

**Abington Township
Environmental Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes for February 8, 2023**

Call to Order: 7:03 pm

Attendees:

Members: Michele Kaczalek (MK), Karin McGarry-Rosen (KMR), Sue Myerov (SM), Andrea Soo (AS), John Sorrentino (JSO), Jim Webb (JW)

Associate Members: Peaches Cooper (PC), Elena Jadach (student/Co-President of Science Club at Penn Charter), Jennifer Sherwood (JSh)

Others Present: Andrew Christy (STC), Lora Lehmann (resident), Jessica Ranweiler (resident), Grace Sekelewski (Digital Media & Communications Coordinator, Abington Township), Lance Weatherly (resident)

1. **Approval of Minutes:** January 2023 minutes were approved

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

3. **Reports below were shared and discussed:**

A. Chairperson's Report – None, but SM did attend the TTF Municipal Task Force meeting on 2/7 to learn about recent programs, projects, and their funding.

B. Treasurer's Report

4. **Committee Reports below were shared and discussed:**

A. Policy – None

B. Programs

C. Engagement

Discussed format and need for committee reports. LL suggested we should maintain them and post them publicly with agenda before the next monthly meeting.

5. **Active Business**

A. **Climate Action Draft Plan (CAP) and Shared Energy Manager Program** – Nothing new to report.

B. **Shared Energy Manager Survey** – Nothing new to report.

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

1. LEED for Cities Certification – AM submitted for recertification recently and has one month to add in the areas of Quality of Life, Innovation, Regional Priorities, and Green Buildings.

2. Climate Change Legislation/Strategies – Nothing new to report.

3. Ready for 100 Abington Clean Energy Plan Team (ACEPT) Update and PACleanEnergy.com website – Nothing new to report.

4. Level 2 EV Charging Stations Rebate Program – Nothing new to report.

5. Municipal Energy Procurement and Efficiency Next Steps – Nothing new to report.

D. **Development Plan and Zoning Review and Coordination** – Nothing new to report. Proposed plan for Raising Cane's Restaurant is expected to be presented during PC meeting this month (Feb 2023).

E. **Vision2035 Comprehensive Plan Development** – LL was at the last CP meeting and has concerns about dense development proposed around train stations with text amendment/rezoning. EAC will consider LL's comments in re-reviewing the Draft CP.

F. **Rain Barrel program** – KMR has 5 orders waiting to be built. Total of 10 outstanding orders. No further RB workshops proposed.

G. **Bird Town Events** – Items discussed included:

- JSh submitted the PA Bird Town annual report on Feb 1 to the EAC for comments before submission.
- JSh said PA Bird Town provides two free new signs, but we are ok with leaving existing signs even though logo has changed. Heidi Shiver (PA Bird Town Working Group Chair) would like to present one of the signs to our EAC during the annual report Public Affairs meeting (if in person) as a photo opportunity. SM will submit a request for this.
- JSh has requested \$1,000 towards creating a native plant garden at one of Abington Library's parking lot islands. KMR made a motion to approve up to \$1,000 (Bird Town) funding to create the native plant garden this spring. EAC members approved the motion. SM suggested adding interpretive signage for it to educate the public.
- Abington Library will be hosting a Garden Festival (Sat, April 8) and has invited the EAC to host a table to promote the native plant garden, answer questions, and educate the public on native plants.

- Native plant sale (Sat, April 22) – Friends of Abington Library partners with the EAC to sell books and native plants. We donate 25% of what we earn to the library group. JSh would like to request funding to purchase native plants. KMR made motion for JSh to purchase up to \$500 of native plants to sell at library (using Bird Town money which is in the Sustainability fund). Four members approved of the motion.
- Keswick Ave Underpass Garden – JSh proposed having a cleanup on Mar 25 or Apr 1. SM, AS, KMR are available for Mar 25, but not Apr 1. EAC agreed to schedule the Keswick Ave Underpass clean up on Mar 25.
- AC announced that there will also be a tree giveaway of 300 trees at Abington Library on Apr 22 at the same time as the book and native plant sale. We will need to recruit many volunteers to cover all events.

H. **Plastic Bag Ban Update** – Nothing new to report.

I. **Composting update** – Nothing new to report, but AS summarized initiative to guests.

J. **Montgomery Award** – Nothing new to report. SM haven't received any updates from township.

K. **Township Recreation, Parks and Open Space Board update** – KMR said public meeting 1.5 weeks ago. They reviewed individual proposals for selected larger parks. KMR noted 1,200 responses were received for the Open Space survey. After the first 500 responses, the subsequent submissions showed very similar results. There was discussion about keeping the Open Space committee as a permanent group to monitor the Open Space plan.

6. New Business:

- A. **E-recycling event** – AS, EJ, and PC will volunteer for the e-recycling event Feb 25, along with John Dubeck (and Family Promise volunteers). KMR will advertise this in our next newsletter and FB page.
- B. **WT Stream Smart block party at Roychester Park** – Block party will be held on April 1, 10 am - 12 pm. SM asked for volunteers. JSh will volunteer.
- C. **EAC Open Seat Recruitment** – No new updates from the township. One open seat needs to be filled. SM will reach out again.
- D. **Review of bylaws** – No new updates on succession planning. SM summarized needs to review and update language (if needed) for bylaws in the most recent version:
 - Number of years for office terms and all successive terms.
 - Regular meetings shall be held at either the Township building or virtually.
 - Do we need clearance/background checks?

Citizens' Comments and Responses –

- **Lora Lehmann** – Two items:
 - **Strategic plan question** – AM was not on call, so LL held off on discussion.
 - **Acorn Lane** – Asked if anyone followed up. AC responded that STC is working on it and will get in touch with LL offline.
- **Elena Jadach** – Asked if she could help promote our Twitter, FB, and Instagram accounts. KMR will work with Elena on how she can support.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm

Next meeting – March 8, 2023 ([Virtual](#)) at 7 PM

Acronym Key:

ACEPT – Abington Clean Energy Plan Team

CAP – Climate Action Plan

CP – Comprehensive Plan

EAC – Environmental Advisory Council

EV – Electric vehicle

LCAP – Local Climate Action Program

LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

LFC&C – LEED for Cities and Communities

STC – Shade Tree Commission