

Sustainability Commission Meeting January 3, 2022

Meeting called to order at 5:35 pm by Renee Ruchotzke

Roll Call: Renee Ruchotzke, Rick Hawksley and Wilder Hritz

Ad Hoc members present were Ms. McCarty and Mr. Wilen. Ms. Nelson listened via phone.

Staff: Patti Long, Assistant to the City Manager

Absent: Dr. Scholl (listened by phone) and MaryJayne Stone

Mr. Hawksley made a motion to excuse Ms. Stone and Dr. Scholl. Motion was seconded by Mr. Hritz, motion passed 3-0.

Approval of the agenda:

Mr. Hawksley made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Hritz. Motion passed 3-0.

Meeting Summary Minutes:

The minutes from December 6, 2021 will be filed since there was no quorum.

Public Comment

None

Work Session

1. Letter of support for Ms. Susel to attach to the Appropriations Request
Mr. Hawksley moved that Ms. Ruchotzke write the letter and give to Ms. Long for review. Letter will state the request for adding a staff person to coordinate the efforts of the Sustainability Commission and Ad Hoc Committee to complete the Climate Change Action Plan, following the guidelines of the ICLEI template. The letter will also include that the coordinator/consultant will need to implement community engagement and community education. The Commission would also like to have two members (Commission and/or Ad Hoc) involved in the interview and decision process. Motion seconded by Mr. Hritz. Discussion ensued regarding what similar cities have hired a consultant. Lakewood OH was suggested as a model, as well as Holland, MI (partnered with Kent through ICLEI). Motion passed with 3-0 vote.
2. Create a plan for meetings for the next few months
Ms. Long expressed that the group determine what the tasks and plan is while waiting for a consultant/coordinator. Ms. Ruchotzke suggested review of the information gathered on the poster sheets at the end of the December meeting, specifically the following:
 - Consolidating information gathered to date
 - Infographics to educate the community on the sectors and scopes in lay terms
 - Perhaps have a webinar or public forum to share the information with the public

Ms. Ruchotzke asked if everyone had a chance to review the template of the ICLEI plan. She expressed interest in adding the template to the Google drive so that the group can edit it. Ms. Ruchotzke went on to suggest when reviewing the document, it might be easier to start at the back end rather than from start to finish. Ms. McCarty reinforced that every member needs to read it because a lot of the information has been reviewed by the Ad Hoc and the Commission needs to make sure all are familiar with the material as well. Ms. Long will print copies at the end of the meeting for all to take home.

Ms. McCarty asked if the group plans to include the high impact items only or community changes such as more bike trails, and other things. It seems that the high impact sectors in the GHG are things we can't have much impact on. Ms. Ruchotzke agreed that there is little we can do to offset industrial and home related emissions but there are things that can be done to plan for the impact of climate change on other items, because of the trajectory we are already on. Examples are flood mitigation, fire mitigation, local food sources, migration planning, water supply, etc. While reducing GHG is a goal, concurrently planning for the changes that are coming will have a positive impact on residents of Kent. Mrs. McCarty asked if Mr. Boateng was planning to be a part of the project at this point. Ms. Long mentioned what Dr. Scholl stated at the last meeting, that Mr. Boateng needed a break but would likely be willing to help again later. Ms. McCarty mentioned that there were three or four slides after his presentation that she thought might be about this planning the mitigation phase. Ms. Long added that she is not certain but has a feeling that those slides may have been for something he is working on, possibly for his doctorate. No one in attendance was sure. Ms. Ruchotzke asked Dr. Scholl if he would make suggestions for Ad Hoc or run point on the mitigation strategies when he is able to participate.

Ms. Ruchotzke suggested the group create infographics for the examples above (flood mitigation, fire mitigation, local food sources, migration planning, water supply, etc.) over the next couple of months so that we are ready to share with the community and to be better partners with the professional consultant. She then asked the group for thoughts on what would be useful tasks over the next few months. Mr. Wilen suggested the group starts investigating solutions to propose to Council. He shared what Cincinnati did with a solar park. With our report showing that residential and industrial sector emissions being the largest issue, with transportation being the third highest. He suggested Kent set up solar areas to reduce the need for grid electricity. Ms. Ruchotzke reminded Mr. Wilen that we need to have the mitigation plan overview before details of the ideas. For example, coming up with a broad statement about the need to reduce our dependence on grid electricity by increasing solar use. *How* it happens comes later. Now is the time for the framework. Mr. Wilen added details of a discussion with Melanie Baker regarding potential solar use at the water plant. Ms. Ruchotzke stated that while he was offering good information, now is too soon and the need is for higher level planning. The Commission's job is to provide the parameters to help Council make the decisions to improve the climate. The goal is to create a framework of goals that Council approves so that when the direction in which Council agrees to move toward, the Commission can make suggestions for how to arrive at those goals. Mr. Hawksley mentioned that if someone would approach Council on his or her

own before the Commission gives guidance, they would be able to take action ahead of the Commission's suggestions. In other words, ideas could still be presented, so he encouraged Mr. Wilen to continue to research ideas to have on hand, for the appendices. Oberlin might be a good city to review, in spite of being so far ahead of Kent in this.

Mr. Hawksley suggested the group review final CAP's from other cities to decide what Kent's should look like. Ms. McCarty added the importance of keeping in mind that Kent is not the same as Cincinnati and Columbus.

Ms. Ruchotzke asked if the asset and liability study could be completed by the ad hoc committee. Ms. McCarty stated that assignment was to be completed by Dr. Scholl and herself. Mr. Wilen and Ms. Nelson were exploring the hazards. There was a meeting on the findings. Ms. Ruchotzke was looking into the prioritization and planning of an adaptation strategy. (Copies of the CAP work plan for 2020 were reviewed and made available to all after the meeting.)

Ms. Ruchotzke asked Mr. Hritz for his thoughts. He stated that reducing GHG and increasing green spaces are his primary areas of focus.

Ms. Ruchotzke recommended we work on the following priorities before the next meeting in February:

- a. List the vulnerabilities and assets in Kent and prioritize them. (Ad Hoc)
 - b. Explain the scopes and sectors of the GHG reports in lay terms. (Ruchotzke/Hawksley; later reviewed by Scholl)
 - c. Create the infographics for the scopes and sectors. (Ruchotzke)
3. Review notes on poster sheets from December meeting.
- Mr. Hawksley asked if Ms. Susel organized the google drive yet. Ms. Long confirmed that the cleanup was in progress and expected to be complete early in the week of Jan 10.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hawksley made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Hritz seconded it. All in favor, 3-0. Meeting ended at 6:40. After the meeting copies were made for all members.

Next Meeting

February 7, 2022 in person at the Kent Police Department Community Training Room, 1st Fl. Joint meeting with the Ad Hoc Commission.