

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION**

**Monthly Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at 6:30pm**

[Join Zoom Meeting link](#)

Meeting ID: 857 6059 9499

Passcode: 892563

Dial In: +16465588656

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Review of Minutes – June 1, 2022

Announcements

Open Discussion

1. Sustainability Initiatives

Adjournment



MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Services Committee
FROM: Wyatt Williams
SUBJECT: Sustainability Initiatives
DATE: September 7, 2022

Motion

No motion necessary, for discussion and input only.

Background

The Township has made a commitment to sustainability. One of their actions was to hire me as a Sustainability Coordinator. In my role as Sustainability Coordinator, I will be researching and proposing sustainability initiatives to help the Township accomplish their goals and commitments. The main areas of sustainability that I will be focusing my efforts on are Energy, Waste and Community Engagement. There are other areas I will research and delve into, but the focus for this presentation is to provide information and get feedback on the initiatives within these main areas.

The sustainability initiatives will cover the three main topic areas Energy, Waste and Community Engagement. For Energy I will discuss energy benchmarking, energy contracts, solar installations, and EV chargers. For Waste I will be discussing plastic ordinances and their implications. For Community Engagement I will be discussing a community garden. The information will be in a presentation format with other supporting documents and data.

ChargePoint New Station/Pricing Change

Pricing Change

- We have had the issue of idle charging at our station. This means that cars are plugged into the station and staying plugged in even after they are fully charged. This mostly happens due to overnight customers from Ashbridge leaving their cars until mid-morning or later.
- Our avg session is 5hrs with 1hr and 40 min total of idle time.
- A price change is the most effective method at reducing this
 - Increase hourly rate to 75 cents (first 4hrs)
 - \$2-\$5 every hour after first 4 hrs.
 - This can also be scheduled to start at certain times of day ex: 7:30 am start the clock for 2-5 hourly.
- This increases our profit from the station enough to offset the energy it costs to operate the station and deters lingering parking which can inhibit use.
 - Our utility cost for August was \$301 while the station produced \$220
 - This means the money earned by the charger only covers 73% of the cost that is being used to power the station.
 - With the 75-cent price it would still be below the average hourly rate at other stations which can be as high as 1-2 dollars per hour.
- I believe this would be necessary going forward especially considering that we are looking at adding another station and do not want to encourage more residents to practice idle charging

New Station

- I have been talking with our ChargePoint representative and he gave us a very rough estimate of \$12,000. With the Level 2 Rebate Grant it would bring the cost down \$7,000 to a total cost of \$5,000.
- The current use of our station has increased over time. In August alone we have had 20 different drivers and 140 separate charging sessions.
- Our station has also avoided 6,117 kg in greenhouse gas emissions which is equivalent to planting 157 trees and letting them grow for 10 years.
- Considering the work that was done with the last installation I can see the new estimate being lower than the rough estimate provided. I am waiting to hear back from ChargePoint electrician.
- What are other locations that could be effective places for other stations?
 - Ed mentioned Boot Rd. Park
 - Exton Park would be an ideal location as well

Community Garden Initiative

Initial Thoughts and Concerns

- Who handles maintenance and upkeep?
- Will the garden last and be used or just fall off and become a problem?
- How much involvement does the township want to have? All in or removed and occasional upkeep?

Early Steps

- Gauge Community Interest
 - Surveys and other methods
- Identify Interested Parties (FFA, Schools, Garden Clubs, Apartment Complex's)
 - Targeted towards groups with aligning interests or with a potential need
- Quantify the size or capacity of the garden based on groups willing to be involved
 - Two options
 - Large Garden 20-30 plots
 - Incorporates multiple parties and more complex and expensive process
 - Grant available for 45K to assist construction if desired
 - Small (pilot) garden 4-8 plots
 - Targeted to one group or interested party
 - Lower initial cost and possibility for expansion depending on reception and use

Next Steps

Choosing Site (Dependent on affiliated group)

Some Possible Site Options

- Township Building Front (No Man's land by end of parking lot)
 - Pros
 - Visible to high traffic area
 - Suitable parking
 - Use for no man's land that is costly (mulch and maintenance)
 - Support Ashbridge population
 - Central Location in Township
 - Cons
 - Visible and could impact professional image
 - How would we get water there?

