

**Swarthmore Environmental Advisory Council**  
**Tuesday, March 22, 2022**  
**Minutes**  
**Approved May 24, 2022**

**Present: Margaret Betz, Phil Coleman, Hannah Covert, Alex Danovitch, David Director, Sue Edwards, Julie Ellis, Nancy English, Elizabeth Jenkins, Susan Kelly, Scarlett McCahill, John McKinstry, Carol Nackenoff, Susie O'Donnell, Allen Prindle.**

**The March 22, 2022, meeting of the Swarthmore EAC began at 7:30 pm on Zoom and in person in Borough Hall.**

**1. February Meeting Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the February 22, 2022 were APPROVED.

**2. Public Comment**

No public comments

**3. Coming Events**

Elizabeth noted the following coming events:

- CRC Cleanup on March 26, including in Crum Creek Park
- Q&A with Doug Tallamy on March 31.
- Delaware County Recycling Forum: April 7
- Delaware County Sustainability Conference April 21. This is at the Union Stadium in Chester. There will be many interesting speakers. There will be tabling opportunities.
- Treevitalize Planting Day 4/23. (Sponsored by the Tree Committee)

**4. Code Proposals**

Elizabeth Jenkins and Carol Nackenoff have been drafting updates to the Borough code.

Elizabeth reported that the Planning Commission will not have us on its April agenda because the Park Avenue Development will occupy the entire evening. The code proposals will come before the Planning Commission in May.

**a. EV Chargers**

An EV ready space: where there is an electric panel installed and other infrastructure.

It is important, even if you do not have full capacity if you have things as EV ready in space. This is easier than retrofitting.

The proposed new code is from a model ordinance for new construction or where there is material renovation: for 1 -2 family dwellings, provide an EV ready space if there is parking. In multi-family dwellings, 100% of all parking space EV-Ready or EV-Capable, and 50% EV installed. One person suggested that if there is a new electrical panel being put in, the code should require the owner to make house EV-Capable. There was also sentiment to require this if one is putting in a large addition such as a granny flat, or when one upgrades electrical or the

house footprint or a new partial dwelling. One person suggested that the percentages be tied to the number of parking spaces provided, not by the number of people.

#### **b. Native Plants**

In proposed new requirements for new subdivisions, the proposal requires using native plants for the landscaping species, unless allowed by the Borough. The range of plants will be those native to Pennsylvania. The Swarthmore Tree Committee were open to being the approving authority. The EAC could also be the approving authority.

Elizabeth asked people to let her know about other specific language they would like added to these two proposed changes as well as the maximum lot coverage language.

Carol and Elizabeth are looking at other ordinances enacted by the Borough of West Chester. Carol noted that West Chester has incentives and recognition of those who meet the requirements of its ordinances.

### **5. Alex Danovitch: Composting expert + County update**

Alec spoke on Zero Waste, Reduction and Reuse at the County level.

The plan needs to be finished by December. They are doing background information on what the 49 different municipalities of Delaware County are doing. Included in the research is a life-cycle analysis on GHG. They are looking at input on what the county can do, and are encouraging members of the public to give its input. The last Thursday of each month at 6pm are workshops on the plan. There are a series of listening sessions with various institutions such as faith groups, schools, etc. They want to consider compost and recycle points at each municipality or to use a county recycling and compost programs.

One person asked if there could be encouraging of compostable and re-usable containers.

There was some discussion about the changes at the recycling center.

Alex wondered that with 49 municipalities in Delaware County whether it would be good to have the County have the authority to do the contracting for hauling and recycling.

A question was asked about the human health in waste disposal. Alex says that all the factors are being examined in terms of waste, including the health impacts of incineration versus landfill.

One person suggested that having the county involved would allow more consistency across all the municipalities, so that everyone might be able to have yard waste, composting, recycling, etc. That would allow consistency via a county-wide standard of what you can dispose of, and a central location for disposal of certain wastes, such as batteries or electronics. One person noted that the specialized collection events, such as e-waste, are very popular.

Some suggested that Swarthmore have curbside pickup (as opposed to have the collectors go to the side of your house) and use the savings to pay for composting or other services.

Alex invited us to give him more thoughts at his email [alex@nl2w.com](mailto:alex@nl2w.com).

### **6. aFewSteps**

Phil Coleman reported on aFew Steps.

#### **a. EV vehicles for borough**

Big trucks and police cruisers are not ready to be put in place. (For example, EVs are not ready for “pursuit rated.” There would be liability if the police cruiser could not be pursuit-rated. There are other factors as well for police vehicles such as the suspension, load capacity, electrical, towing / pushing capability, all kinds of details that aren’t obvious.

There is one hybrid police car in the fleet, and they are going to get a second one. (These have doubled their milage.) But there is less to do in this area. David Director said we should be talking with the school district to replace the diesel school buses with electric buses. (One person noted that the Philadelphia School District has been getting electric school buses.)

**b. EV Charger**

The EV charger at the borough lot is not being used very much. There does not seem to be much demand for this. Some think that a charger at the SEPTA lot is a better possibility.

**c. Solar Panels**

On the solar front: Bill Webb noted that the borough is going to replace its roof. They have \$660,000 in federal funds under ARPA that could help include in the roof replacement the installation of solar panels. Phil and aFewSteps will investigate to make sure that these funds could be used for solar panels. This last option seemed like the best one to pursue. We also want to focus on consumer education over the course of this year.

**7. DELCORA Wastewater Tunnel**

Scarlett McCahill reported that the wastewater tunnel project is a countywide initiative to create a waste water tunnel that would terminate in Chester. Chester views this as an Environmental Justice matter, because it means more wastewater would be going there. Scarlet raised the issue of whether there are other ways to handle our wastewater. The Borough’s Public Works Committee is feeling that it would abide by the wishes of Chester City. The EAC also felt that we would want to abide by the wishes of Chester. There was recognition that sometimes elected officials in Chester sometimes do not reflect the residents’ wishes.

**8. Thank you Notes for Ross**

Scarlett posted a link so people could write a thank you to Ross Schmucki for his service on Borough Council. <https://forms.gle/wA74KXtQxFAAyhoeA>

The meeting adjourned at 8:55.

Respectfully submitted,  
John McKinstry  
Co-Clerk

EAC Calendar

March  
Doug Tallamy Q&A on Zoom

Quarter 2

April

Present Environmental Code Updates to Planning Commission

Activities Report due to Borough Council

Treewitalize Planting Day 4/23. (Sponsored by the Tree Committee)

May

Native Plants - No Mow May (?), "Free the Trees" - English Ivy Management (?), Pesticide Free Summer (?)

June

National Pollinator Week - June 20-26th - Home Eco-Audits

### Quarter 3

July

Native Plants (see May)

August

Native Plants (see May)

September

Discussion with Bill Webb re: Electricity Contract - Borough Renewable Gas Leaf Blower Ban and/or Education

### Quarter 4

October

Ready for 100 Ideas/Research

November

Ready for 100 Ideas/Research

December

Ready for 100 Ideas/Research

TBD:

Recycling Education

Composting

Plastic Bag Ban

Business Environmental Toolkit