

DRAFT RESOLUTION

West Chester Borough Vision for a 100% Clean Renewable Energy Future

WHEREAS: Global warming (climate change) is a long-term threat to survival;

WHEREAS: Violent weather associated with the use of fossil fuels poses immediate risks;

WHEREAS: Climate change impacts will test our infrastructure, emergency and social services; impact our access to food, water and energy supplies; and heighten disruption of services, commerce and quality of life;

WHEREAS: The 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris resulted in a consensus among all 195 countries to limit the increase in global average temperatures to well below 2°C, ensure that GHG emissions will not exceed sinks (total carbon capture) by the second half of this century, and become carbon neutral between 2050 and 2100;

WHEREAS: The constituents of the Borough of West Chester have made very clear their desire to protect our local environment through the 2006 Community Conversation, passage of the 2015 Environmental Community Bill of Rights amendment to our Home Rule Charter, and articulation of a shared vision for a sustainable future in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan;

WHEREAS: The Mayor of West Chester has acted on this priority and pledged support for a goal of 100% clean energy as part of the 2017 Mayors For Clean Energy Endorsement;

WHEREAS: The internationally agreed upon goals can be met based upon existing and new national, state, and local initiatives; and our actions will contribute to a critical mass of local climate initiatives that can collectively reduce climate disruption and help minimize the impact of extreme weather on our communities;

WHEREAS: The Borough of West Chester is committed to being a community characterized by health, safety, livability, prosperity and equity;

WHEREAS: Renewable energy sources are the most cost-effective and reliable sources of power generation;

WHEREAS: A renewable energy initiative can produce energy cost savings for residents and local businesses while stimulating new economic activity and jobs in the Borough and providing life-protecting benefits for everyone;

Be it RESOLVED that:

- West Chester Borough will join other leading towns and cities in the national movement to transition to 100% clean and renewable energy community-wide, and complete this transition for 100% clean renewable electricity by 2035 and 100% renewable energy for heat and transportation by 2050;
- The Sustainability Advisory Committee will provide guidance for commissioning a committee and/or contractor to draft an energy transition plan for achieving these goals by April 22, 2019 [Earth Day], to include interim milestones, financial impacts, equity metrics, potential financing mechanisms and percentage of clean energy that is locally produced;
- The clean renewable energy will be defined as carbon-free and pollution-free energy generated sustainably from renewable sources such as wind, solar, small hydro, tidal, fuel cells and geothermal;
- Locally produced and distributed energy is prioritized whenever feasible for the many advantages it provides to the community;
- All West Chester Borough stakeholders will have the opportunity and will be encouraged to participate in the planning and implementation process;
- The committee and/or contractor will report quarterly to Borough Council on the progress of achieving the interim milestones and targets and associated work plans until the plan has been officially adopted. Thereafter, the committee will report twice per year to Borough Council on the progress and achievements of the Clean Energy Plan.

Submitted by: Sustainability Advisory Committee, 9/6/2017