

**City of Reading Environmental Advisory Council  
Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019**

The regular monthly meeting of the City of Reading Environmental Advisory Council (“EAC”) was held for the transaction of general business on Tuesday, January the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, in the second floor conference room of the City of Reading Public Works Building.

EAC members present: A. Sellers, S. Case, A. Molteni, C. Kern and D. Beane

Others present-K. Lugo, D. Hunter, E. Lift and M. Sheffman

**Call To Order**

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 12.03 PM.

**Public Comment**

None

Members of the public present included Elan Lift and Michael Sheffman, both of Reading for 100.

**Administrative Matters**

Minutes from the EAC’s November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 meeting were approved upon motion of Mr. Beane, seconded by Mr. Molteni.

**Reorganization**

Ms. Sellers was re-elected Chair for the 2019 calendar year and Mr. Case was re-elected Vic-Chair for the 2019 calendar year, upon motion of Mr. Molteni, seconded by Mr. Kern.

**Planning Presentation**

David Hunter introduced himself as the City’s new planning manager. He reviewed the vision for the new Comprehensive Plan that is in the works. He said the last Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2000. He described five themes to be included in the new Plan.

1. The new Comprehensive Plan will include some “big plans”, including developing the riverfront and the rail yards, and “doing something with the Pagoda”.
2. A strategic plan is needed for downtown. Such a plan was mandated as part of the 2000 Comprehensive Plan, but was never acted upon. Priorities should

include moving forward with a “complete streets” initiative and “green downtown”. Mr. Hunter commented that fostering a “walkable urbanism” is the key to reviving struggling downtowns.

3. A comprehensive housing study is needed, to be accomplished by updating the City’s draft Housing Improvement and Blight Elimination Plan. Mr. Hunter plans to replace the term “Blight Elimination” in the title with “Reinvestment”. He said Reading lacks middle class housing stock that is essential to restoring the City’s economic viability.
4. An updated parking plan is needed. The last two such plans were completed in 1963 and 2008. Mr. Hunter described Reading as having an oversupply of parking downtown and an undersupply of parking in its residential neighborhoods.
5. The new Comprehensive Plan must address the City’s need to improve its records management, including making its archived records available online.

Mr. Case questioned where sustainability fits in with the new Comprehensive Plan. It was suggested by Mr. Hunter that the EAC compile a list of sustainability initiatives to be included in the new Comprehensive Plan. Towards that end, Ms. Sellers announced that, as Chair, she is creating a Strategic Planning Committee tasked to create such a list, which will then be voted upon by the full EAC. All members present volunteered to serve on the Committee. Ms. Smith will coordinate an initial meeting of the Committee.

Mr. Hunter also announced that the Pennsylvania Planning Association is currently working on an agenda for its Fall 2019 conference, which will be held in Reading. Mr. Hunter is the program Chair for the conference. He would like the EAC to have a visible role at the conference. Vendor tables will be available. He suggested the EAC might want to staff a vendor table.

### **Old Business**

- *Draft Internship Proposals:* No report.
- *Reading for 100 Resolution:* Mr. Case reported that a draft is done. Mr. Case reported that step one in the draft resolution is to document the City’s carbon footprint, and then to map out a realistic, achievable plan for arriving at a zero carbon goal by 2040. He said that action targets are needed in the resolution for holding everyone’s feet to the fire, otherwise the resolution will be meaningless. A final version of the resolution will be disseminated prior to the next monthly EAC meeting with the goal of voting thumbs-up or thumbs-down on the resolution.
- *Endorse EAC Representation for Community Organizations:* It was reported that this is a work in process.
- *Park Tour:* Scheduled for June the 5<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM.

## New Business

- With respect to this year's regional EAC meeting, it was reported that an update will be provided.
- Mr. Beane commented on the unexpected passing of the EAC's Council liaison, John Slifko, and remarked that Mr. Slifko is to be commended for elevating the role of the EAC as a resource arm of Council. Mr. Slifko almost never missed a scheduled EAC monthly meeting, and was an active participant in the EAC's deliberations and formulation of policy. Mr. Beane said that he wanted the minutes to reflect the EAC's appreciation to Mr. Slifko for a job well done. It was suggested by the members present that the EAC may want to plant a tree in Mr. Slifko's memory.

## Updates

- *Stormwater/MS4 Issues*: No report.
- *City-Owned Dams*: Mr. Beane reported on his having attended a Council meeting of the whole in November to discuss PaDEP's directive that Bernhart's Dam be drained and removed, at which Mr. Beane advised the City's Solicitor to review USEPA's Administrative Consent Order for Exide's lead remediation at Bernharts, noting that the Order may obligate Exide to perform additional characterization and remedial work at Bernharts if the lake is drained.
- *Recycling*: Mr. Lugo provided an update on reception to the new recycling receptacles.
- *Green Infrastructure Subcommittee*: Ms. Sellers reviewed the written subcommittee report appended as part of the meeting agenda.
- *BCTV*: Mr. Molteni noted that Ms. Curran-Myers is coordinating the EAC's next program offering.
- *Remediation at the Former American Chain and Cable Site*: No report.
- *Membership Update*: No report.
- *Plan Review/Comprehensive Plan*: See report of Mr. Hunter's presentation, *supra*.
- *18<sup>th</sup> Wonder Project-Little Free Library*: Ms. Sellers reported that the project is moving forward.
- *Greening Penn St. Plan*: Mr. Hunter announced his intention to include this item as part of the City's new Comprehensive Plan.

- *Mt. Penn Preserve*: No report.
- *West Shore Bypass Project*: No report.
- *RHS Project*: Ms. Sellers reported that she is working with students on conceptual plans for a 50' x 50' courtyard with a green roof. She anticipates the conceptual plan will be complete by February 21<sup>st</sup>.
- *Smart Growth Alliance*: No meeting.
- *DCNR Grant Project Ideas*: DCNR has announced that \$200,000.00 in grants are available for this grant award cycle. It was suggested that Ms. Smith schedule a meeting with the City's grant coordinator to discuss whether a grant application might be in order

The meeting was adjourned at 1.30 PM upon motion of Ms. Sellers and Mr. Kern.

The next meeting of the EAC will be held at the Public Works Center on Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, at Noon.

Respectfully submitted by David R. Beane, Acting Secretary