

Allentown EAC Meeting
October 21, 2019
City Hall, 5th Floor Conference Room

Members in attendance: Alejandra Soler, Liz Hunt, David Melman, Jennifer Swann, Tinku Khanwalkar

Members absent: Keith Hespeth, Tim Duch

Non-members present: Janet (Barnes Lane property owner), Diana (Barnes Lane property owner), Barb (Barnes Lane property owner), Laura (Muhlenberg student), Patrick (Muhlenberg student), Matthew (faculty at Muhlenberg neuroscience department), Ben (Muhlenberg student interested in climate action), Kalyna Procyk (Muhlenberg Sustainability coordinator), Greg Klepeis (Allentown resident initiated a 20's and 30's meet-up group), Christa Kraftician (Spillman Farmer Architects)

- Welcome and introductions for new people in attendance
- September minutes were reviewed and approved
- Tinku made a motion that the Allentown EAC should support the LVPC application for the BUILD Grant. The motion was unanimously approved. Tinku to submit the support letter to the United States Department of Transportation.

Micro-mobility

- There was extensive discussion of how the EAC can help to persuade Allentown to further support bike sharing. The decision was made that the first step would be an informal statement by David Melman to City Council to raise their awareness of the benefits of micro-mobility. The statement can be made in the near term. This can be followed by step two which would be a more formal presentation and requested resolution by City Council in support of micro-mobility (attended by as many micro-mobility supporters we can bring to the meeting). This step would need to be preceded by additional on-on-one contacts with Council members, the Mayor and the Economic Development and Planning Department. In addition, City Council needs 60 days for a resolution.
- It was noted that the LVPC has included bike sharing programs in its draft comprehensive plan. The comment period for the LVPC comprehensive plan is closed.
- Tinku Khanwalkar made a motion that bike sharing be more forcefully addressed in the climate action plan components of the EAC's comments on Allentown's Vision 2030 Plan. The motion was seconded by Liz. Following discussion of the motion and input from Kalyna Procyk, Tinku modified the motion to replace the term "bike sharing" with the term "micro-

mobility”. The motion passed unanimously. Alejandra to develop the needed language for Tinku to insert into the EAC comments.

Student Internships

- There was discussion of how student internships can be structured to assist the EAC. Muhlenberg can work with us on internships - we need to produce bullet points for each: climate action plan, plastics campaign, inventory of trees. Each of the bullet points then need to be turned into tasks. For effective student involvement we need to decide:
 1. What piece can the students take on.
 2. Who will manage the students
- Brian Hillard noted that the state was conducting outreach in helping the development of local climate action plans. One component is creating a system that pairs groups with universities; train and pair student up with the city. Heidi Kunka, a Muhlenberg graduate who is now with the Pennsylvania DEP, has a great background on developing student internships around climate action planning. Brian will reach out to Heidi and we will let her guide us. She is one of 2 people working on the PA climate action plan. This is round one - they are likely doing round 2 - new session does not start until July and needs to be teed up by December.
- Tinku Khanwalkar noted that Building 21 High School has expressed an interest in doing the tree inventory requested by the Parks and Recreation Department. The school already has an app that the students can use so this is perfect for them. Goal of the inventory is to both identify trees and find out where they need to plant more. Tinku offered to work with Building 21 on this. We could divvy up the aspects of the plan so that all colleges could get involved.
- The suggestion was made that additional institutions could also be involved with climate action planning. We could divide components among them. For example, developing the climate inventory is a huge project and would need more than one or two students.
- It was suggested that the first step is the emissions data that determines the next steps (storm water management etc.). Some felt that these can be parallel processes. It is most important to develop goals and policies – short, medium and long term. This will be a huge effort.

Single Use Plastics

- Tinku reported on a meeting she was at with council woman Mota who expressed tremendous interest in dealing with single use plastics. This is a significant concern for the residents of the city. It may be possible to ask City Council to pass a resolution that encourages business not to give out straws or bags right way.
- Another idea is to have a certificate of recognition issued by City Council or the Mayor to businesses that commit to cutting back on plastics.
- It may be possible to have students go to businesses and survey them on this idea.

- Alejandra noted that some companies are now turning plastics into oil and gas for energy . This could reduce costs which would help to move forward as the theme for anything moving forward is zero dollars.
- Liz will continue to lead the plastics campaign for the EACm, with input from Jennifer and Alejandra

EAC comments on 2030 comprehensive plan

- Concern was expressed that the EAC's recommendation for Allentown to achieve net neutrality by 2050 is too late and should be 2030 instead. The EAC concluded that asking for net neutrality by 2030 would harm the EAC's credibility. Philadelphia 's goal is to reduce emissions by 80% by 2050. Ditto for Pennsylvania.
- The issue was put to a vote and the 2050 date was retained on a 4 to 1 vote.
- There was discussion of the need for aggressive interim goals: related to renewable energy, transportation, efficient buildings efficient transportation
- Tinku reported that she met with the Mayor and Joe McMahon to discuss EAC matters and Joe McMahon said that he will drive the development of a climate action plan for Allentown.
- Tinku moved to file the comments with the change on wording of micro-mobility as agreed. The motion was approved.

Barnes Lane Property

- Tinku noted that in the meeting with Councilwoman Mota, she found out that the Councilwoman lives near Barnes Lane and may be interested in a City Council resolution seeking an environmental impact statement prior to development of the property. It is unclear, however whether City Council has the authority to do this. David Melman offered to bring this up with the City Solicitor following which we can coordinate with Cynthia Mota if the solicitor sees no issue.
- A motion was made by David Melman for EAC to put this issue on City Council's agenda. The motion unanimously passed. All parties advocating for environmental assessment should be sure to attend the Council meeting when it is on the agenda. David Melman can give the presentation to City Council. He will lead with the stormwater concerns.
- The EAC would also need to check with public works - city has to abide by the EPA MS4 requirements.

Report on Meeting with Public Works

- Tinku reported that both she and Jennifer attended the Public Works meeting (Jennifer for the first half and Tinku for the second half). Tinku noted that the City is engaged in many projects that demonstrate strong environmental stewardship which should be more readily available to the public. She subsequently met with Craig Messinger and his staff to put

together a list of all the things they are working on so we can add them to our webpage. This could be linked to a public works page. Alejandra and Liz will work on the web page when the information is available.

Report on Meeting with Mayor

- Tinku reported on her meeting with the Mayor. Aside for the climate action plan discussions, the Mayor was particularly interested in making sure that EAC vacancies are filled and reappointments are promptly made.

Report on City Council Meeting

- David Melman reported that he expressed the Allentown EAC's strong support for Craig Messinger's appointment as Director of Public Works.

EAC Support of Allentown as Green City Partner for Earth Day 2020

Tinku explained that she was contacted by Earth Day Network for Allentown to sign up to be a Green City Partner for Earth Day 2020. She noted that Kristin Baringer is willing to do this. As Liz Hunt will be attending meetings with Kristin Baringer on the Keep Allentown Beautiful Initiative (next meeting November 5th at 5:00pm IN CITY COUNCIL chambers), she can be the EAC lead on this as well.

Liz Hunt suggested that future agendas need to have a section for old business and a separate section for new business. She also suggested that each agenda item should have an allotted period of time and she can be the time keeper to obtain agreement to go over the allotted time.