



MINUTES

City of Ypsilanti
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MEETING
One South Huron Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Monday, August 12, 2019
7:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:02 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Keith Michalowski	Present	Nancy Heine	Absent
Emily Drennen	Absent	Julia Bayha	Absent
Bryan Foley	Present	Katy Greenwald	Present
Christian Cannon	Present	Beth Gibbons	Present
Takunia Collins	Present		

Also Present: Council Liaison Steve Wilcoxon
Staff Liaison Ronald Akers, Public Services Director
City Planner Bonnie Wessler
Commission Recording Secretary Nancy Hare-Dickerson

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

Greenwald (Second: Foley) moved to approve the Agenda as submitted.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried

IV. INTRODUCTIONS- none

V. PRESENTATIONS

A. Creating Opportunity and Affordability in Ypsilanti with Solar Energy – Dave Strenski, SolarYpsi
Dave Strenski from SolarYpsi updated the Commission on projects that he has been working on and asked for assistance of the Commission for ideas as to new projects. Mr. Strenski stated that he recently completed The Department of Energy Solar in Your Community Challenge and earned an honorable mention in the final report. As part of that project, he explained that solar panels were put in at the new Parkridge Community Center and at the DPW; that local residents were trained in how to install solar and then were hired to install the panels. He shared that he is currently working with the Family Empowerment Program which looks into renewable energy for low income families, to put together a grant underneath the name of the Ypsilanti Housing Commission. Mr. Strenski provided an update on his work to install solar panels on the 7-acre landfill by Exit 183 and I-94.

Mr. Strenski further added that there are many foundations out there. He stated that he would like to put together a group of people to write a generic grant application on how solar would be put on a hundred low income homes in Ypsilanti, figure out the criteria for selecting them, create a list of foundations for submittal, and help shepherd it through City Council for approval. He indicated that local

people would be trained and used for the install, and a company called Chart House Energy would be used to monetize the tax credits.

[Query and general discussion followed. Commissioner Cannon volunteered his assistance.]

B. Non-Motorized Advisory Committee Report and Discussion - Bob Krzewinski, Chair

Bob Krzewinski, Chair of the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee presented an overview of the Committee and passed out an informational handout with pertinent information about the committee and projects they are working on.

Mr. Krzewinski discussed Committee priorities for the year -- such as bike lanes; Border to Border Trail; Walk Friendly Community application submission; sidewalk/curb cut snow removal in the winter and vegetation removal in the summer; Events work, such as the EMU Bike Rodeo, as well as the Parkridge Festival and Downtown Halloween Festival, for example.

Commissioner Foley: Stated his appreciation, as Entertainment Chair for the Parkridge Summer Fest, for the Committee participation in the Summer Fest and the bike helmet give-away.

[Discussion continued as to bike repair stations, the importance of bike safety improvements, feasibility of divided bike lanes, and making the City a more bike friendly/walk friendly/disabled friendly community]

C. A Discussion on Opportunity Zones – Bonnie Wessler, City Planner

City Planner Bonnie Wessler shared a map of the Opportunity Zones within the City of Ypsilanti and stated that those are certain census tracts that have been designated by the State of Michigan. She explained that Opportunity Zones are basically target areas of investment for funding and development projects that are funded from an Opportunity fund and that they are meant to spur economic development in certain economically depressed areas within the country.

[Discussion as to what the funds can be used for, types of investments]

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT- none

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of July 8, 2019 minutes

Foley (Second: Greenwald) moved to approve the Minutes as submitted.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried

VIII. WORK SESSION

A. Sustainability Plan

1. University Town Plans
2. Bloomington Indiana Plan
3. Holland Sustainability Report
4. Washtenaw County 2019 Energy and Sustainability Plan
5. Eau Claire Wi Sustainability Plan
6. Eau Claire Wi Other Sustainability Provisions

7. Oberlin 2013 Sustainability Plan
8. Oberlin 2015 Sustainability Plan Update

Commissioner Michalowski: Explained that he included reference plans which were shared by City Planner Wessler and would like commissioners to express their view of what they feel are important.

Commissioner Greenwald: Provided feedback regarding thoughts on the Bloomington Indiana Plan.

City Planner Wessler: Stated that with still being in the brainstorming part of the Plan, encouraged commissioners, as they are looking at the plans, to look at the goals to see what goals and what objectives Ypsilanti needs that could translate into it. She discussed a voting survey that is being made available and requested that commissioners review the survey, the site installation board and provide feedback to her by next Monday morning.

[In response to commissioner query, discussion ensued regarding the following: citizen education, as well as ways to address enforcement of recommended improvements; the goal and the implementation steps of creating the Plan; ozone emissions around the expressways; the inclusion of communication, safety and health; community meetings scheduled for August 14th and August 22nd, focused on Ward 3 and Ward 2, respectively]

City Planner Wessler: Stated, "at this point, I would talk about the content of the Plan, not the framing of the Plan. I have asked the consultants to look at it from more of a resilience and reaction sort of standpoint seeing that climate change is already here. So now this is more going to be about how to react to that locally, still with some mitigation and some green house things in there but more focus on the realities".

Commissioner Michalowski: Indicated agreement that "resilience is going to need to be the component of our Plan".

IX. RESOLUTIONS/MOTIONS/DISCUSSIONS

A. WCRC Roadside Herbicide Spraying Discussion

1. Termination of Herbicide Spraying Program
2. Roadside-Herbicide-Spraying-Flyer
3. Washtenaw County Road Commission and Herbicides rev2
4. Certified Resolution R-19-327 – Washtenaw County Road Commission

Commissioner Michalowski: Indicated that a motion passed at the Washtenaw County Road Commission July 16th meeting, for the Board to terminate the roadside herbicide spraying contract and abstain from the use of herbicides as a part of the WCRC roadside vegetation control program.

B. Open Meetings Act Discussion

Open Meetings Act – Email Quorum Violation

Commissioner Michalowski: *[Discussion re: Email Quorum Violation Fact Sheet]*. Indicated that the Google group method which he had been using to capture information in one place in an attempt to lessen ambiguity will be disabled for forwarding emails in order to eliminate the possibility of an email quorum violation.

[Discussion as to appropriate ways to disseminate information and not violate the Open Meetings Act]

C. Curbside Recycling Update Discussion

August 7, 2019 News Flash

Commissioner Michalowski: Indicated that he included the following online document into the packet in order to make commissioners aware of changes to the curbside recycling.

[In response to commissioner query, Staff Liaison Akers provided an overview of the curbside recycling changes and the reason for the changes]

Changes to Curbside Recycling

For more information on our recycling program follow this link:

<https://cityofypsilanti.com/301/Recycling-Program>

ITEMS ACCEPTED CURBSIDE

Plastic Bottles or tubs with numbers 1 (PET), 2 (HDPE), 4 (LDPE), 5 (PP),#6 (PS) or#7 on the Bottom

NO plastic lids or plastic bags

NO motor oil bottles

NO Styrofoam

Clean plastic and discard caps

Tin & Aluminum

Need to be cleaned before placing in bin

Includes cans, foil, trays

Scrap metal up to 1 cu. ft.

Paper

Bundle paper separately with string or place in paper bags or cardboard boxes

Paper may be placed next to bin, but don't block the view of bin

Shredded paper

Corrugated Cardboard & Box-board

Bundle in 3 x 4-foot bundles, or box or bag

If too large to bundle, take to Recycle Ann Arbor drop-off center

Place next to or on top of bin

Cereal boxes, cardboard egg cartons and similar type material

Flatten and remove inner bags or packaging

NO box-board that touched food

Newspaper, Magazines & Junk Mail

Newspapers include glossy inserts

Magazines and paperback books, including phone books

Mixed paper, glossy coated OK

NO plastic or metal tabs, binders, transparencies, carbon paper, or tissue paper

NOTES OF IMPORTANCE:

Place your red bin at the curb 6 feet or more from your rubbish and yard waste, by 6:30 a.m. on your regular collection day.

All recyclables need not fit in your red bin, but please make sure the bin is visible from the street.

The new single-stream collection for recyclables means that paper and containers may be mixed in the bin. Please do not put bottles of oil or bags of rechargeable batteries in the red bin.

50-pound weight limit

[Discussion ensued as to the following: the desire to have the City drop-off station return and the benefits; what other surrounding areas are doing with regards to recycling glass – Staff Liaison Akers to follow up and update; that conversations are occurring re: a county-wide recycling authority]

X. COMMISSIONER REPORTS and PROPOSED BUSINESS

- A. **Commissioner Michalowski**– Indicated that the ICLEI subscription is a year from the date of the subscription; i.e., from August 1st to July 31st of 2020; Eco-Works is inputting the data; the Commission will have access to the results of their data in the short term. Commissioner Gibbons stated that depending on the level of membership purchased with ICLEI, there would potentially also be access to a tool called the “Temperate”, where they will create a climate resilience plan. Commissioner Michalowski stated that either he or City Planner Wessler will check into that and update the Commission.

- B. **Commissioner Foley-** Apologized for missing the last meeting. Indicated that as chairperson of the Summer Fest Committee and working with the Heritage Festival, he will keep his eyes open as to how they handle the trash, in order to learn what can be improved next year. Commissioner Michalowski stated that he would like to see the City invest in Zero Waste containers (due to the expense) and provide them to events to use and then the Commission and volunteers can assist with them being used properly.
- C. **Commissioner Cannon-** Indicated having no major updates as to the solar project at Perry School. Stated that he will update the Commission on the work with SolarYpsi at the next meeting in regards to the grant.
- D. **Commissioner Greenwald-** Indicated that the EMU sustainability commission will begin meeting in September. Shared that her program in the Environmental Science and Society Program, have set up to assist with the EMU student move-in/move-out at the beginning and end of the year for the last several years. Stated that they plan to do it again the Tuesday after Labor Day. *[Discussed what the assistance to the students involve, including their using the trash dumpsters and recycling receptacles. Asked that available commissioners would wear their Sustainability Commission shirt and help direct the recycling]*
- E. **Commissioner Gibbons-** Indicated that an opportunity came across her desk from an organization called EcoAdapt which does climate adaptation planning work. Stated that they have a grant for eight communities to host climate adaptation, planning and resilience workshops, in which she applied for Ypsilanti.
- F. **Commissioner Collins-** Indicated that he is working on collecting at least a million broken crayons by 2020. Indicated that it is a learning opportunity for children – that he recycles the crayons, melts them down and makes different collages. Also stated that he is working to promote the use of paper straws rather than plastic, as they are at least biodegradable within a year. *[Initiated discussion re: safety and security during meetings]*
- G. **Commissioner Michalowski-** Indicated that he connected with The Farm at St. Joe's, which is a group who has worked for two years trying to eliminate barriers and establish institutional composting. Stated that they are having meetings and possibly would be willing to address the Commission. Commissioner Collins expressed interest in connecting with the group.
- H. **Commissioner Collins-** Indicated that his work in teaching gardening and farming to children was written up in the July/August edition of Spudman Magazine, where he provided the hands-on experience of teaching each child to grow their own potato, take it home and learn how to grow their own sustainable garden at home. Commissioner Michalowski asked if it could also be shared on the Facebook page, which Commissioner Collins agreed to.

XI. **PUBLIC COMMENT-** none

XII. **NEXT MEETING DATE**
Monday, September 9, 2019

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT:** 9:22 p.m.

Greenwald (Second: Foley) moved to adjourn the meeting of the Sustainability Commission.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried