

**Swarthmore Environmental Advisory Council**  
**Tuesday, July 26, 2022**  
**Minutes**  
**APPROVED August 23, 2022**

**Present: Margaret Betz, Phil Coleman, Hannah Covert, Shirley Dodson, Sue Edwards, Nancy English, Elizabeth Jenkins, Susan Kelly, John McKinstry, Carol Nackenoff, Susie O'Donnell, Allen Prindle**

The July 26, 2022, meeting of the Swarthmore EAC began at 7:30 pm on Zoom and in person in Borough Hall.

**1. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**2. Friends of Little Crum Creek Park**

Sue Kelly announced that the Friends of Little Crum Creek are getting an award the Organizational Stewardship Award for 2022 from the CRC Watershed Association.

**3. Minutes from the June 2022 EAC Meeting**

The EAC APPROVED the minutes from the June 2022 meeting.

**4. Renewable Natural Gas via The Energy Co-Op**

The Borough and the Energy Co-Op had formed a partnership in the past whereby the Borough bought Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) from the Co-Op. RNG comes from landfills, as opposed to conventional natural gas. Swarthmore was the first municipality in Pennsylvania to make this switch. This contract is under administrative review by the Borough. The EAC hopes that this contract will be renewed and Elizabeth said she will continue to keep everyone apprised.

**5. Zero Waste Updates: Farmers' Market Partnership and Other Activities**

Susie and Jennifer have been working on this. They have applied to have one or two green advisors with Swarthmore College. We are pursuing a campaign to encourage zero waste, and the extra help from the college students will be very welcome.

At the Farmers' Market this past Saturday, there seemed to be positive response to the no plastic bag policy initiative in October. October 1 will be the first day that there will be no plastic bags given at the Market and the EAC will need volunteers. We can coordinate more on this at our August meeting. We ask people to reach out to community groups to help with this effort. We are getting the word out through *The Swarthmorean*, Next Door Swarthmore and the Farmers' Market newsletter. It is on the Farmers' Market Facebook page and the Town Center webpage. We will also put it on Facebook. We want to continue to collect re-usable bags. We are also

looking for establishments to provide bag donations. Giant will give us a \$25 gift card with which we can use to buy their reusable bags.

## **6. Borough ARPA Fund Application Summary: Solar Panels on Borough Hall and Solar Parking Canopy**

The EAC submitted to the Borough its request for a portion of the ARPA money for solar panels on Borough Hall (72 solar panels); and for a solar parking canopy. There have been about 48 requests from various groups in the Borough for the ARPA money, so the competition is significant.

Phil Coleman submitted an application to the Borough for ARPA money for the solar parking canopy. He said, given that the EAC has a primary application for panels on Borough Hall, this was a secondary part of the ARPA application.

Phil reported that he met with Paul Kydd and Will Agate of V2G to assess potential locations for a solar parking canopy along the railroad tracks on Myers Avenue. Of the site they said was best, there would be 60 Kwh generate from this projects covering 14 parking spots. The site is good because there is no shade and is proximate to parking and the two businesses.

There are a variety of ownership models but V2G prefer to own the system and sell the power to those charging their EVs and sell the balance to either the Co-Op or Dartmouth House Apartments. It can only work if there is a subsidy where the array is tied in to PECO. The ARPA request was tied to this subsidy. Although the Co-Ops or apartments energy costs will go up, the advantage for them is that this is real green power, and not just RECs.

John and Phil will meet with them tomorrow to further define the project.

## **7. Bird Town Application**

Shirley Dodson presented the second draft of the application for being recognized as a Bird Town with the Pennsylvania Audubon Council. We went through the application and many suggestions were put forward to add. The EAC will review Draft #3 it at the next meeting. Margaret Betz will talk with Scarlett about when to present to Borough Council the Resolution to Adopt Initiatives to Be Recognized as a Pennsylvania Audubon Council Bird Town.

## **8. Community Choice Aggregation for PA Boroughs - Sierra Club**

Sue Edwards reported that there is a Sierra Club team working on a plan for boroughs in PA to adopt Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) whereby the default energy would be -solar. Marty Spiegel has learned about this, and he will be consulting with us and the Environment Committee. An advantage is that these renewable energy sources would provide cheaper and more stable pricing compared to fossil fuels. Elizabeth can talk with Scarlett and Marty about this. Elizabeth suggested having a brief document to present to the Environment Committee. Sue said that the SC team is drafting such a short description. When there is a commitment of a critical mass of people (which would happen because the default would be

solar power, from which individuals could opt out), that encourages solar companies to invest in more solar generation.

Some pointed out that local solar panels would help with resiliency under severe weather, and by having it local, you reduce the loss of power due to long-distance transmission. Another person pointed out that this might work well with the V2G Technology, in that having a large group of Swarthmore residents committee to green energy might make it easier for V2G to expand their solar parking canopy. Sue added that perhaps this project could have some interface with the GEODE proposal to build a solar array at the county prison and expand EV charging for low income residents and hire returning citizens.

#### **9. Farmers' Market Table Update and Next Table Opportunities (8/20 and Fun Fair, 9/18)**

The Farmers' Market table this past weekend went well. We had a waste sorting activity, plus information on native plants. We will want to have information on solarize Delaware County. We will share a table with the Tree Committee in August, and we will also have a table at the Fun Fair on September 18.

#### **10. Code Updates**

Code Updates are on hold right now since the planning commission is busy.

#### **11. Naturalization of Yards Incentives**

Some people have asked about incentive for Naturalization of Yard. Could we have a sign, or some way to recognize those who have made their yard sustainable. This is something to think about for the future. The Audubon Society may have ideas about this.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted.

John McKinstry  
Co-Clerk