

Sustainability Commission Meeting February 7, 2022

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

Roll Call: Renee Ruchotzke, Rick Hawksley, Andy Scholl and MaryJayne Stone
Ad Hoc members present were Ms. McCarty, Mr. Wilen, Ms. Nelson

Staff: Patti Long, Assistant to the City Manager
Absent: Wilder Hritz

Also present was Joan Seidel from the Kent City Health Department

Mr. Hawksley made a motion to excuse Mr. Hritz. Motion was seconded by, Dr. Scholl
motion passed 4-0.

Approval of the agenda:

No changes made to the agenda.

Meeting Summary Minutes:

No changes made to the minutes.

Public Comment

None

Work Session

1. Vulnerabilities and assets in Kent -

Mrs. Nelson stated the group reviewed the various categories and hazards that the group had worked on in early 2020. The hazards were compiled with Andrews Boateng from a scientific standpoint. Mr. Wilen reached out to ICLEI for help with vulnerabilities settings. ICLEI provided an example from Paltz, NY (in the Google drive). One recommendation from ICLEI is that we could anticipate drought in our area, with possibilities of flash flooding after heavy rain. Dr. Scholl added that there are climate models (eg. Climate Explorer) that can be used to predict what would happen in the Kent area. When a list of assets is compiled, we can look at what would be impacted by each of the possible hazards then mitigation planning can be tied to protecting those assets (resilience).

Mrs. Nelson stated the importance of resources and that we need to use the tools that come from a reputable source. Dr. School added that we also need to keep in mind the need to model our plan after others in this region. He also added that simply saying it is going to wetter or hotter is not specific enough. There needs to be more specific prediction modeling in order to prioritize the planning.

Ms. McCarty added that our hazards will be moderate compared to coastal regions. Mr. Hawksley mentioned his findings on floodfactor.com that predicts the flood risk in Kent is minor but 333 properties could be severely affected by flooding over the next 30 years.

Mr. Wilen commented on the document that Mr. Boateng created that give that

reduction targets show us what we need to target first. Mrs. Ruchotzke suggested that we might need to start with what sources we should use for the reduction strategies, then what data should be examined (rainfall, snowfall, average overnight temps, etc.).

Mrs. Nelson stated that step one is to determine our assets from the list created while brainstorming. The next step is to identify the hazards. Then determined how the hazards impact the assets. She also said she would send out documents that the Commission that might be helpful, like the brainstorming list. Ms. Long was requested to send the drive link again.

Mrs. Nelson explained that the Ad Hoc needs to educate the Commission and also move forward with the planning. She plans to lean on Dr. Scholl to help digest the information on the ICLEI links, due to the complex nature and volume of information. Ad Hoc will meet in the near future. Until a project manager is hired, Ms. Long will cover the administrative support for the Ad Hoc. Dr. Scholl will provide the expertise and Ms. Nelson will provide the structure and focus during the meetings. Ms. Long to send out a Doodle Poll to find a time the group can meet.

Mrs. Nelson mentioned that there are actually three of the circular plans we need to examine: Greenhouse Gas; Hazards and Vulnerability; and Sustainability Planning. She asked ICLEI if we have the latest versions to follow. ICLEI found that the mid-west towns who narrowed the focus had better success than those who had a wider focus. Holland MI called their plan a Community Energy Plan to have a softer approach. For example, start with a GHG focus and create a plan and implement it, then circle back with looking at the hazards and vulnerability as another plan. The group will need to decide where to set limits of what will be part of this first plan. She also recommended we get input from the community as well. All members agreed that community input is vital.

2. Review of lay terms examples/descriptions of scopes and sectors – not discussed directly.
3. Infographics review – Ms. Ruchotzki shared several examples of what other cities have used for their educational handouts and left them with Ms. Nelson for future planning.
4. Letter to support budget amendment reviewed for submission to council.
5. Agenda items for March meeting (Commission only, not joint)
 - a. Discuss Communication Planning using Athens sustainability plan as an example, all to review prior to meeting.
 - b. Effects of 2-cycle engines
 - c. Light pollution – MaryJayne to gather examples of dark sky ordinances
 - d. Community Gardens

Good of the order:

KEC and NAACP is co-hosting an event at the Kent Free Library 2/17/22.

Adjournment

Ms. Stone made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Hawksley seconded it. All in favor, 4-0. Meeting ended at 6:41.

Next Meeting

March 7, 2022 at the Kent Police Department Chief's Conference Room, 3rd floor.