

## MIDDLETOWN

## Global warming measure divides board

*One board member wanted a subcommittee to explore possible costs and other ramifications of signing on to the agreement; another was angry that the move wasn't approved.*

By *CHRIS ENGLISH COURIER TIMES*

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Global warming has one Middletown supervisor hot under the collar, in more ways than one.

Diane Marseglia was so infuriated by the board's failure at Tuesday night's meeting to adopt a set of goals designed to reduce global warming, she left the room for two or three minutes after voicing her displeasure.

Marseglia and Robert McMonagle voted to adopt the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, with board Chairwoman Lisa Pflaumer and Jasper Caro voting no. The other supervisor, John J. Kelly III, was absent.

"I am outraged," Marseglia said immediately after the vote. "I can barely control my anger over this. This was a way for us to step up and set a responsible example for the community. I'm appalled this went down."

Pflaumer said she wasn't against the agreement but said adopting it Tuesday night was premature. She wanted to form a subcommittee of the township's Environmental Advisory Commission to study possible costs and other ramifications of the agreement before the supervisors voted to adopt it. After the agreement didn't get the necessary votes, Pflaumer made a motion to form the subcommittee, but it died for lack of a second. Parks and Recreation Director Debby Lamanna, who presented the information on the climate agreement to the supervisors, had recommended forming the EAC subcommittee if the agreement had been approved.

"I don't have a problem pledging to turn the township into a green community, but I don't want to make a pledge I'm not going to be able to back up," Pflaumer said. "The costs to signing on to this agreement might be hidden, but they're still costs, and I'd like some sort of identification of the possible costs associated with the remaining steps in this agreement."

Caro said he isn't convinced global warming is as serious a problem as many experts say it is.

"Many scientists agree there is global warming, but they cite a rise in [average] temperature of only 1 degree centigrade in a 100-year period," he said.

None of the reasons for voting against the agreement, which is not legally binding, resonated with Marseglia.

"If towns don't step up to be role models, nothing will change," she said. "There are no costs listed in the agreement. It might be years before someone calls on us to spend money. We all have a responsibility to the environment. This is simply taking a pledge. It's painless and free."

The climate protection agreement, part of the Sierra Club's Cool Cities Initiative, has been adopted by neighboring Lower Makefield and some other Bucks County municipalities. It calls on cities, townships, boroughs and other governmental entities to take steps within their municipal operations to reduce global warming.

Among the steps are reducing emissions of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, doing energy audits and other measures to improve energy-use efficiency, increasing recycling rates, promoting transportation options such as bicycle trails and carpooling and adopting and enforcing land-use policies that reduce sprawl and preserve open space.

The township is already having a limited audit of its energy use being done by the state Department of Environmental Protection at no charge, Lamanna said.

In reading the entire U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, Pflaumer said it was more

suited to cities and larger municipalities, an assertion Marseglia disagreed with.

Pflaumer suggested talking to representatives from the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors about developing a similar agreement for smaller municipalities. She also said that having various municipalities sign on to agreements in a sporadic, piecemeal fashion doesn't do a lot of good.

"We have to think about how do we get others to sign on," Pflaumer said. "A lot of the measures we take could be for naught if our air is still being polluted by our neighbors."