

Abington Township
Environmental Advisory Council
DRAFT Meeting Minutes for March 9, 2022

Call to Order: 7:02 pm

Attendees:

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

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

Other Present: Erin Landis (Wissahickon Trails), Grace Sekelewski (Digital Media & Communications Coordinator, Abington Township), Cindy Shapiro (Abington resident and Synagogue Mishkan Shalom member), Mark Smith (Abington resident and Chair of Climate Action Committee for the First United Methodist Church of Germantown)

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the February 2022 meeting were approved with edits.

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

3. **Reports:**

- A. Chairperson's Report – Approved
- B. Treasurer's Report – Approved

4. **Committee Reports:**

- A. Policy – None
- B. Programs – Approved
- C. Engagement – Approved

5. **Active Business**

[After the reports, guest Erin Landis (Water Programs Manager, Wissahickon Trails) informed the EAC that the StreamSmart program would like to host a block party at Roychester Park at the end of Silver Ave near the rain garden on 4/23 at a time that is convenient for some members of the EAC, STC, and other community members to attend. Details will follow soon.]

A. **Climate Action Draft Plan (CAP) and Shared Energy Manager Program Update** – Nothing new to report. See meeting minutes from February 9, 2022 EAC meeting.

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

- 1. Ready for 100 Abington Clean Energy Plan Team (ACEPT) Update – CE attended a webinar on doing Community Choice Aggregation. They asked if AT would be interested in becoming a pilot community which would involve lobbying local officials. CE will share the webinar with the EAC and others.
 - Update on Level 2 EV Charging Stations Rebate Program application – Nothing new to report.
 - Development of new PACleanEnergy.com website – Website is currently being developed to support municipalities that don't have dedicated sustainability staff. Resources will include a learning library and strategic planning info.
- 2. Municipal Energy Procurement and Efficiency Next Steps – Nothing reported. Please refer to Item B3 in [January 2022](#) minutes for a detailed summary.
- 3. Climate Change Legislation/Strategies – Nothing to report.

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

- 1. LD-22-01 – 1603 & 1617 Old York Road (DJS Building Addition) – Properties will be consolidated into one lot, connecting two existing commercial buildings. Since there is no open space, STC will need to identify tree species and evaluate replacement trees. Other green infrastructure may also be recommended.
- 2. EAC comment letter for proposed zoning text amendment (PREIT) – SM has asked the EAC for comments/edits within 10 days so that it can be put on the agenda packet for next BOC meeting's vote.
- 3. Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Ordinance Review Update - SM updated EAC members on project undertaken by Pennsylvania Environmental Council staff to audit Abington's zoning and subdivision codes to identify policy barriers to GSI implementation. Working with Township staff, an audit tool with approximately 100 questions was used to produce a recommendations report related to green infrastructure policies which could be updated to make it easier to include GSI in new and redevelopment projects.

Township staff are reviewing the report which we hope will help inform possible updates/revisions to land use and stormwater management ordinances.

- D. **Vision2035 Comprehensive Plan Development** – Next public meeting will be on March 15, 2022 at 6 pm. They will be finalizing the future land use survey.
- E. **Rain Barrel program** – KMR noted that we will have a virtual RB workshop on 4/7, a Girls Scouts RB build event on 4/16, and KMR/JW will be scheduling to pick up more donated RBs from iRice. KMR also reported that there is a new contact at iRice named Josh Siegal. Another RB workshop may be proposed at Redeemer Valley at the end of April or early May.
- F. **Next steps for composting, solid waste and recycling** – Composting discussion is still in progress; nothing new to report. For recycling, CE reported that AT is part of the Montgomery County Consortium of 7 municipalities that will be voting on a new recycling contractor beginning in April 2022. The Township is currently recommending a contract with Republic Services, instead of Mascaro (our current provider). The EAC has expressed concern to the Township that Republic may not recycle as effectively as Mascaro and, instead, move waste to landfills or trash to steam plants which will cause environmental justice/health concerns. Although Ward 6 Commissioner Mike Thompson believes that the vote will not change, Cindy Shapiro, Mark Smith, and the EAC plan to express their concern at the next BOC meeting. In addition, JW will draft a comment letter to the BOC expressing our view on this matter and future waste disposal.
- G. **Bird Town Events** – JSh announced three upcoming Bird Town/EAC events; 3/26 Crosswicks Sanctuary, 4/2 Keswick Underpass cleanup, and 4/23 Briar Bush EarthFest native plant sale/swap. Abington HS students will help support each event.

6. New Business:

- A. **Plastic Bag Ban Survey** – AM shared our draft plastic ban survey for residents with township manager, R. Manfredi. R Manfredi emailed CE that the BOC needs to first be made aware of this survey. CE responded back that there are three EAC members leading this initiative and to coordinate with them. When a business survey is developed, the EAC will share it with the Economic Development Committee for their input.
- B. **EAC Network Conference Summary** – SM noted an overall very successful virtual event where there were at least 80 attendees for the opening session. The virtual format may be permanent as it is easier for most people to attend.
- C. **StreamSmart Block Party (Erin Landis, WT)** – Please refer to first item under Active Business (#5 above)
- D. **Upcoming park cleanup events** – Keswick Underpass cleanup event is scheduled for 4/2. Other cleanup events will be reported in the next EAC meeting.

7. Citizens' Comments and Responses:

- Cakky Evans announced that a public memorial tree planting for David Schramm (ATFD Fire Services Administrator) may be planned for 4/30. Details to follow.

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm

Next meeting – April 13, 2022 ([Virtual](#)) at 7 PM

Acronym Key:

ACEPT – Abington Clean Energy Plan Team
AT – Abington Township
ATFD - Abington Township Fire Department
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
Rf100 – Ready for 100
STC – Shade Tree Commission
USGBC – U.S. Green Building Council