- Township Building Back
 - Pros
 - Not as visible which upholds professional image for township
 - Easily accessible to Ashbridge population
 - Easy water access
 - Central Location in Township
 - Cons
 - Increased traffic to rear of building
 - Hidden and may be hard to find for new users

- Miller Park (field adjacent to basketball courts)
 - Pros
 - Central Location in Township
 - Popular Park and a lot of exposure
 - Support walkable communities (Keva, Chadwell, Thomas Meeting)
 - Close to boy scouts (possible location for eagle scout project and volunteer group support)
 - Easy pre installation maintenance
 - Cons
 - Lose some usable green space at miller park
 - Water extension from bathroom expense (rain collection? option)

- Exton Park (multiple options depending on size) – In between sledding hill and natural play area; near proposed parking lot and existing athletic fields (storage bonus); near unpaved overflow parking above natural play area.
 - Pros
 - Popular highly visited park
 - High visibility because of Chester County Trail
 - Water accessible options
 - Support larger amount of commuting users
 - Not much shade to contend with
 - Near play areas
 - Cons
 - Extra cost for water extension (is there a rain capturing option from pavilions)
 - Could it fit into current plan?
 - Is it worth it to try and fit into current plan?

Composting

Multiple Options

- 1) Compost on site at community garden monitored by volunteer groups. They would determine the type of compost (Food Waste/Yard Waste)
- 2) Back To Earth Composting is a composting business that serves Exton and does residential composting. A link to their website provides all their information. This is a good way for us to prioritize composting with minimal involvement and maximum participation from the community.

Process for Creating a Community Garden

- <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/how-to-organize-a-community-garden>
- Establish a Planning Committee?
 - o Makes preliminary decisions
 - o Identifies stakeholders and Responsibilities
 - Recruitment
 - Partnership development
 - Organization
 - Develop bylaws
 - Budget
 - Insurance?
 - Get quote assuming insurance is necessary
- Identify Partners
 - o Garden Clubs
 - West Chester Garden Club
 - Twin Valleys Garden Club
 - Uwchlan Garden Club

- Schools/FFA org.
 - Technical College HS Brandywine FFA (closer)
 - Technical College HS Pickering FFA (bit of a reach 20 min drive)
- Food Banks
 - None in immediate vicinity of West Whiteland
 - Partner with another municipality?
 - Transportation costs
- Choose Site
 - Township Building Front (by parking lot)
 - Township Building Back
 - Miller Park
 - Exton Park
- Organize garden
 - Establish criteria for membership
 - Identify multiple sponsors and guarantee set plots for them/naming opportunity
 - Name of community garden
 - Selection process for initial gardeners
 - Plot assignment strategy
 - Maintenance
 - Access to tools/how will it be managed
 - Identify due collection
 - Online format?
 - Social Event planning around times for harvest
- Create garden plan
 - Set amount of plots
 - 10ft by 20ft plots basic
 - 8ft by 16 ft allows more plots and parties involved

Identify Composting area within community garden locations

- What kind of compost will be available?
 - Food Waste
 - Yard Debris
- Identify which type of compost is most beneficial to Garden

Identify Stakeholders and Volunteer groups for involvement

- Find local gardening club/establish their goals and desires for community garden
 - West Chester Garden Club
 - Twin Valleys Garden Club
 - Uwchlan Garden Club
- Talk to Allie about Friends of the Parks involvement at park locations
- School gardening/horticulture clubs/FFA
 - Technical College HS Brandywine FFA (closer)

- Technical College HS Pickering FFA (bit of a reach 20 min drive)
- Private Businesses?
- Schools
- Food Banks

Establish Education Framework

- Importance for growing in season vegetables
- Importance of eating healthy locally grown food
- Importance of no till planting options
- Importance of non-synthetic fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides
 - WS4 opportunity to educate on stormwater runoff and chemical impacts in river basins
- Importance of building community involvement

