

Media Environmental Advisory Council
Annual Report
2014

Membership on the EAC during 2014 consisted of the following seven voting members:

Walt Cressler, chair
Brian Taussig-Lux, treasurer
Brendan O’Riordan, secretary
Zach Barner
Addie Ciannella
Greg Krykewycz
Vivian Williams

Kent Davidson was our liaison to Borough Council. This year the Borough of Media nearly completed the process of revising its Comprehensive Plan for the next ten years. The Media EAC participated closely in this process.

TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE

Bicycle Transportation Plan – In accordance with the new Media Borough Comprehensive Plan, the EAC began making steps towards improving bicycle infrastructure in the Borough. Funding was approved for the purchase of six bike racks, to accommodate ten bikes each. The Borough received another \$1,000 from the Delco Cycling Committee of the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia to purchase racks. Bicycle racks will be installed at strategic locations around town by Ralph DeRosa and the Public Works Department in early 2015. In order to promote bicycle riding in the Borough, the prominent placement of an eye-catching sculptural bike rack was discussed in collaboration with the Media Arts Council. Under the leadership of new EAC member Greg Krykewycz, preliminary plans for additional bicycle infrastructure was discussed, such as “sharrows” or shared rows on Borough streets. In his day job, Greg works for the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Council on bicycle infrastructure projects, and his involvement with Media’s initiatives in this area are a great asset. A formal Bicycle Transportation Plan proposal will be made by the EAC’s Transportation & Land Use Subcommittee in 2015.

Connecting the Circuit- Patrick Starr was invited to give a presentation about “The Circuit”, the Greater Philadelphia’s Regional Trail Network. The EAC subsequently sent a memo to Media Borough Council recommending support of “Connecting the Circuit.” Borough Council passed a resolution and sent a letter of support, and then sent notice to Delaware County Council of its interest in the county supporting the completion of the trail network.

CyclePhilly - Information was distributed about the CyclePhilly app, through which people can upload their bicycle routes. This data is used by regional planners to help determine trail and/or bike lane locations.

Wayfinding Signage Plan – Media Borough received a grant to create a signage plan from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. As an employee of the commission, EAC member Greg Krykewycz will work on this project with Karen Taussig-Lux. There is a two year timeline with a completion date of June 2016. The Borough has developed an RFP to seek a consultant to devise the plan, but further funding will be required for implementation of the plan. The EAC will work closely with the planners to ensure signage pertaining to bicycle infrastructure and Media’s energy efficiency initiatives are included.

South Avenue/Veterans Square Memorial Garden – The EAC, through its point person Addie Ciannella, consulted with Borough officials on the proposed sidewalk garden to be installed on South Avenue next to the Verizon building. Borough engineers Gilmore and Associates provided a cost breakdown of the different facets of the project based on the conceptual sketch created by Peter Williamson. Borough Council has budgeted \$165,000 for the project. The EAC will continue to be available for consultation as the project moves forward.

Bamboo Ordinance – Following a citizen complaint, Council liaison Kent Davidson requested guidance from the EAC pertaining to a possible ordinance to eliminate bamboo in the Borough, or to prevent its planting. After the EAC subcommittee researched the issue, Zach Barner drafted a memo with bamboo ordinance recommendations that was sent to Borough Council. Subsequently, Council considered various options including an outright ban and a height restriction. A compromise was reached to increase required side yard setbacks. The planting of new bamboo, of the types specified by the EAC recommendations, will be prohibited. Existing bamboo can be maintained, but must be kept 15’ from all property boundaries or in a container. The ordinance went into effect in October.

Backyard Gardens – The EAC was visited by Donna Cusano, Secretary of Transition Town Media, who proposed a Borough-wide gardening initiative. Sari Steuber, also in attendance and representing TTM, expressed her support for the proposal as a sustainable food initiative with shared harvests.

ENERGY

Solar Monitors – The Sustainable Development Fund contributed money towards the purchase of solar monitoring equipment for the Borough’s arrays so that solar energy production can be quantitatively tracked on the Internet. Solar monitors were installed in the Fire House, Media Theatre, Borough Hall. Monitors are planned for Trader Joe’s, Media Elementary School, Library, Youth Center, Sweney Building, and the Highway Department Garage on Brooke Street. The user name and password for the monitoring website is for internal use only. A means to make the data public is in the works.

DOE SolarReady II Grant - The Borough participated in a federal initiative to standardize and simplify zoning and permitting for residential solar arrays in the county's municipalities. Borough Manager Jeff Smith attended stakeholder meetings. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is managing this project locally. EAC member Greg Krykewycz summarized the three regional "best practices" that municipalities can employ as identified by the program team. These are streamlined/standardized permitting for solar PV; incorporating solar into zoning; and educating residents and businesses on solar. Media Borough has been a pioneer in the permit/inspection and is being consulted by the program for technical assistance.

Street Lighting – In consultation with the EAC, Karen Taussig-Lux had ongoing communications with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission regarding consortium prices for LED street lights. The DVRPC had submitted a grant proposal to purchase lights but it was not awarded.

