

Meeting Minutes

City of Ypsilanti Sustainability Commission

Regular Meeting City Hall Council Chambers – 1 South Huron St. Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Monday, December 10, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:01pm

II. ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Michalowski	Present
Commissioner Drennen	Absent
Commissioner Heine	Present
Commissioner Zeuner	Present
Commissioner Bayha	Present
Commissioner Foley	Present
Commissioner McKee	Absent
Commissioner Greenwald	Present
Commissioner Cannon	Present

Also Present: Nancy Hare-Dickerson, Commission Secretary

III. AGENDA APPROVAL:

Heine (Second Foley) moved to approve the Agenda as amended to:

- 1. Remove IV. Presentation D. – “Ann Arbor’s Urban & Community Forest Management Plan” due to Commissioner McKee’s absence, at the request of Commissioner Michalowski;**
- 2. Move IV. Presentation C – “Ypsilanti’s Climate Action Plan with Commissioner Zeuner to IV. Presentation D, at the request of Commissioner Michalowski;**
- 3. Add as IV. Presentation C - “Sustainability Plan Advisor Proposal” Discussion, at the request of CED Director Joe Meyers.**

Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried

IV. PRESENTATIONS: *[Presented after VII. Consent Agenda]*

- A. Recycle Ann Arbor Recycle Drop Off Services – with Bryan Weinert and Steve Pratt**

- B. Washtenaw County Solid Waste Program – with specialists Jon Tulman and Noelle Bowman on behalf of Washtenaw County Public Works
- C. Sustainability Plan Advisor Proposal Discussion – with Ypsilanti CED Director Joe Meyers
- D. Ypsilanti’s Climate Action Plan – with Commissioner Zeuner

V. INTRODUCTIONS:

- A. Commissioner Katy Greenwald – Associate professor at Eastern Michigan University in biology.
- B. Commissioner Christian Cannon – Mechanical engineering student at the University of Michigan in his senior year.

Both commissioners provided an overview of their work, study and interests.

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – None

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of October 9, 2018 Minutes
- B. Approval of 2019 Sustainability Commission Meeting Schedule

Bayha (Second Zeuner) moved to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

Approval of the October 9, 2018 Minutes and the 2019 Sustainability Commission Meeting Schedule as submitted.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried

VIII. PRESENTATIONS *[From IV.]*

- A. Recycle Ann Arbor Recycling Drop Off Services – with Bryan Weinert and Steve Pratt

Bryan Weinert, Director of Strategy at Recycle Ann Arbor introduced Site Manager Steve Pratt and then presented an overview of Recycle Ann Arbor, outlining the residential, commercial and educational services that Recycle Ann Arbor provides.

Steve Pratt, Site Manager at the Ellsworth Road Drop Off Station outlined the new City of Ypsilanti voucher program that is in place with Recycle Ann Arbor and detailed the types of recycling materials that are accepted. Mr. Pratt indicated that a detailed list of acceptable and unacceptable materials, as well as the different service offerings can be located on the Recycle Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti City website.

Also discussed, in response to commissioner queries and comments:

1. Additional household, yard, electronic and miscellaneous items can be dropped off for a fee;
2. Items such as thermometers with mercury, fire extinguishers, mixed chemical solvents, gas oil-based paint and stains would need to be taken to the hazardous waste location;
3. Residents receive a one-time \$30 coupon with their voucher to help discount supplemental materials that require additional cost;
4. Commercial recycling is also being dropped off; i.e., bulk cardboard;
5. The number of residents who use the service is provided on the Recycle Ann Arbor monthly invoice that is sent to the City.

CED Director Joe Meyers added that the City tracks the resident vouchers that are issued, broken down by ward, which will help the City measure how well the program is working and if adjustments are needed. Mr. Meyers stated that 250 vouchers have currently been given out, with 52% in Ward 2, 34% in Ward 3 and 14% in Ward 1.

