

# Meeting Minutes

## City of Ypsilanti Sustainability Commission

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

Monday, May 14, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:05 p.m.

II. **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioner Drennen	Present
Commissioner Heine	Present
Commissioner Sampson	Present
Commissioner Zeuner	Present
Commissioner Foley	Present
Commissioner McKee	Absent

Also Present: Council Liaison Beth Bashert  
City Manager Darwin McClary  
Nancy Hare-Dickerson, Commission Secretary

**Drennen (Second Foley) moved to approve Commissioner Zeuner as Chair for the evening.**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Motion: Carried**

III. **AGENDA APPROVAL:**

**Heine (Second Foley) moved to approve the Agenda as submitted.**  
**Vote: Unanimous**                      **Motion: Carried**

IV. **PRESENTATIONS:**

None

V. **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:**

None

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of April 9, 2018 Minutes  
(Brief discussion re: correctness of roll call attendance as listed)

**Heine (Second Drennen) moved to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the approval of the April 9, 2018 minutes as submitted.**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Motion: Carried**

**VII. RESOLUTIONS/MOTIONS/DISCUSSIONS**

- A. YSC 2018 Goals Discussion

Commissioner Sampson briefly summarized her presentation from the April meeting and offered that the Commission has other things they have to be reactive to that are happening real-time; that it's helpful to list some objectives they wish to accomplish for the next year.

Commissioner Drennen added USDM leading indicators to the list of goal-setting ideas for the year, as well as getting the sustainability framework adopted and implemented.

Commissioner Zeuner stated that in addition to being part of the conversations with the Planning Commission on the Master Plan update, that inter-commission opportunities or work might be a good thing to add to the goals list.

Council Liaison Bashert expressed that writing the sustainability plan is the current priority for the Commission and that working out the steps of how to proceed with the plan is the most efficient way to handle it.

Commissioner Zeuner opened up the discussion to include other goals that aren't related to the framework draft that's in the packet.

Commissioner Heine added that recycling and home toxics would be very important to add; also, collaborating more with the cities that are in the County, as well as the County itself; i.e., utilizing the County Help Desk – doing more outreach, networking with groups that are doing the types of things the Commission wants to do.

Commissioner Sampson questioned how to build up the capacity and resources at the same time.

Council Liaison Bashert responded that the Commission does not have a budget but if they make a request to Council, Council can approve expenditures on behalf of the Commission.

Commissioner Heine brought up the Summer Youth Project as an initiative possibly for next year, which is currently going on at the County. The focus is for disadvantaged youth, through the Michigan Works Program.

## **VIII. LIAISON REPORTS**

### **A. Sustainability Plan Subcommittee**

Commissioner Zeuner read aloud the proposed resolution from him to the Sustainability Commission in response to the Sustainability Plan Subcommittee's Working Draft of the Sustainability Framework. He explained that its use is to be shared with the Planning Commission to gain their thoughts and, also, to share with the general public for their comments.

Commissioner Drennen gave an overview of what the Framework is – that it came from the Star Communities project and some of the text was tweaked to be Ypsi specific. The hope with the Framework is that it could be used in a multitude of different ways – the first and most important one being incorporated into the Master Plan as part of the Master Plan update. It gives a scaffold for how to interpret sustainability, be it a project or a program or a policy – you'd be able to find it somewhere in the Framework and explain its possible different uses. Also, the leading indicators get us starting to track metrics on an annual basis and then we can see how we compare to other cities. The hope is that at some point if there's some serious resources put towards sustainability, then the City could do a full Star certification process and then, out of that, we've got a significant sustainability plan.

Commissioner Zeuner indicated that the reason he wanted to have this conversation with the entire commission today, especially with this Framework as the starting point, is to look at how can we see the next step from the Framework.

Council Liaison Bashert expressed that Ypsilanti is a sustainable city and the Commission needs to be strong in sustainability and a leader. She added that the Sustainability Commission is involved in the Master Plan review through Commissioner Foley.

Commissioner Foley agreed and added that he is part of the zoning subcommittee and that they are dealing with sustainability as well as affordable housing.

City Manager McClary suggested that with the use, already, of a tried and true framework that's been worked and discussed through the Star communities program, that the sustainability plan subcommittee, working with the rest of the Commission, move forward and start working on each of the seven goals – start with each section and prepare a draft plan for it

and then invite people to come in and review that and provide comments on it.

After further discussion regarding the seven main goal areas, City Manager McClary expressed his concern that if the process is done piecemeal, there may not be a clear understanding of what's trying to be accomplished with sustainability. He explained that all of the pieces and how they come together need to be seen; that the average person who hasn't done some background research into sustainability and what it means may not be able to understand how the seven goals come together to address a sustainable community and a sustainable future. All the pieces have to be pulled together and put into a plan that people can look at and understand and then, from that plan, performance measures can be set up. He, therefore, offered the assistance of a consultant to help the Commission with the step-through of the process and offered to have the Planning Department get price quotes on the cost so some additional funds could be allocated in the budget.

Commissioner Foley added that it makes sense to have a consultant to help guide, oversee and give input.

Commissioner Heine agreed.