Bonus Ideas

- Popup libraries (stand or box that holds books which people can donate/borrow)
 - Literature about nature/gardening
 - Nonfiction how to's
 - Fiction novels
 - Make list of possible books
 - Children's Books
- Questions for Garden Clubs
 - Establish Goal of Accessibility to Community
 - At what capacity would you be involved?
 - Either total management or support?
 - Depending on level of involvement what would you grow/how would you manage it?
 - Identify goals for the garden
 - Source of produce for West Whiteland communities
 - Community engagement, education, and outreach on sustainable gardening methods
 - No till methods
 - Water capturing systems
 - Seasonal guides
 - Non-synthetic pesticides, herbicides, or alternatives
 - Effective barriers against wildlife
 - Greenhouses – information/validity for use in winter
- Soil Resource
 - Use sediment built up in stormwater basins to supplement topsoil instead of purchase
 - Highly nutritious soil and easily available for free

Plastic Ordinance Information

Types of Plastic Bans

- 1) Straight Plastic Bag Ban (first Gen)
 - a. Thin plastic bags are banned (typical grocery bags)
 - b. Has free alternatives to plastic (paper and thick plastic -reusables)
 - c. Not effective at reducing plastic bag usage – leads to retailers increasing plastic bag thickness to more than ordinance standards and continues to cause issues in disposal and effect on natural resources.
- 2) Ban/Fee Hybrid (Second Gen)
 - a. Thin single use plastic bags are banned
 - b. Pay for all paper and reusable bags
 - c. Bring and use your own reusable bags at stores
 - d. 10 cent fees for 40% recycled paper bags, store determines reusable bag prices, no fee for bringing your own bags
 - e. Shown to be effective by presenting consumers a choice
- 3) Fee on all bags (Second Gen)
 - a. Like it sounds, this introduces a fee on all bags with different levels for different types of bags
 - i. Ex: 5 Cents per plastic bag, 10 cents for larger paper bags, set price for reusable
 - b. Can be effective at reducing unnecessary bags for items but contributions are determined by “penalty” for each type of bag. This can be difficult to determine which is best at deterring use.

These are the three main types of plastic **BAG** bans. Many of these ordinances also include plastic straws and have special exemptions for some types of plastic bags (ex: laundry bags, garbage bags, produce bags, etc.)

When plastic straws are included in bans there are also exemptions that allow plastic straws to be used, either by request to accommodate someone with a disability or when packaged with beverages outside of township.

Considerations going forward

What type of ordinance would the township want (1, 2, or 3)?

How would the community feel about this? (Potential survey for Residents and Businesses)

What are the implications on businesses?

How would we handle the enforcement of a plastic ordinance?

Municipality	Type of Muni	Type of Ban	Yr Approved/Yr Enacted	Contact	Enforcement
Ambler	Borough	Hybrid (15 C)	2022/2023	N, Elizabeth Rosencrans Co-Chair	Just Passed Aug. 2022 Includes Styrofoam and polystyrene containers.
Radnor	Township	Hybrid (10 C)	2022/2023	N, Nancy Winkler: EAC Chair Y, Will Williams: Sustainability Director, wwilliams@west- chester.com	Just passed Aug. 2022 No structured method: report as you see it, Straws Incl.
West Chester	Borough	Hybrid (10 C)	2019/2022	N, Eugene Briggs Jr.: Township Manager, ebriggs@easttown.org	N/A
Easttown	Township	Hybrid (15 C) Straight, Business decides cost	2022/2023	N, Helena Rudoff: Waste Reduction Programs helena.rudoff@phila.gov	Contact the City through Philly311 (online & phone)
Philadelphia	City	Straight, Business decides cost	2019/2022		Contact form on township website, Straws Incl.
West Goshen	Township	Hybrid, Business option for 10 C	2021/2022	N, Melanie Vile: SAC Chair	
Media	Borough	Hybrid, Business option for 10 C	2022/2023 2020/2021 (2022 Covid extension)	N, Mark Paikoff: EAC liaison	N/A, Straws Incl. Unclear if they are in enforcement phase yet. Straws Incl
Haverford	Township	Hybrid (10 C)		N, EAC members (not specified) N, Jesse Lytle: Narberth 2050 &EAC, narb.lytle@gmail.com	Designated Code Enforcement Indv., Straws Incl.
Narberth Lower Merion	Borough Township	Hybrid (10 C) Hybrid (15 C)	2018/2019 Not Complete	N, Nancy Winkler: EAC Chair	N/A

Energy

Ready For 100 – National grassroots movement started by Sierra Club members and adopted by several Chester County Municipalities. This supports the goals established by the COG for 100% renewable electricity by 2035 and 100% renewable energy by 2050.

