

To all,

After reading the 1/25/11 four page memorandum from Drew Shaw, Section Chief of Environmental Planning at the Montgomery County Planning Commission, to our Township Manager and regarding the proposed MCPC version of a Cheltenham Township Sustainability Plan, I felt compelled to speak at the Public Works meeting tonight. The MCPC, like the DVRPC and SEPTA are misusing and confusing the word "sustainability."

The four page memorandum (starts on page 30 of the Public Works agenda for tonight's meeting at Curtis Hall) provides the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development definition of the word "sustainability" but the memorandum then goes on to redefine the meaning of the word not in terms of sustaining our natural resources for our children, but rather in terms of land use, economic development, "and actions that governments, schools, businesses, and citizens can undertake to meet their shared goals."

It has been demonstrated to me numerous times that the "shared goals" of MCPC and DVRPC are not all in sync with the true sustainability goals of many residents of Cheltenham Township.

The MCPC staff will be the people actually writing the plan, except for the transportation section which will be the sole responsibility of DVRPC. As has happened in the past, the Cheltenham Township Sustainability Plan will be held up as the official position of the Township and used to marginalize the good work of Transition Cheltenham, CCC, the EAC and others. In my many hours as a voting member of the DVRPC RCC, I can tell you that citizen input matters little when the agency wordsmiths get to work on their green-wash.

For those that don't know me, I have spent 35 years in the solar energy and energy conservation industries. Back in the Carter era I designed a solar hot water heating system for The White House, but an Exxon subsidiary was awarded the contract. I later watched with disgust as the solar equipment was removed by the Regan Administration. I suppose that I have been working toward sustainability all of those years. I say this from my heart; Don't let the real meaning of sustainability be lost in Cheltenham Township.

Tom McHugh