In response to commissioner queries and comments, Mr. Meyers also indicated:

1. The City continues to give out passes for residents to take yard waste to the Ypsilanti Township Compost Center.
2. Recyclables picked up by City DPS employees go to Chelsea.
3. The Recycle Ann Arbor service is for residents who used to take their recyclables to the former City Drop Off Center.
4. DPS employees who worked at the former City Drop Off Center were placed in to other service with no layoffs occurring.

Commissioner Michalowski asked that Recycle Ann Arbor provide an update in approximately six months on how the program is going.

B. Washtenaw County Solid Waste Program – with specialists Jon Tulman and Noelle Bowman on behalf of Washtenaw County Public Works

Solid Waste Specialist Jon Tulman introduced Solid Waste Specialist Noelle Bowman, Public Works Manager Theo Eggermont and Water Resources Commissioner Evan Pratt.

Mr. Tulman stated that their mission is to work and protect surface water in the environment to promote long-term environmental and economic sustainability of the county. He then provided an overview of the programs and services provided to Washtenaw County residents, including discussion of the Community Clean Up Days and School Recycling programs.

Solid Waste Specialist Noelle Bowman discussed the following programs:

1. The Master Composter Certification Program - a comprehensive compost education course offered annually in the fall.
2. The Waste Knot Environmental Excellence Program which seeks to reward and recognize businesses that are voluntarily committed to waste reduction and recycling, with technical support also being offered to help businesses meet their waste reduction and recycling goals. Ms. Bowman shared that some of the local Ypsilanti City partners are the Ypsi Freighthouse, High Scope Educational Research Foundation, Growing Hope, the Ypsilanti Food Co-op, Materials Unlimited and Data Optics.
3. The Zero Waste Washtenaw Program - a community program which partners with event organizers and groups to provide the resources and tool kit to help them reach their zero-waste goal.

In response to commissioner queries and comments, Ms. Bowman indicated the following:

1. The Master Composter Certification Program is a popular program with an average class size of 20-25 enrollees each fall.
2. The Environmental Excellence Partnership Program (E2P2) is less of a certification and more of a partner membership. Commissioner Zeuner discussed following up with Ms. Bowman on possible ways the process could be helpful to the Commission.
3. Her willingness to work with the Commission to help in implementing the Zero Waste Program. Commissioners Foley and Michalowski will follow up with her.

Commissioner Greenwald, as coordinator for the EMU Environmental Science and Society Program, offered that EMU students looking into internships in environmentally relevant fields may be interested in becoming involved.

In response to commissioner queries and comments, Mr. Tulman indicated the following:

1. Fee-for-service suggestions (churches/businesses) for residents without a personal vehicle wanting to dispose of hazardous waste items.
2. That there are several different recycling and disposal streams for collected materials – some can be reused, some are recycled, most flammables are captured and burned for energy recovery.
3. Vendors are questioned and vetted on where their collected materials are being taken.

In response to commissioner query, Water Resources Commissioner Pratt addressed the concern of leaves and twigs covering storm drains and the problems it can cause. Informational brochures are available through the Water Resources office which could be shared with City residents.

C. Sustainability Plan Advisor Proposal Discussion – with Ypsilanti CED Director Joe Meyers

CED Director Meyers indicated that City Council has allocated \$15,000 for the creation of a sustainability plan for the city. He outlined the four consultant proposals that were received. Commissioners provided input and questions which will be shared and discussed with the consultants and Council.

D. Ypsilanti's Climate Action Plan – with Commissioner Zeuner

Commissioner Zeuner provided a presentation based on his review of the Climate Action Plan, outlining the pros of the Plan and discussing suggestions for improvement with the sustainability plan - such as the inclusion of outreach to south side neighborhoods, addressing resilience, social vulnerability, housing affordability and access, as well as adaptation to address the impacts from climate change that will happen and that are happening.

IX. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Lisa Voelker, Cross St.: overviewed her work with the Southeast Michigan Stewardship Coalition and expressed her desire to discuss with interested commissioners how students and teachers could play a role in answering some of the ecological needs that the City has.

Amber Fellows, Ward 3: expressed support for the idea of adaptation as far as its short-term impact in communities like Ypsilanti and that housing issues need to be part of the climate action plan.

