

Upper Merion Township Environmental Advisory Council
Regularly Scheduled Meeting for June 18th, 2019

The Upper Merion Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) met for its regularly scheduled meeting on June 18th, 2019 in the Upper Merion Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE:

Zach Davis, Chair
Janet Serfass, Staff Liaison
Courtney Smith, Secretary
Carole Kenney, Board Liason
David Newman
Alexandra Moulton
Kabindra Shakya

ABSENT:

Brittany Grala

MEETING MINUTES:

Ms. Moulton motioned to approve the May 2019 minutes, which was seconded by Ms. Smith, with all in favor.

OLD BUSINESS:

Donations to the Community Garden and Senior Center

The committee donated two compost bins and one rain barrel to the community garden, and one compost bin to the senior center. It was determined that more rain barrels will need to be ordered as there are only two left in supply.

Ready For 100 Resolution

Mr. Davis read the resolution to the committee for their review, which stated the township's commitment to utilizing renewable energy and resources, following the example of world leaders, state government officials, and other local municipalities. A motion to present to the Board of Supervisors, with the assistance of a Power Point presentation, was made by Ms. Moulton and seconded by Mr. Newman with all in favor.

Penn Environment Initiative

The committee discussed support of the initiative, which is in the same vein of the Ready For 100 Resolution but is more specific to the state of Pennsylvania. A motion to add the EAC to the list of supporters of the initiative was made by Mr. Shakya and seconded by Mr. Newman with all in favor.

Single-Use Plastic Ban

The committee reviewed their draft Power Point presentation regarding the reduction of single-use plastics being provided by businesses within Upper Merion Township. Three approaches will be presented: One, introducing ordinances to prevent (or severely limit) the amount of single-use plastic bags or plastic straws being provided to customers and charging fees to businesses who do not comply; Two, a voluntary model where businesses make a public pledge to reduce single-use plastics where the businesses will then be advertised by the township as being considered "green"; Three, a combination of the first and second approach where the voluntary model is first implemented and then a township ordinance would later follow.

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While these approaches are important to the future of the plastics ban, it was also determined that public education on the importance of single-use plastic reduction will be imperative. This will be addressed through providing literature at events such as the weekly Farmers Market, general canvassing, and the use of social media.

At the moment, action items include creating lists of businesses to reach out to should any of these approaches become active, research on push-back from local businesses in other municipalities who have adopted similar policies, and presentation of the above approaches at various workshops for citizen committees.

BCA Grant Allocation

The EAC was awarded a \$2,000.00 grant. \$1,000.00 of that grant will be used to provide new rain barrels and new compost bins, and the rest will be used for marketing materials like magnets and reusable shopping bags.

NEW BUSINESS:

Solar Energy

The committee discussed the ongoing efforts to utilize solar energy within the township. Some options would be to have covered parking at the township building with solar panels on the roof (as several solar companies offer a type of solar roof tiles) or to have the charging docks for electric vehicles powered by solar energy to avoid the current issue of too many cars causing the power to short out. Geoff Hickman, Director of Public Works, has been in talks with Tangent, a solar energy company, regarding the township's solar needs. Another company, Community Energy Solar, was also mentioned as a possible resource.

ECDC – Trout Creek

Joe Brophy of the ECDC has reached out to the EAC to assist with the lack of wildlife existing in Trout Creek. As Ms. Serfass pointed out, the water is considered "impaired", or polluted to a point that it impairs the support of wildlife. There is an MS4 mandate that currently exists which requires the Township to address the impairment.

TerraCycle

The committee discussed reaching out to businesses to see if they would be interested in working with TerraCycle, a company which claims to recycle the "unrecyclable", such as tubes of toothpaste and other types of waste. These claims have yet to be fully researched, but several schools within the township are already engaging with the business.

Farmers Market Dates

It was confirmed that Ms. Smith and Mr. Newman will be at the Farmers Market from 9:00-11:00 AM and 10:00-1:00 PM respectively. The use of a canopy was discussed, and it was determined that it may be a good use of funds to purchase one specifically for outdoor events that the EAC will be attending.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business to discuss, Ms. Moulton motioned to adjourn which was seconded by Mr. Shakya with all in favor at 7:57 PM.

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Zach Davis, Chair

Minutes Approved: _____

Minutes Entered: _____