RECYCLING & WASTE

Recycling Facility Tour – A tour of the ReCommunity Recycling facility in Wilmington, Delaware took place on 21 March 2014. It is similar to the facility that receives Media Borough's recyclables. Attendees included Zach Barner, Karen Taussig-Lux, Walt Cressler, Brian Taussig-Lux, Eric Stein, and Omar Thameen.

Highlights of what was learned included:

- Bowling balls damage equipment at the plant and are removed by hand
- Plastic chairs are also impossible for the plant to handle and are removed by hand
- Plastic flatware and toys are discarded as waste because they damage machines
- Optical sensors detect plastic types and compressed air stream blows different types into specific bins
- Plastic #1: Mohawk carpets purchases at \$300-\$400 per ton.
- Plastic #2: Used by Nvision, subsidiary of Proctor & Gamble to remake detergent bottles. Pigmented #2 sells for \$500-\$600 per ton. Natural #2 sells for \$700 per ton.
- Plastics #3 through #6: are not recycled at all because there is no market for them.
- Plastics #4, 5, and 7: a company in Canada makes landscaping edging using them.
- Glass: a nearby facility takes their glass but recycling company barely breaks even on glass.
- Aluminum: earns \$1000-\$1500 per ton, and can be recycled with little to no degradation.
- Aseptic Containers: recyclable and prized for their fiber content. Examples: tetra pak, milk cartons, soup cartons.
- Plastic Bottle Caps: not recyclable if separated from bottles. Crush bottle with cap on; these will go to buyers who can recycle both together.

Residential Recycling Bins – After running out of recycling bins, more were ordered and made available to residents at the Media Borough Complex. Media Borough pays \$15 for each bin, and charges residents \$5.00 for each bin unless it is their first bin. Bins for new residents are free. Brian Taussig-Lux and the EAC Recycling subcommittee suggested that the price structure remain the same, but also suggested tracking data on usage of bins. A questionnaire was devised to track bin purchases to determine whether there is any abuse of the system and if people are truly using the bins for residential recycling. Of the first twenty-six questionnaires filled out, the reasons for obtaining new bins were as follows: New Resident (8); Never received bin (3); Damaged/stolen bin (6); Too much recycling for one/existing bin(s) (3). Six (6) of the bins were purchased by one landlord for his/her rental properties in Media Borough. Fifteen of the 26 bins were purchased, eleven were given away.

Public Paper Shredding Event – Addie Ciannella organized a public paper shredding event that took place on the morning of 17 May 2014 in the parking lot of the Media Borough Complex. There was a 40-bin capacity but only 9 bins were filled. Most of the participants came from other municipalities, having seen a notice for the shredding opportunity on the shredding company's website. Addie suggested increased publicity well ahead of event for next time.

Business Recycling – Media Borough hired a new Health Inspector, Lori Devlin of Springfield, Delaware County, PA, whose role as health inspector was been expanded to include enforcement of recycling in commercial establishments. She informs restaurant owners of mandatory recycling requirements and the potential for incurring fines. Tina Mason was also hired this year to assist Jim Jeffery with Code Enforcement. She has a role in enforcing recycling in the business district as well. Occupancy permits now require proof of a recycling contract before they are issued. This year saw some improvement in apartment building recycling compliance. The EAC continued to monitor the situation and support Borough efforts in this area.

WATER

Rain Gardens – Media Borough was a partner in a Water Resources Education Network grant awarded to the Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association to enhance education about rain gardens. The project involves the upgrade of signage and the creation of an accompanying website for the rain gardens that were installed at the Media Borough Complex through a previous grant award. A rain garden workshop and rededication of the rain gardens will take place on May 17, 2015. The goal is to promote the installation of rain gardens as an attractive way to diminish the effects of stormwater run-off. In addition, Walt Cressler and Vivian Williams devised a systematic plan for maintaining the Borough's rain gardens year round that involves weeding, pruning, and watering.

Growing Greener Grant – Media Borough was awarded a grant from the state to create a Stormwater Best Management Practices Master Plan. The grant will be used to hire a consultant to develop the plan, which will then be used as the basis to apply for grants for

its implementation. The grant is for a maximum amount of \$127,192 and it must be used within 3 years. The EAC has been very supportive of getting an overview of the Borough's stormwater problems in order to address them systematically and effectively, and this grant will be an indispensable part of that effort.

Stream Clean-Up - The EAC sponsored the Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association Streams Clean-Up event on behalf of Media, which took place on May 3.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Outreach to other EACs – Walt Cressler met Upper Providence (UP) EAC members at a Ridley Creek clean up event. He followed up with them by phone to discuss opportunities for cooperation, such as initiatives pertaining to parks and trails, stormwater, and cooperative grant applications.

Borough Newsletters – A lot of environmental information was included in both the spring and fall Media Borough newsletters, such as recycling and yard waste information.

Transition Town Gratitude Celebration – Transition Town Media hosted a Candlelight Gratitude Potluck Dinner on 15 November 2014 at the Media Community Center. It was the third annual event held to honor local organizations that promote a sustainable community. Walt Cressler spent a few minutes describing the activities of the EAC to those in attendance.

Walt Cressler, 2/5/15