

Swarthmore Environmental Advisory Council

April 25, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Present: Susan Kelly, Chair; members Matt McCabe and Tracy Bouvette; associate members Annie Fox, Phil Coleman, Jennifer Pfluger, and Melissa Tier; Borough Council liaison Lauren McKinney.

Absent: members Ashley Grider, Doug Hasbrouck, Jon Penders, Aurora Winslade.

Guests: Swarthmore College students Aaron Metheny and Nathan Graf.

Public Comment:

Carbon Pricing

Aaron Metheny and Nathan Graf reviewed the Carbon Pricing Resolution for the EAC to consider recommending to Borough Council that had been first discussed in the March meeting. The group reviewed and discussed examples of municipalities and regions which have acted on carbon. Aaron and Nathan reported on their success as students on campus at getting support from the College president on the resolution and their efforts. The group also discussed the limitations on what was possible for the Borough to enact as it is outside the charter of the Borough government to assess fees on carbon producing items such as gasoline or home heating fuel. The resolution has wide support, but action was postponed given the EAC had recently forwarded a resolution supporting EQAT's efforts to require PECO to increase its use of locally sourced solar power. To close, Aaron and Nathan showed a short video, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, that reflected the movement on campus in support of reducing carbon emissions.

Approval of March Minutes

A quorum was not present to approve the March minutes.

A Few Steps

Phil discussed the plans for A Few Steps to host an information table at the Farmers Market. Firm plans and schedule is still shaping up. The Few Steps member at the table will be there to discuss actions citizens can take on their own to take better care of the environment. The group discussed including information on the "It's Not Trash" initiative.

Sustainability Office/students

Melissa updated the group on activities at the College Sustainability Office. She reported that Green Advisors have been hired for the coming year and President's Fellows have been selected as well. One of the immediate areas of focus will be expansion of the on-campus vegetable gardens with new gardens planned around some of the new dormitories under construction. Melissa also discussed efforts at the College to increase recycling. The Office feels that current recycling rates are too low as only 30% of waste is currently recycled. Melissa said the goal will be to more than double current rates. The initial work on this initiative will be to increase the availability of recycling bins on campus.

It's Not Trash

Annie gave an update on the effort to ensure residents dispose of unwanted household items appropriately. Ashley is coordinating efforts, but Annie believed that new sheets were being uploaded on the website and that the link to the Borough website was working well. She will post again on Nextdoor.Swarthmore with the hope of enlisting more help to work on the project. The volunteers she recruited so far are being very slow to complete assignments, and she did not know how other volunteers were doing.

Little Crum Creek Park

Susan and Matt reviewed ongoing work at the Park. The SRS clean-up, originally scheduled for March 31st, was rescheduled for April 28th. The group discussed the comments received from neighbors about the installation of the porta-potty within the Park. Several neighbors have complained about the appearance and location of the porta potty. Lauren, as Borough Council member, has been receiving the complaints. She has explained that the porta-potty will only be there until September and that its installation was intended to allow greater use of the Park, particularly by children. The group discussed the possibility of writing a letter to the Swarthmorean to explain the reasons for the porta-potty and its location, but no decision was made. The installation of the "Storybook Walk" appears to be proceeding on schedule for completion on May 13th, with a rain date of May 20th. Susan, Tracy, and Matt agreed to meet in the park with Lori Schnick from CRC to discuss new trees and shrubs to be purchased with recent grant money and to schedule the delivery and planting of the new trees and shrubs.

Tracy raised the issue of damage caused by the traditional July 4th horseshoe tournament in the Park. The horseshoes cause damage, such as divots in the ground, which previously have not been adequately repaired. The group discussed whether repair of any such damage could be a condition to the permit issued by the Borough to allow the tournament. Lauren agreed to see if such a condition would be possible.

Report from Borough Council

Lauren reported that the resolution supporting EQAT's efforts to require PECO to increase use of locally sourced solar power would be introduced at the May 1st working session and brought up for a vote at the May 8th legislative session. Lauren also mentioned that she and Annie would be attending the upcoming regional EAC Network Conference.

Pesticides/Herbicides

Susan updated the group on efforts to work toward an educational presentation within the local Multi Municipal Environmental Advisory Committee (Rose Valley, Nether Providence, Rutledge and Swarthmore).

Recording secretary,

Matt McCabe