Ready for 100 Initiatives – Any initiative that supports and helps the Township move towards the COG's shared goals.

Initiatives & Actionable Areas:

- **Township Energy Benchmarking:** By looking at our energy use over time we can see when we use the most energy and identify township properties that are inefficient. This enables us to increase our efficiency and take steps towards using less energy overall.

Progress: I have setup an EnergyStar Portfolio which allows me to autofill our energy use information from PECO for each building. This will allow us to monitor current energy uses and be proactive in identifying our inefficient properties.

- **EV Chargers:** With our current EV charger we provide the public with infrastructure to support clean transportation. This is effective due to our proximity to Main Street and the Ashbridge.

Progress: With our current EV charger we are having some issues with idle charging, and I am looking at introducing a price change based on average charge times to reduce this problem. I have also reached out to ChargePoint and am currently waiting for their quote on the second station adjacent to our current station. I am also looking into viable locations at our township parks.

Level 2 Charger Rebate: Rebate that is available to support installation. It is key to apply as early as possible for this. I have already started filling out information in the application and would like to know if I could have permission to complete it.

- **Energy Contract:** Our current energy contract is with Constellation New Energy. We have a really good price compared to the current state of energy costs as we pay \$0.047/kWh compared to a current average of \$0.075/kWh. Currently Constellation selects the source of our energy which means much of our current energy is still fossil fuel based.

Our current contract expires Jan 1st, 2024. I would like to explore purchasing energy from renewable resources in our next contract. This would show the community and other COG members that we are committed to the Ready For 100 goals. It would also give us time to consider more localized renewable energy options like solar for Township properties.

- **Solar Installation Options:** I'd like to move forward exploring solar options for township properties. There are already some estimates for the Township Building and Boot Rd. House from the energy transition study. I'd like to get updated quotes or feasibility studies for these buildings and look at the options for solar at the new Public Works Facility.

Township Solar options

In the COG Energy Transition Study there were two buildings identified as feasible solar options for our Township

Option 1 – Township Building

Estimated Capacities

DC Capacity (kW)	47.5
AC Capacity (kW)	37.7
No. Modules (Indv. Solar Panels)	130
Annual Production (kWh)	62,470
% Energy Offset	9%

Option 2 – Boot Rd. House

Estimated Capacities

DC Capacity (kw)	8.76
AC Capacity (kW)	6.96
No. Modules (Indv. Solar Panels)	24
Annual Production (kWh)	12,250
% Energy Offset	100%

If a system was purchased directly, our 25-year estimated savings for the Boot Rd. House would be \$11,046. If the same was done for the Township building our savings would be \$48,777. The PPA option outlined by the transition plan would cost more than it would save over the 25-year period. This summarizes the findings from the COG plan which are estimates.

There are several solar installers that offer free quotes and would be worth considering if the Township wanted to prioritize solar as a feasible option going forward.

Energy Sage is an online free quote service that gathers information and sources multiple quotes from local vendors and installers. If a quote was obtained now for reference, it would be subject to become cheaper in the future as solar prices are continuing to fall across the board.

Solar Companies

Considerations when choosing installer: <https://www.letsgosolar.com/solar-panels/companies/installers/>

Sky Solar Solutions (Commercial and Residential)

- Free Solar Evaluation

Solare America (Commercial, Residential and Municipal)

- Consultation (may have cost)
- Have experience working with Municipalities

- Offer Solar Canopy

Solar States (Commercial and Residential)

- Free property assessment

Solar United Neighbors (Resources for transition to Solar)

- Municipal Resources
 - o PACE programs available for business
 - o Solar Co-op Model