(Further discussion ensued regarding the assistance of a consultant)

City Manager McClary clarified that once the request is prepared for consulting services to assist the Sustainability Commission in preparing a sustainability plan based on the Star Communities 7 Sustainability Goals and leading indicators, the proposals would be submitted to the Commission for review, after which the Commission could select the consultant they feel comfortable with and move forward from there.

**(There was consensus of the Commission to accept the offer of a consultant to assist the Sustainability Commission in preparing a sustainability plan based on the Star Communities 7 Sustainability Goals and Leading Indicators)**

B. MGC Challenge Subcommittee

Commissioner Sampson provided an update that Commissioners Michalowski, McKee and herself have been doing homework over the last several months to decide how the required goals would be met. She feels they have all the materials they need and they will be working to meet the end of the month deadline. They will reach out to others if any additional help is needed.

C. Outreach Subcommittee

Commissioner Foley shared that he attended an Earth Day outreach event posted by Commissioner Bayha, which was a nice affair. He also added that he has reached out to the Bell-Kramer area regarding the topic of solar panels, making them aware of what's going on, and asking for their thoughts, questions and concerns. He had spoken with Dave Strenski about setting up a community meeting to discuss what solar panels are, their purpose and how they impact the community but then learned from Dave that DTE is no longer interested in placing solar panels in the Bell-Kramer area at this time. As Dave is still willing to have a solar education event, Foley will contact him to get a community meeting set up.

Council Liaison Bashert expressed her feeling that solar panels could be an incredible asset to City residents, especially those with fixed incomes, due to the probable electrical cost savings.

After further discussion, Commissioner Zeuner indicated that follow up would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

- D. Housing Affordability & Access Committee of the Planning Commission  
Commissioner Foley indicated that there are five subgroups, of which his subgroup is zoning. They are addressing where they can build new housing within the city and the impact of things like increased traffic with increased residency. Once the committee minutes are completed, he will have more to report.

## **IX. COMMUNICATIONS**

### **A. Zero Waste**

Commissioner Foley shared that through the Washtenaw County Zero Waste site, he completed an application for zero waste resources for an event he created, entitled "Pride Day", to take place on June 1<sup>st</sup>; however, the County hasn't yet responded. Commissioner Heine will call some contacts at the County and follow up on the process.

### **B. PACE**

Commissioner Heine gave a brief overview of the creation of PACE, which stands for Property Assessed Clean Energy and includes lighting, solar, wind, composting, HVAC and roofing. Funding is available for business owners to apply for a PACE grant. She reached out to the contact person, who is willing to do a presentation if the Commission wants to move forward with this or at least get more information. Each community would be able to set up their own process.

Discussion continued with Commissioner Heine explaining more details of how Ypsilanti could set up their own savings percentage and set up their own program. It could possibly be worth pursuing by Ypsilanti's business

community, non-profits and property owners, as it would create a cleaner environment.

Commissioner Zeuner suggested that the PACE presentation be added to the next Commission agenda, under Proposed Business. Consensus followed. He suggested that the presentation could be advertised to Ypsilanti landlords and businesses on the City's website.

Once the PACE presentation is confirmed, Commissioner Heine will email the presentation information to City Manager McClary for placement on the City of Ypsilanti website.

Commissioner Heine shared that there is a SolarYpsi presentation Wednesday, at 6pm, at the Ypsilanti Performance Space, 218 N. Adams – “Can solar work for you? Find out. Bring your bill and Dave Strenski will help you calculate how many solar panels you need.”

#### C. Recycling Program

Council Liaison Bashert explained that City Council is pursuing some general areas of solution for the Recycling Center having to be removed. A recycling center is necessary as the City doesn't pick up recycling for 4-or-more-resident households.

Proposed solution #1: to remove the recycling center, allow the parking lot to be cleaned up and replace it with a temporary 3-4 year solution of a dumpster-style recycling location. She explained the upsides and downsides of this. Bashert noted that the reason that a long-term solution isn't needed beyond 3-4 years is because a County materials recovery facility is in the works. With that being the case, the City could have a county-wide plan for recycling which would possibly help with this issue.

Proposed solution #2: mandate recycling for every resident and business throughout the City. She explained the upsides and downsides of this.

Proposed solution #3: approach the City's partners and ask for support. She explained the upsides and downsides of this.

Commissioner Foley suggested having an enclosed dumpster with specific open and close hours; that could only be used during those certain hours.

Council Liaison Bashert responded that it's an interesting idea and that she would mention it when the conversation comes up.

**X. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

None

**XI. PROPOSED BUSINESS**

Commissioner Zeuner outlined the following items for the next meeting:

- Commissioners Zeuner and Drennen will bring an outline of what was discussed today; how measurements can be created, why it would be done and what it would look like, as well as discuss public outreach.
- Commissioner Heine will be contacting Levin to do the PACE presentation if he's available.
- Foley will have the minutes for the subcommittee and there will be follow-up on the solar package.
- There will be a MGC update. Further goals could be discussed.
- Updates on the status of the term expirations for Commissioners Bayha, Michalowski and Kovacs.

**XII. NEXT MEETING DATE:**

Monday, June 11, 2018

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Sampson (second Drennen) moved to adjourn the meeting of the Sustainability Commission.**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Motion: Carried**