Desirae Simmons, Ward 3: expressed her interest in the Zero Waste Washtenaw program – the scale of events that are done, the process for hosting an event and if there are ways to make that information more public. She also discussed a Housing Affordability and Accessibility survey being circulated and asked the Commission for distribution assistance. Commissioner Michalowski indicated the Commission could help distribute the survey through Facebook and its mailing list.

X. RESOLUTIONS/MOTIONS/DISCUSSIONS

A. Climate Action Plan Discussion

Commissioner Michalowski asked commissioners for their questions/thoughts from their review of the Climate Action Plan and/or comments regarding Commissioner Zeuner's presentation.

Feedback from commissioners, as follows:

1. Appreciation for Commissioner Zeuner's presentation;

2. Housing/rental data updates are needed in order to address housing affordability and access issues;
3. Outreach information is needed from the south side area;
4. Include working with Dave Strenski in the sustainability plan (advocating for more community solar over DTE type utility solar);
5. Information would be helpful regarding green roof advantages/solar advantages – mutually exclusive or use of both.

Commissioner Michalowski asked the committee to continue to review the Climate Action Plan and offer any additional input.

XI. LIAISON REPORTS

A. Sustainability Plan Subcommittee

Commissioner Michalowski asked for any thoughts/comments about the proposal he previously sent out.

Commissioner Zeuner indicated he would like to see an itemized budget.

Commissioner Zeuner acknowledged not being able to go forward with doing a master's project with the University of Michigan due to difficulty completing necessary requirements before the deadline.

Commissioner Michalowski encouraged further conversation of how to wrap the needs of the Commission into an internship project.

B. MGC Challenge Subcommittee

Commissioner Michalowski indicated that Commissioner McKee was planning to present an example of one of the goals and that Commissioner Heine has been working on an inventory of the MGC metrics.

Commissioner Heine stated that some DTE data was received which she will have to break down. Commissioner Zeuner offered to provide additional assistance.

C. Outreach Subcommittee

Commissioner Bayha indicated her intention to begin work on the Earth Day Ypsi event right after the New Year, with a plan to also contact Zero Waste Washtenaw for their assistance.

Commissioner Foley indicated his intention to continue with Zero Waste planning for the next upcoming Parkridge event.

Commissioner Michalowski indicated he will continue to reach out to the Heritage Festival and the First Friday events.

There was also discussion about Zero Waste outreach for possible inclusion of the Beer Fest and Elvis Fest events.

Commissioner Foley discussed his intention to coordinate a community outreach-sharing, in a Town Hall forum, of Commissioner Drennen's "Climate Reality Project" presentation and Commissioner Zeuner's "Ypsilanti's Climate Action Plan" presentation.

- D. Master Plan: Housing Affordability & Access Subcommittee
Commissioner Foley indicated his intention to provide a presentation of the housing survey data at the next meeting.

- E. EMU Sustainability Commission
Commissioner Greenwald shared that the commission is now staffed with a diverse cross section of people and that they also have a website and Facebook page set up with information on some of their immediate and long-term goals.

XII. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Peninsular Dam Status Update
Commissioner Michalowski asked commissioners to review the report and asked for a volunteer to put together a brief statement as to the ecological benefits of removing the dam that the Commission can put out.

[Discussion ensued discussing and clarifying what the Plan proposes]

Commissioner Michalowski indicated that he will reach out to the Huron Watershed Council and the Friends of Peninsular Place to ask if they are willing to come in and discuss their perspectives regarding the dam removal.

- B. Recycle Program Update
[Commissioner Michalowski referenced the previously expressed information and updates received from above Presentations]

XIII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION- none

XIV. PROPOSED BUSINESS

- A. Climate action plan - Commissioner Zeuner
- B. Presentation re: paint recycling while helping in New Orleans post-Katrina – Commissioner Bayha

XV. NEXT MEETING DATE:

Monday, January 14, 2019

XVI. ADJOURNMENT: 9:39pm

Zeuner (second Cannon) moved to adjourn the meeting of the Sustainability Commission.

Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried