

Sustainability Commission Meeting June 5, 2017

Meeting called to order at 5:34 pm by Chairperson Nadine Gomez

Roll Call: Judy Nelson, Julie Morris, and Nadine Gomez

ABSENT: Ann Gilmore and Rick Hawksley

Mrs. Nelson made a motion to excuse Mrs. Gilmore. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Morris and was approved with a 3-0 vote.

Mrs. Nelson made a motion to excuse Mr. Hawksley. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Morris and was approved with a 3-0 vote.

Staff: Harrison Wicks, Executive Assistant to the City Manager
Suzanne Stemnock, Human Resources Manager

Review of Meeting Summary Reports of May 1, 2017:

Mrs. Morris made a motion to approve the summary reports from May. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Nelson and was approved with a 3-0 vote.

Public Comment

None

OLD BUSINESS

Bag Share Project Update - The bag share item was deferred until the next meeting in July. Project lead, Mrs. Gilmore, was absent.

Rain Barrel Workshop Update - Discussion centered around when and where to have the rain barrel workshop. In discussing when to host the workshop, Mrs. Morris stated that the 25th Anniversary of the Haymaker Farmers Market is in August 2017. Mrs. Morris put forward the idea of unveiling the rain barrel workshop at the anniversary event. Mrs. Nelson commented that the anniversary celebration is not happening at the same time as the regular Farmers Market hours and may take place in the evening. Ms. Gomez brought up the idea of doing multiple workshops at different times. If done at different times, this brings up the issue of storage and one idea was to store the barrels at the City of Kent's Service Admin Complex on Overholt Rd. Ms. Gomez stated that once we figure out a date we can also reserve time at the Market. As for a location, Mrs. Morris mentioned the opportunity of holding the rain barrel workshop immediately following the Farmers Market on a Saturday. Mrs. Morris also put forward the idea of hosting the event at the Wells Sherman House and Ms. Gomez was supportive of the idea. The Wells Sherman House has a large back area big enough for 20 attendees. Mrs. Morris stated she can reach out to Ann Ward at the Wells Sherman House. Mrs. Nelson mentioned the possibility of using a Parks and Recreation facility at the Fred Fuller Park however the scheduling for the facility may be challenging during the summer

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months. Mrs. Stemnock pointed out that Sheri Chestnutwood in the Service Department emailed her last week about the rain barrels and whether or not the holes should be drilled before giving them to residents. If they can be drilled, then 20 rain barrels could be ready. Mrs. Stemnock also confirmed receipt of email from May 31st that the barrels were ready to be washed.

June Farmers Market Attendance - Mrs. Nelson stated it would be beneficial to attend the June Farmers Market so commission members can start getting people signed up for the Rain Barrel Workshop. Ms. Gomez wanted to know which day in June would be best. Mrs. Morris stated she can have bags and print outs to bring to give to attendees at the market. Mrs. Morris also spoke about bringing more seed bombs since they were a big hit previously. Mrs. Nelson put forward the idea to wait to attend the market until later in June, that way the commission will have more time to set a date for the Rain Barrel Workshop. As a result, June 24th was chosen as a date to attend the market. Ms. Gomez stated she will ask Andrew to make sure June 24th will suffice and if they can have a table under the bridge. All three attending commission members said they wanted the early shift. Staff will send an email to ask absent members Mrs. Gilmore and Mr. Hawksley if they will be available to attend the Farmers Market on June 24th. Also Staff will check with Sheri to see if she has an update from Jeff. Ms. Gomez stated a concern for the need of equipment for the booth at the Farmers Market such as a table, easels, fold out tent, and chairs. Mrs. Nelson put forward the idea of placing the booth under the bridge so that a tent would not be needed. Also, it was suggested that signs can be hung on the table if there was no tent. Mrs. Morris asked if the city could invest in a tent that can be used at the Farmers Market and other public events. Ms. Gomez also reiterated a need for a central place to put everything so that the commission members do not have to worry where items were located.

Community Information Update - Mrs. Morris and Mrs. Nelson met with representatives of the Sustainability Department at KSU, Leah and Melanie. KSU is planning a GeoTour in collaboration with Portage County for October 2017, highlighting LEED standards and sustainable architecture. October is sustainability month and Mrs. Morris and Mrs. Nelson voiced support to help plan events with KSU. The date for the GeoTour has not been set yet. Another event was the showing of a documentary called 'The True Cost' that will be shown in the KIVA. Mrs. Morris and Mrs. Nelson supported the idea of having the Sustainability Commission attend the event at the KIVA to give information and connect people and students to local organizations and resources. As for other collaborative events Mrs. Morris and Mrs. Nelson brought up the idea of co-hosting a lunch and learn where the university could host lunch and the commission could host a gathering in the evening to encourage more residents to attend. Mrs. Morris informed KSU of the database idea, and Lis Regula, Chair of the Kent Environmental Council, voiced interest and said he will work to have a platform on the website and reach out to student groups to get them into the database. The next scheduled meeting time with KSU would be when the GeoTour has dates set and they would discuss attending the event at the KIVA. Jim Bowling with City of Kent was scheduled to speak today however it will be moved to the August meeting.

Recycling - Ms. Gomez stated a need for recycling cans downtown next to trash bins. There was discussion over having more recycling bins at downtown events. Staff will connect with Heather at Main Street Kent to see about having recycling bins at future events. Currently there are 5 recycling bins downtown. Mrs. Stemnock pointed out that the commission can work with the Service Department and Engineering Division to possibly get more recycling bins downtown. An important aspect of this request is to do research on recycling bins so they have a better idea of what can be done by looking at bin designs, colors, and prices. Ms. Gomez stated the City needed blue bins next to trash bins. Mrs. Stemnock pointed out that past issues of recycling downtown boiled down to contamination. Portage County wouldn't pick them up due to trash contamination. If the bins are together, there can be an issue of contamination. Next steps are for the commission to look up companies that sell recycling bins and materials and conduct further research.

Tree City Bulletin - Mr. Wicks pointed out the deadline for articles is June 26th for the Fall issue. There was a consensus that it is important a date for the rain barrel workshop be finalized before June 26th. Mrs. Nelson stated she spoke with Matt at Birdsong farm and there was interest in writing an article on a local farmers' viewpoint on how weather is impacting local farming. Mrs. Nelson affirmed she will talk to Matt and other select farmers to get their input. Ms. Gomez put forward the idea of the Sustainability Commission issuing a statement to give to council supporting local efforts to address climate change. Mrs. Morris stated she will brainstorm different movements or organizations to support related to climate change (Examples included the '1000 Mayor' movement, state and local actions, 'We are still in' movement, etc.). Mrs. Morris also mentioned GAINS (Greater Akron Innovation Network for Sustainability) as an example of what could be done in Kent, as far as supporting incremental change, and developing a sustainability network.

Review and Discuss the Current Fracking Permits- No discussion as no new items have been addressed.

NEW BUSINESS

None

NEXT MEETINGS

July 10, 2017

August 7, 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Gomez made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Nelson and was approved by a 3-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 6:43pm.