

The regular meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) was held tonight. Members present were Kurt Ahrens, Yuri Berg, Barbara Duffy, Tom McHugh, Brad Pransky and Lorna Rosenberg. Ex-officio members present were Earl Stamm and Beth Yount. Township liaison present was Nancy K. Gibson, Public Information Officer. Guests present were Nancy O'Neill, Ross Kaplan, and Chuck Westerlund and Nick Mazzone from Solar City. See attached attendance sheet.

1. **Call to Order:** Mr. Ahrens called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.
2. **Presentation by Solar City (SC):** Mr. Ahrens introduced Chuck Westerlund of SC to describe options for adding solar power to homes. Started in 2006 in California, SC expanded to the East Coast 5 years ago. It has a 38% market share, the highest in the country. Mr. Westerlund described how SC makes residential solar power affordable but not requiring a huge upfront payment. Instead, SC retains ownership of the panels it installs in a 20-year contract, and homeowners pay monthly fees for the solar energy they use. Mr. Westerlund said the solar energy fee has always been lower than traditional energy costs. Some houses are not suitable candidates for solar panels for reasons like orientation to the sun, nearby trees and roof pitch. Others can use panels, but owners may still need to purchase some of their energy from traditional suppliers. Each home is different, but SC can quickly calculate the specific options for each home. Installation takes about a day but the process from first meeting to power-on can take 4 to 6 months. Homeowners can choose among 1) the lowest monthly payment up front that will increase 2.9% per year; 2) a higher base rate that is guaranteed not to change; 3) an outright purchase of the solar panels, which could be eligible for a tax credit; or 4) paying for the solar energy in advance, which qualifies for a 27% discount. In response to members questions, Mr. Westerlund said 1) SC was starting a Small Business Division to accommodate medium size

entities like schools; 2) SC was building a plant in New York after which panels will no longer be made in China and shipped; 3) with the exception of damage caused by balls (baseballs, basketballs, footballs, etc.), SC covers repair costs; 4) new owners purchasing a home with the panels are subject to the agreement unless the original homeowner pays it off; and 5) a textured coating prevents glare from the panels. Ms. Rosenberg knew of a Township SC customer who was very pleased with the service and suggested the homeowner might host an open house, as proposed by Ms. Duffy, to raise awareness in the community. Members thanked Mr. Westerlund for all of his information.

**3. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:** Mr. Berg made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 22, 2015 meeting; seconded by Mr. Pransky. The motion was unanimously approved.

**4. Committee Reports:**

*A. Communications and Engagement Committee:* Mr. Ahrens announced the distribution of the July 2015 EAC e-Newsletter last Friday.

*B. Water and Ecology Committee:* Ms. Duffy submitted a report (see attached). Although the committee did not have an official meeting, she informally brainstormed ideas with Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership about ways to remove invasive plants on public and private property within the Township. The Bird Town proposal will be reviewed at an August meeting.

*C. School Liaison Committee:* Ms. Rosenberg submitted a report (see attached). Wyncote Elementary School will have a grand opening September 3 with student-led green tours. Ms. Rosenberg would like to use the District food truck event on October 4 to interact with the people in-line for food, either polling or educating them. Mr. Ahrens suggested education about composting would be timely.

*D. Energy and Emissions Committee:* Mr. McHugh emailed members a draft letter to the Commissioners to recommend the Public Works Committee consider a reverse energy auction “to procure the lowest carbon emission electricity practical and the highest percentage from clean renewable sources that is financially responsible for our municipal electric accounts.” Mr. Pransky suggested he clarify that the Township would bear no expense from an auction whether or not the Township chooses a supplier from it. Mr. Berg made a motion that the letter as edited (see attached) be directed to the Public Works Committee; seconded by Mr. Pransky. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. McHugh commented on an article about the problems of contaminated single-stream recycling. He asked how much revenue the Township receives for single-stream recycling versus the cardboard-only recycling collected at the Public Works Facility and Waverly Road Leaf Site. He wants to determine if the EAC should promote cardboard drop-off recycling. [The Refuse/Recycling Superintendent reports that the Township gets \$12.23/ton for single stream and \$35.00/ton for cardboard-only today, but the market fluctuates.]

**5. Old Business:**

*A. Draft Zoning Ordinance:* Mr. Ahrens will host a discussion and review on the Draft Zoning Code at his home on July 22 at 7:30 p.m.

*B. Educating Citizen Committees about Sustainability:* The discussion was tabled.

*C. Annual Sustainability Report:* Ms. Rosenberg has nearly completed the report but needs a friend’s technical assistance to create the look that she wants.

**6. New Business:** Mr. McHugh offered to email members a copy of a 2012 flood plan for Abington Township that he thinks would greatly benefit many Cheltenham residents in Glenside.

**7. Announcements:**

July 20, 2015, 7:30 p.m.  
Township Administration Building

- A. Ms. Gibson distributed copies of "ShopRite Earth 2015," which was mailed to the EAC.
  - B. Ms. Gibson announced the GVF Annual Sustainability Breakfast on September 14 from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. in King of Prussia for \$38.
  - C. Members were reminded that the EAC will not meet in August 2015.
8. **Adjournment:** Mr. Pransky made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Rosenberg. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.



Bryan T. Havir  
Township Manager

Submitted by: Nancy K. Gibson  
Public Information Officer

ATTENDANCE LIST



# Environmental Advisory Council

Monday, July 20, 2015 @ 7:30 P.M.

Cheltenham Township Administration Building  
8230 Old York Road, Elkins Park

(Please Print Clearly)

| Print Name       | Mailing Address                         | Telephone Number | E-mail Address             |
|------------------|---|------------------|----------------------------|
| Earl Stamm       |   | 215-887-2612     | estamm@verizon.net         |
| Ross Kaplan      |   | 215-694-2847     | Acudoc728@yahoo.com        |
| Beth Yount       |   | 215-635-1894     |                            |
| Chuck Westerlund |   | 717-283-7156     | CWesterlund@Solarcity.com  |
| Barbara Duff     |   |                  | kduff@comcast.net          |
| Nancy O'Neill    | 114 Carroll Ave<br>*add to water supply | 207-909-0050     | noorbeck@gmail.com         |
| Tom McHugh       |   | 215-688-1343     | tom.mchugh@monitordata.com |
| Yuri Berg        |   |                  | yuriberg@msn.com           |
| Kurt Alvens      |   |                  | kFahren@gmail.com          |
| BRAS Prandy      |   | 215-782-5559     | Brandy@atcc.org            |
|                  |   |                  |                            |
|                  |   |                  |                            |

## CHELTENHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL- July 20, 2015

**Committee:** Water & Ecology

**Liaison to the Council:** Barbara Duffy

**Date of last meeting:** July 13, 2015

**Date of next meeting:** August 10, 2015

### **Questions for the board/larger group:**

### **Action Items Completed:**

### **Action Items In-progress/Pending:**

- **TTF Partnership-** Postponed the June 21st "Backyards with Benefits" tour of the riparian buffers that were planted last fall. Keep tabs on TTF website & twp news for the rescheduled date. Working with W&E committee on ideas for future riparian care and invasive removal plans. For upcoming TTF educational events visit their website listed below.
- **Curtis Arboretum Master Plan-** Steering Committee met in May. Committee continues to work on the first draft of the plan.
- **Invasive Controls with Public Works & Parks Superintendent** – TTF & W&E committee are working to create a priority list of riparian areas in township parks that should be targeted for invasive control.
- **TreeVitalize-** November 14<sup>th</sup> (10am to 2pm) planting at Curtis Arboretum with the ponds being the target areas for plantings.
- **America in Bloom-** committee is planning for the Elkins Park Train Station Garden and slope planting. SEPTA is on-board and plans are moving forward. Planting is still targeted for October and fund raising continues.
- **Native Plant Ordinance** – Montco Planning is helping to locate the draft document. (No word yet.) Discussed with STAC Chair the possibility of forming a new committee to start again on this ordinance.
- **"Herbicide Application Recommendations" Review-** was up for discussion but tabled due to need for more information from the township &/or contractor regarding whether the recommendations were followed this past year. (Adding to the discussion will be the recent assessment from the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer findings on glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans".)
- **Flooding Projects (DEP & Army Corps)** – Army Corp presented on Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup> the final draft of the Tookany Creek Watershed Flood Reduction Feasibility Study.
- **Bird Town** –application is still being discussed and a meeting is to be set up in August with Audubon to get more information on the program. (Small group already met in June to start working on putting together volunteers to work on a "Bird Town" subcommittee and to discussed partnering with schools.)

### **Announcements:**

#### **Check out these websites for upcoming events-**

**HS Park Events:** <http://highschoolpark.org>

Workday weekends all summer – check the website for more details.

