proposed development post-construction through tree plantings. CE has asked the STC to provide input on applicability as they have iTree experience.

5. Google Environmental Insights Explorer (GEIE) in Abington Township – See EAC meeting minutes from December 8, 2021. CE explained that GEIE calculates and extrapolates building/transportation emissions and tree canopy data based on Android phones. CE will share the demo with the EAC when it is ready.

C. **Development Plan and Zoning Review and Coordination** –

1. Proposed Zoning Text Amendment (BC District-Willow Grove) – AS mentioned in our Dec 2021 EAC meeting, SM summarized preliminary EAC comments that the plan must be compatible with our CAP/Master Tree Plan and noted that EAC must be prepared to provide high-level and/or detailed comments on the proposal. SM has asked for additional input and edits from the EAC.

2. Hollywood Tavern – SM summarized proposal for restaurant to add an 800 square-ft concrete patio for outdoor dining. Preliminary EAC comments include recommending adding stormwater control measures and planting more native plant species in the new landscape improvements. Aim to finalize comment letter by end of January.
 3. 365 Cedar Road – SM described this property as a 4-acre lot (R2-low density residential) which the owner is proposing to subdivide into 8 more lots for new, single-family detached houses. Preliminary EAC comments include requesting a proper inventory of existing trees, slope considerations for construction and landscaping, and adding better stormwater control measures. Aim to finalize comment letter by end of January.
 - D. **Rain Barrel program** – Nothing to report.
 - E. **Budget Submission Updates** – CE shared the budget summary sheet which has been approved. Budget allows for potential benchmarking, an energy audit, a renewable energy feasibility study to replace our HVAC systems and charging stations.
 - F. **Plastic Ban Options through MontCo EAC Joint Planning Update** – Nothing new to report. As mentioned in our Dec 2021 EAC meeting KMR, AS, JSO are continuing to work on the resident survey and will incorporate the sample survey questions that were recommended by PC. The next step will be to work with the Economic Development Committee on developing a business survey for distribution.
6. **New Business:**
- A. **EAC Engagement/Leadership for LEED for Cities Certification (due March 31, 2021)** – CE suggested that the EAC could possibly achieve LEED Gold certification since we have high scores for prerequisite areas and could gain significant points if the CAP and CP are passed. CE has requested EAC members to act as liaisons and assist with credit areas for our various strategies and actions in the LfC Crosswalk Project Plan. CE also mentioned a Dropbox that was created for AT which provides government resources, forms, and example narratives.
 - B. **Virtual EAC Network Conference** – Scheduled on Feb 26, 2022. JW and CE will be presenting at the “Capacity Building for Established EACs and Ready for 100: Municipal Energy Planning Now” and “Into the Future” sessions and SM will be doing a joint presentation with DCNR on lawn conversion/meadow creation.
 - C. **Final 2021 EAC end-of-year expenses** – EAC was able to expend our 2020 budget on a tablecloth and green and white EAC t-shirts.
7. **Citizens’ Comments and Responses** – None to report.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm

Next meeting – February 9, 2022 (Virtual) at **7 PM**

Acronym Key:

ACEPT – Abington Clean Energy Plan Team
 AM – Ashley McIlvaine, Special Assistant to the Township Manager
 AT – Abington Township
 BOC – Board of Commissioners
 CCPC - Comprehensive Plan Consistency Committee
 CDP – Carbon Disclosure Project
 CP – Comprehensive Plan
 DEP – Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
 EAC – Environmental Advisory Council
 EV – Electric vehicle
 GHG – Greenhouse Gas
 LCAP – Local Climate Action Program
 LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
 LFC&C – LEED for Cities and Communities
 PSEUDT - PECO Smart Energy Usage Data Tool
 Rf100 – Ready for 100
 SEM – Shared Energy Manager
 STC – Shade Tree Commission
 USGBC – U.S. Green Building Council
 WES – Wilson Engineering Services