

Sustainability Commission Meeting September 11, 2017

Meeting called to order at 5:52 pm by Julie Morris

Roll Call: Judy Nelson and Julie Morris

ABSENT: Nadine Gomez and Ann Gilmore

Due to the lack of a quorum there cannot be a motion to excuse absent commission members.

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

Due to the lack of a quorum there cannot be a motion to approve meeting summary reports.

Public Comment

Sandra Halem, 429 Carthage Avenue, Kent, OH - Speaking in support of the County Clothing Center in Ravenna. Ms. Halem commented that the clothing center does not have any outside funding sources. An attachment was presented by Ms. Halem providing statistics of the amount of donations the clothing center has received in the past. Ms. Halem confirmed that the clothing center will be advertised in future Tree City Bulletins and other outlets. In response to where unusable clothing items go after being dropped off at the clothing center, Ms. Halem commented that items that are not able to be distributed at the clothing center are given to the World Mission organization.

Roger DiPaolo/Family & Community Services (F&CS), 705 Oakwood Street, Ravenna, OH - Speaking in support of the County Clothing Center in Ravenna. Mr. DiPaolo confirmed the clothing center does not turn a profit. Any revenue is put right back into the clothing center and related services. Mr. DiPaolo highlighted the clothing center's existence is rooted in Kent and it is from Kent residents that the center receives the greatest number of donations as well as a significant portion of patrons. Mr. DiPaolo confirmed that F&CS is concerned about the survival of the clothing center should the Simple Recycling curbside program be implemented in Kent. F&CS would be happy to work in conjunction with Simple Recycling where possible. Mr. DiPaolo confirmed that F&CS is considering adding drivers and local drop sites to make it more convenient for Kent residents to donate to the clothing center. Mr. DiPaolo confirmed a 3 year contract between the City of Kent and Simple Recycling would not be advantageous as the clothing center is already in competition with Goodwill and other donation centers. To add Simple Recycling would be yet another local competitor. The clothing center has only one paid employee. Mr. DiPaolo confirmed donation items that are unusable must be hauled away at F&CS's expense.

Shirley Overholt, 7066 Newton Falls Road, Ravenna, OH - Speaking in support of the County Clothing Center in Ravenna. Ms. Overholt confirmed patrons to the clothing center here about the service by word of mouth and by church congregations spreading the word. Ms. Overholt confirmed a steady stream of donations is crucial to the existence of the

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clothing center. Many individuals in Portage County are in need of adequate clothing and the center provides clothing at no cost. Ms. Overholt confirmed the clothing center recently implemented a 24-hour drop off location. One result of this is that individuals have used this location to drop off items that cannot be used by the center which makes the upkeep of the location problematic.

Deborah Newberry, 1334 Greenwood Avenue, Kent, OH - Speaking in support of the County Clothing Center in Ravenna.

Andrews Boateng, Stow, OH - Mr. Boateng commented on the importance of looking at the Simple Recycling curbside recycling program through the vantage point of local sustainability, concluding that the Simple Recycling program may not be the most suitable solution for Kent. In considering the Paris Climate Agreement resolution and membership in the Compact of Mayors, Mr. Boateng confirmed that the City of Cleveland has done a good job inventorying greenhouse gas information. Mr. Boateng also confirmed that he is working with the University of Akron to do a project with the City of Akron to inventory greenhouse gas emissions related to waste. Mr. Boateng also provided details on the Davey Resource Group's climate initiative that assists organizations to build capacity to do a greenhouse gas inventory.

OLD BUSINESS

Recycling Update- In continuing the previous discussion on the Simple Recycling curbside program, Mrs. Nelson wanted to know how the County Clothing Center in Ravenna advertised their services in the past. Mr. DiPaolo and Ms. Overholt confirmed that services are spread by word of mouth and through church congregations. Ms. Susel also confirmed that people usually do not know about the center unless they are otherwise directly involved through donating or as patrons. Mrs. Morris wanted to know where the majority of donations to the clothing center originate. Mr. DiPaolo confirmed it is difficult to measure but he is confident that a majority of donations come from Kent residents. Mrs. Nelson commented that she wanted to make sure everyone understands the problem of unusable clothing going into the landfill and that a solution to solve this problem must be reached regardless of the City of Kent utilizing Simple Recycling or not. Mrs. Morris wanted to know if there was any leeway with the initial contract of 4-years between the City of Kent and Simple Recycling. Mr. Wicks confirmed Simple Recycling would not be able to adjust the initial contract term. Mrs. Morris confirmed that the advertising from Simple Recycling to include information on local donation centers is an advantage and can be useful to the clothing center. In answer to Ms. Newberry, Mrs. Nelson confirmed the Simple Recycling bag used to collect clothing and materials would be only one color. Mrs. Nelson confirmed that she still thinks the Simple Recycling program is a good source to pick up unusable clothing. Mrs. Morris wanted to know about ways in which Simple Recycling and the clothing center could work together. Mr. Wicks commented that he will review ways in which collaboration would be feasible. In addition, Mrs. Morris commented that a stakeholder meeting between Simple Recycling, F&CS, and City staff to

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discuss the program could be advantageous. Mr. Wicks confirmed he will reach out to Simple Recycling to see if they would be willing to collaborate with F&CS. If so, a meeting will be set for later in September to discuss the Simple Recycling program and collaboration ideas.

Paris Climate Agreement Resolution- Mr. Boateng explained that a greenhouse gas inventory, undertaken as a part of joining the Compact of Mayors, would take a year to gather. Mrs. Nelson wanted to know if it would be easier for the City of Kent to collect data from a waste or utility provider that already provides similar data to other nearby cities, such as Cleveland, that are already in the Compact of Mayors. Mr. Boateng confirmed that it may be easier but there is no guarantee. Mr. Boateng confirmed he is currently working on a project at the University of Akron to inventory greenhouse gas emission of the City of Akron's waste services. Ms. Susel wanted to know what sort of graduate program at universities would be available to do something like a greenhouse gas inventory. Mr. Boateng confirmed that a graduate program in a Geography Department could be suitable. Mr. Boateng confirmed however to his knowledge to date no other graduate program in the area has completed a greenhouse gas inventory. Ms. Susel commented on how much a project with a university would cost a City for staff labor, time, investment, and materials. Mr. Wicks confirmed he would reach out to the University of Akron Geoscience program and the City of Akron to determine costs for their project as well as other similar university programs as needed. Mr. Boateng shared the name of the professor from the University of Akron that is leading this project. His name is Professor Shannon Donnelly. Mr. Boateng also commented on previous work completed by Davey Resource Group's Climate Initiative, with regard to inventorying greenhouse gases. Mrs. Nelson wanted to know what level of assistance Davey Resource Group would provide a city. Mr. Boateng confirmed it would be introductory training on how to complete a greenhouse gas inventory.

Bag Share Item- Deferred until the next meeting because Mrs. Gilmore was absent.

Final Update on Rain Barrel Workshop- Deferred until the next meeting.

Farmers Market Update- The farmers' market tabling scheduled for Saturday, September 16th will need to be rescheduled.

Community Information Update- Deferred until the next meeting.

Review Fracking Permits- No discussion as no new items have been addressed.

NEW BUSINESS

None

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NEXT MEETING

October 2, 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Due to the lack of a quorum there cannot be a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting ended at 7:33pm.