**TTF Watershed Partnership Events:** <http://ttfwatershed.org/events/>

\*\*\*\*W&E committee meets at the Friends of HS Park office every 2nd Monday of the month- all is welcome! \*\*\*\*

Cheltenham EAC Schools Committee Action Minutes – July 13, 2015

Attendees: Melissa Twersky, Chris Edelstein, Lisa Donahue, Bill England, Kristen Strizel, Julie Slavet (TTF)

1. Set up meeting with Dr. Marseilles, the new Superintendent to discuss:
  - a. Establish a District-wide Green Team
  - b. His leadership is needed on Green Issues
  - c. Create an Eco-code or mission statement
2. At the Food Truck Fundraiser October 4<sup>th</sup>, have students from various schools take surveys and collect information or share knowledge with Cheltenham residents about green efforts in the community.
  - a. Raffle off rain barrels
  - b. Have students create an interactive and educational display (or gamis
3. Wyncote Grand Opening – almost 25 students are knowledgeable about the green features who will be giving tours on opening day – students will engage their parents to be involved in the green committee
4. EP – to continue having environmental leadership by students from the Elementary schools, which teachers to engage? Ms. Staroba, Ms. Jeffson, and Mrs Jacoby will be approached to work with the students on environmental education and actions.
  - a. Chris Edelstein and Lisa Donahue, to engage teachers at EP and all other schools in TTF stream keepers and teacher education in the fall
5. At the elementary level, the development of environmental clubs is a good way include young students in a club
6. The EAC Schools Committee will propose a path to engage CHS and Cedarbrook student in the design and construction of new Cedarbrook school in the fall 2015
7. Check with Dwight Nolt about Professional Development for Wyncote teachers regarding green features of the building
8. EAC Schools committee can encourage teacher and parent participation in TTF Watershed - Sreamkeepers and teacher training about the Tookany Watershed.

July 20, 2015

RE: Reverse energy auction services for municipal electric accounts

Dear Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_,

I am happy to have been asked by the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) to write this letter to the Board of Commissioners of The Township of Cheltenham. We hope that you will consider our recommendation that the services of Premiere Energy Auctions be reviewed and considered for Township municipal electric accounts. Information on Premiere Energy Auctions is available at: [www.myenergyauction.com/](http://www.myenergyauction.com/) and the unique value of their services are listed and described at: [www.myenergyauction.com/premiere-energy-auction/](http://www.myenergyauction.com/premiere-energy-auction/).

The concept of a reverse energy auction, where a significant number of utility suppliers work to underbid each other to win the privilege of supplying the electricity commodity to customers like The Township of Cheltenham, has the potential to reduce our electricity cost. The process also allows for a customer to specify the mix of energy sources from the highest carbon emissions of coal combustion to zero carbon sources.

It is our hope that the advantages of the reverse energy auction process of Premiere Energy Auctions be used to procure the lowest carbon emission electricity practical, and the highest percentage from clean renewable sources that is financially responsible for our municipal electric accounts.

Early in 2015 I met with Mr. Michael Weizman of Premiere Energy Auctions. After having spoken by phone a number of times, I thought it best to meet with Mr. Weizman face to face to discuss the services that Premiere Energy Auctions offers for municipalities. I was impressed with what I learned about those services, and suggested that he attend a Cheltenham Township EAC meeting to do a short presentation.

Mr. Weizman's PowerPoint presentation to the EAC on April 20, 2015 is attached as a pdf for your review. His presentation was most informative and well received by those attending the EAC meeting. As can be read in the EAC minutes from the April 20, 2015 meeting, the voting members in attendance were unanimous that the EAC recommend that Premiere Energy Auctions services be suggested to The Public Works Committee for further discussion.

It is important to add that the proprietary software intended for the use of Township administration staff and all of the services provided by Premiere Energy Auctions are provided free of charge. There is no cost to the Township for these services, and the Township is not required to accept the lowest utility provider bid or any bid resulting from a reverse auction.

For the reasons explained above, the members of the Township of Cheltenham EAC respectfully recommend that the services of Premiere Energy Auctions be explored further by the Public Works Committee and if determined to be worthy of further consideration, be then reviewed by members of Township Administration.

Sincerely,

Thomas K. McHugh, Chair  
Energy and Emissions Committee  
Township of Cheltenham Environmental Advisory Council