

Sustainability Commission Meeting November 6, 2017

Meeting called to order at 5:40 pm by Chairperson Nadine Gomez.

Roll Call: Julie Morris, Nadine Gomez, Ann Gilmore, and Miriam Jackson

ABSENT: Judy Nelson

Ms. Gomez made a motion to excuse Mrs. Nelson. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Morris and was approved with a 4-0 vote.

Staff: Harrison Wicks, Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Bridget Susel, Director of Community Development

Review of Meeting Summary Reports of October 2, 2017:

The meeting reports will not be approved due to a lack of a quorum. The reports will be held as a public record.

Public Comment

None

OLD BUSINESS

Climate Action Plan, Ad Hoc Committee- Ms. Jackson commented that we should reach out to Diane Smith at the Record Courier to make the City Council's support for the Paris Climate Agreement a feature story. Ms. Jackson also commented it would be an advantage to have buttons and stickers promoting Council's support and the creation of the Climate Action Plan but with no budget for the Sustainability Commission it would be challenging. To alleviate this, Ms. Jackson promoted the idea of hosting a benefit or donation drive event to raise funds. Mr. Wicks confirmed he will research donation regulation and grant opportunities for the commission. Ms. Jackson advocated for the creation of a Sustainability Commission Facebook page. Mrs. Morris commented that a Facebook page would be a good idea, also adding that the commission is working with the Kent Environmental Council (KEC) to create a database of environmental organizations, issues, supporters in Kent on the KEC website as a networking tool. Ms. Susel confirmed that the City of Kent Facebook page is the approved platform for the Sustainability Commission to promote initiatives and events. This question has been brought up in the past and it was decided to have all posts on the City of Kent Facebook page so there would not be unauthorized posts. Ms. Susel also confirmed no other board or commission has a Facebook page for this same reason. Mrs. Morris continued the discussion on the KEC database that will list environmental activities and key personnel in Kent to help match interests to people. Lis Regula with KEC is currently working to identify potential assistance from Kent State. Ms. Jackson offered to assist with contacts from Kent State as well and will reach out to the Geography Department to see if they have an interest in participating in research gathering and data collecting activities. Mrs. Morris also confirmed the commission meets regularly with the KSU Office of Sustainability. Ms. Jackson was

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curious to know how many cities in the United States have resolutions of support for the Paris Climate Agreement. Mr. Wicks commented he will conduct research to find out how many cities have completed resolutions of support. For the Climate Action Plan, the commission agreed to collect research over the next month on the best practices for such an action plan as well as learn about the principles and values guiding these actions. As for the ad hoc committee, Mr. Wicks will reach out to potential participants highlighted below to confirm their participation:

- A. Representative of Kent business community: Andrews Boateng, Davey Resource Group
- B. Representatives from the Kent Environmental Council (KEC): Bill Wilen, Lis Regula, and Lorraine McCarty
- C. Representative from Kent State University: Melanie Knowles and Leah Graham, Kent State Office of Sustainability

Mr. Wicks confirmed he will work to organize the first ad-hoc meeting in early December or before the end of 2017. Mr. Wicks also confirmed he will conduct research on climate action plans in other cities.

Farmers' Market Update- The commission confirmed they will attend the market on Saturday, November 18, 2017. The commission will share a table with Family & Community Services to pick up the donations. Ms. Gomez confirmed she will reach out to market organizer Andrew Rome to see if he will send out an email reminder and Facebook post on behalf of the Sustainability Commission. The commission also agreed they will wait until 2018 to attend the market again. Ms. Susel commented that a food drive at the market at the beginning of 2018 led by the commission could be very beneficial to those in need. The commission agreed to look at dates in the spring 2018 to do such an event. Ms. Gomez and Ms. Jackson confirmed they will be in attendance on the 18th from 10-11:30am. Mrs. Gilmore and Mrs. Morris confirmed they will be there from 11:30-1pm.

Community Information Update- Mrs. Morris confirmed the True Cost Documentary that was hosted by the KSU Office of Sustainability in the Kent State Student Center was well attended and a success. Mrs. Morris commented that organizing a brown bag lunch event in January or February 2018 would be a great collaborative event between the Sustainability Commission and the KSU Office of Sustainability. Mr. Wicks commented he can reach out to the KSU Office of Sustainability to see if they would be interested. Mrs. Gilmore commented that the KSU Women's Center on campus has a space that can be available for events, as well as the KSU Wick Poetry Center. Also the Kent Free Library has spaces available for events, including rooms for showing films. Mrs. Gilmore commented that a 'Spring Film Series' could be beneficial for the residents of Kent. Mr. Wicks commented the timing of the film series could coincide with the 'Who's Your Mama?' film festival hosted by the Standing Rock Cultural Arts that occurs around Earth Day. Mr. Wicks confirmed he can conduct research on possible films to show. Mr. Wicks confirmed he can also speak with Jeff Ingram, the 'Who's Your Mama?' film festival organizer about a potential collaboration.

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Review Fracking Permits- No changes have occurred and no discussion was had.

NEW BUSINESS

Guest Speaker: Anna Droz- Mrs. Morris made a motion to move the guest speaker to the beginning of the meeting before discussing old business. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Gilmore and was approved with a 4-0 vote.

Ms. Droz explained she is a 4th year PhD Biological Sciences major and focuses on green roof technology and innovation. Droz explained green roofs benefits such as absorbing radiation, catching rainwater, and providing habitat for wildlife. Droz confirmed a typical green roof is 4 inches deep, utilizing sedum soil that is low maintenance. For example, the downtown Cleveland Hilton Convention Center has a green roof utilizing sedum. Droz confirmed she travelled to 44 roofs in the Midwest as a part of her research, with 14 of them being in Cleveland. She also visited Minneapolis and Chicago, which has the most green roofs in the United States. Droz took soil samples and collected data from the green roofs in these three cities to look at differences in the 3 communities. Droz also confirmed another project she is working on includes building experimental green roof sites. Locally, Droz confirmed there are 2 green roofs in Akron and 1 in Kent located on top of the KSU Architecture building, however, it is currently not open to the public or to students. Ms. Susel confirmed that the architecture building was designed for a large green roof with open access but over time the project had to engineer it out and make it smaller. Mrs. Morris commented that a green roof on the new Kent City hall would be great and would add to KSU's effort. Ms. Gomez was curious how the depth of green roofs. Droz confirmed the soil is usually 4 inches, but buildings designed to hold more weight can have depths as deep as 16 inches, which would have larger plant diversity. Droz commented that retrofitting older roofs to have green roofs is challenging. The oldest roof she witnessed was around 20 years old. Droz confirmed that the average green roof has wild onions, sedums, grasses, lawn, and weeds. Mrs. Morris was curious about vegetables. Droz confirmed that a garden can be created on green roofs and highlighted the example of a fire station in St. Paul, Minnesota. Mrs. Gilmore commented do plants go dormant in the winter? Droz confirmed that no, many plants on green roofs are hardy, such as Prickly Pear. Droz commented that green roofs can also be used as pollinators for bees and have been known to house beehives. Mrs. Morris commented that a green roof can be a great community education tool.

NEXT MEETING

December 4, 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Gilmore made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Morris and was approved by a 4-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:06pm.