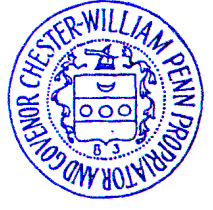




THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



COMMISSIONERS
Marian D. Moskowitz
Josh Maxwell
Michelle Kichline

Brian N. O’Leary, AICP
Executive Director

PLANNING COMMISSION
Government Services Center, Suite 270
601 Westtown Road
P. O. Box 2747
West Chester, PA 19380-0990
(610) 344-6285 Fax (610) 344-6515

Chester County Environmental and
Energy Advisory Board

Hybrid Meeting – GSC Suite 351W/Zoom
Government Services Center
April 26, 2023

AGENDA

2:30 p.m. 1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Welcome

Jess Cadorette, Chair

2:35 p.m. 2. ACTION ITEM

- A. Appointment of 2023 Secretary
- B. Adoption of Jan. 25, 2023 Minutes

*Nominating Committee
Jess Cadorette, Chair*

2:45 p.m. 3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. EEAB Subcommittee Reports
 - 1) Environmental Subcommittee
Overview of Woodlands & Tree Protection Webpage
 - 2) Clean Energy Subcommittee
i. Update on PA Climate Change Advisory Committee
- B. Climate Action Plan and Plan Review Process
- C. Watersheds 2045 Plan Status

*Carol Stauffer
Jim Wylie, Subcommittee Chair
Steve Krug
Carol Stauffer
Kate Hutelmyer*

3:25 p.m. 4. UPDATES AND COMMENTS

- A. Facilities Director’s Report
- B. Planning Commission Director’s Report
- C. Sustainability Director’s Report
- D. Other Updates
- E. Public Comment

*Jan Bowers
Brian O’Leary
Rachael Griffith
Board Members*

4:00 p.m. 5. ADJOURNMENT

Next quarterly meeting – July 26th, 2023

Attachments:
Draft January 25, 2023 Minutes



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Environmental and Energy Advisory Board
Government Services Center Suite 351W/Zoom

January 25, 2023
Hybrid meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON: Jan Bowers; David Busch; Seung Ah Byun; Jess Cadorette Chair; Joseph DiRocco; Brian O'Leary, Secretary; Steve Krug; Paul Spiegel, Vice Chair; Jim Wylie, Wyatt Williams.

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Mark Connolly; Carol DeWolf; Karena DiLeo; Ann Hutchinson; Sarah Sharp, Dave Stauffer.

OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON: Beth Cunliffe; Rachael Griffith, Sustainability Director; Gene Huller; Kate Hutelmyer, Water Resources Planner; Sally Warren; Richard Whiteford - citizen.

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Rachel Roberts; Christian Strohmaier; Kevin Warren

OTHERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Teri Dickinson, Al Wright

CALL TO ORDER:

The Environmental and Energy Advisory Board meeting, held in the Government Services Center Suite 351W and via Zoom video/audio on Wednesday, January 25, 2023, was called to order at 2:30 P.M. by Chair Jess Cadorette.

Ms. Cadorette welcomed two new members, who are replacing Jon Altshul of Westtown Township (Municipal Managers Consortium Representative), and Will Williams of West Chester Borough (Citizen Representative) respectively. Introducing themselves was Joseph DiRocco, the new Municipal Managers Consortium Representative, and Assistant Manager and Finance Director for Tredyffrin Township, and Wyatt Williams, the new Citizen Representative to this board, and Sustainability Coordinator for West Whiteland Township.

ACTION ITEMS:

Mr. Steve Krug reported that The Nominating Committee met to discuss the appointment of 2023 Officers. The Committee met with and asked if the current officers, Jess Cadorette, Chair, and Paul Spiegel, Vice-Chair, would like to continue in their roles for this year. Both responded affirmatively. Mr. Brian O'Leary asked for any other nominations. No other nominations offered.

A MOTION TO VOTE FOR MS. CADORETTE AS CHAIR AND MR. SPIEGEL AS VICE-CHAIR FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM, BEGINNING 1/1/2023 AND ENDING ON 12/31/2023 WAS MADE BY MR. KRUG, SECONDED BY MS. BOWERS AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE BOARD. MOTION CARRIED.

Approval of October 26, 2022 Minutes:

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 26, 2022 MEETING WAS MADE BY MR. WILEY, SECONDED BY MR. O'LEARY, AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE BOARD. MOTION CARRIED.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Subcommittee Reports.

Environmental Subcommittee:

Ms. Griffith reported in place of Ms. Stauffer who is the staff lead on this subcommittee for the woodlands protection effort but who is not present today. The Environmental Subcommittee has provided input via email on a webpage that will be posted on the Planning Commission's website and will focus on woodland protection, tree planting and reforestation programs. A link will be shared with all board members when the webpage is launched in the next few weeks.

Mr. Krug added that he would like the environmental subcommittee to also look at environmental justice issues. There are a number of new environmental justice grants in this area and he asked if this subcommittee can take up this new area of environmental justice. Ms. Cadorette agreed this is an important topic and she asked if anyone on this committee would like to take up this new task.

Mr. O'Leary noted that the Planning Commission is in the process of creating a new social equity data area on the CCPlanning website. This will be a great resource for those seeking grants.

Ms. Griffith asked if the Environmental Subcommittee can take on new members who can focus on environmental justice, and Ms. Cadorette confirmed yes. Ms. Griffith said to date this has been an ad-hoc committee that has met once or twice, but there could be regularly scheduled meetings. Ms. Cadorette indicated she would like to be involved on this subcommittee, cannot chair, is very interested in Environmental Justice and Social Equity, and hopes that someone else can Chair this subcommittee. Ms. Griffith added that CCPC staff can provide support to the subcommittee.

Ms. Hutchinson added that this subcommittee has been focused on land use regulations and preserving land, but environmental justice is critical.

Mr. Connolly commented that tree planting is a good thing, but that tree-checking and inventory of trees is important to make a long-term difference. He thinks a tree database or grant to initiate this effort is needed.

Clean Energy Subcommittee:

Mr. Wylie recapped the subcommittee's Solar Stakeholder Roundtable event that was held on December 8, 2022. He highlighted some of the barriers that were identified in this meeting, which were also provided in the board packet.

Mr. Wylie added there are actions that could be taken. Those he listed were:

1. Develop a series of Solar Guidance Brochures for municipal governments, installers, and adopters, with guidance on priority siting, financing, zoning, permitting templates, installer ratings sites, case studies (good and bad).
2. Promote the DEP's Shared Energy Manager program with municipalities or a Solarize Program in Chester County. He noted that he had heard that Solarize Philadelphia might want to broaden its scope to the larger region, and he would like to encourage that possibility.

Mr. Connolly asked if the Planning Commission could include the Climate Action Plan recommendations in their plan review letters. He also suggested a campaign on promoting solar panel installation in HOA developments.

Mr. O'Leary responded that CCPC will look into how to include the Climate Action Plan in review letters. Ms. Griffith stated that CCPC will soon begin outreach to HOAs on a variety of sustainability topics, one of which is solar panels.

Mr. Wylie brought up the municipal clean energy cohort program the Subcommittee is beginning to plan. The program will bring together the 16 municipalities in Chester County who have adopted the Ready for 100% Resolution to collaborate on next steps.

Mr. Krug reported on the recent building codes training that SEI held, which was one of the Subcommittee's planned initiatives for the year. Eight people attended the training on January 24, 2023, and continuing education credits were offered. The content was excellent and gave an overview of where codes are going in the future. There was a suggestion to have another training, especially for those who need credits, in May 2023, as many of the code enforcers need the credits by June 2023.

Mr. Wylie continued that the subcommittee is tracking a range of building benchmarking tools being developed by DEP, DVRPC, GBU. The subcommittee is looking at a benchmarking online toolkit.

The Subcommittee is planning a 2023 Solar Adopters Conference that will share success stories and case studies of larger solar adopters like campus managers and school districts. At this event, the Subcommittee would like to present an action-plan from the Stakeholders Roundtable in December 2022 and to communicate the benefits of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

Municipal Plastic Bag Bans

Ms. Griffith reminded everyone that the Commissioners are asking for this board's recommendations on how to support local municipal plastic bag ban initiatives. Mr. Wiley asked how many municipalities have plastic bag bans. Mr. DiRocco said Tredyffrin Township has one in place that was modeled after Easttown's ban and that he thinks goes into effect in March 2023. Mr. O'Leary thought sharing a list of municipalities that have passed a plastic bag ban ordinance would be helpful.

Mr. Williams added that West Whiteland has been looking at a plastic bag ban and have reviewed other ordinances and engaged with stakeholders.

Ms. Hutchinson asked if we have a fact sheet on this topic that we can share. Mr. O'Leary suggested that we prepare one.

Ms. Cadorette added that before we reinvent the wheel, the League of Women Voters and Penn Environment are working very hard on this issue and she will see what resources they have first.

To recap what was discussed, Mr. Krug summarized:

- 1) develop a new fact/information sheet;
- 2) coordinate with the Health Dept;
- 3) learn what the recycling enforcement option is (if any);

Mr. O'Leary added:

4) develop an outreach process.

Sustainability Summit Event Discussion

Ms. Griffith said the Planning Commission is planning a Sustainability Summit this fall and the goal is to engage a variety of different audiences who are involved in implementing the Climate Action Plan. Ms. DeWolf suggested defining the audience better to plan this event and what you want to accomplish.

UPDATES AND COMMENTS:

Planning Commission Director's Report

Mr. O'Leary reported that the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority was created to bring passenger rail back to Pottstown, Reading, and Phoenixville. There is a Federal Corridor ID Program that the authority is applying to.

He reported CCPC is also updating the public transportation plan this year, as well as a county-wide trail plan. He noted that PennDOT did get control of the Philadelphia/Thorndale right-of-way which will be used for extending the Chester Valley Trail from Exton to Downingtown.

On the smart growth front, Mr. O'Leary noted that CCPC recently completed the Rural Centers Guide and a Missing Middle Housing Guide.

Sustainability Director's Report

Ms. Griffith shared that the Planning Commission is conducting an inventory of municipal solar power ordinances.

She reported that the Climate Action Plan metrics have been finalized with the exception of those related to Chester County Facilities, and that data is being collected. Also mentioned was the Sustainability E-Newsletter and board members are encouraged to submit relevant events for inclusion.

Ms. Griffith also provided an update on CCPC's open space municipal outreach project, which she noted is being conducted in partnership with area land trusts and identifies the tools available to each municipality.

Facilities Director's Report

Ms. Bowers gave an update on the Southeast PA RPPA (Regional Power Purchase Agreement) group which continues to meet to identify a different pathway for purchasing electricity, and how a procurement group might be structured. The counties decided one more year of purchasing conventional energy was needed. The county's current electricity rate is 4.9 cents per kilowatt hour for 2023 and 6.7 cents per kilowatt hour for 2024, which is less of an increase than expected.

Board Updates

Ms. Byun gave an update on the County Stormwater Management Ordinance which was adopted last August 2022 by the Commissioners and approved by DEP in November 2022. Now all municipalities are required to adopt this within 6 months (May 2023).

Ms. Kate Hutelmeyer, Water Resources Planner at CCWRA, gave an update on the new Watersheds plan. The department is gathering input from stakeholders on metrics, and they anticipate Watersheds 2045 will be complete by the end of this year (2023).

Mr. Krug added that on February 28, 2023, Smart Energy Initiative of Southeastern PA will be holding the 11th Annual Energy Briefing and will focus on the Inflation Reduction Act funding on various energy projects. He asked about the County's progress on EV acquisition and deployment. Ms. Bowers responded that the RFPs for the engineering consultants to plan this project, should go out next week to get this program started.

Ms. Cadorette added that also on February 28, a number of environmental groups (Conservation Voters of PA, etc.) will be giving updates on the Inflation Reduction Act.

Mr. Connolly added that the Phoenixville Green Team will be having an Earth Day event.

Public Comments

Mr. Richard Whiteford, citizen, commented he has heard East Bradford Township has a higher carbon footprint than West Chester or Exton and it comes from energy lost in the homes. He wanted to know our local builders could be more educated about insulation.

Online/Zoom citizen guest, Al Wright, Supervisor for East Fallowfield Township, stated he loved the work the EEAB is doing and all of the resources. Regarding Plastic Bag Ban's he advised this board to reach out to municipal managers so they can explain the carrot-stick process. He also recommended that for event planning, it would be better to have several smaller events tailored to specific audiences, rather than one big event.

The next quarterly meeting will be on April 26, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, A MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 4:00 PM. WAS MADE BY MR. O'LEARY SECONDED BY MR. KRUG AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE BOARD.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian N. O'Leary, AICP
Secretary

BNO/CJS/RG/saw