

Sustainability Commission Meeting March 4, 2019

Meeting called to order at 5:35pm by Chairperson Nadine Gomez.

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

ABSENT: Judy Nelson and Andrew Scholl

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

Ms. Gomez made a motion to excuse Dr. Scholl. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Morris and was approved with a 3-0 vote.

Staff: Harrison Wicks, Executive Assistant to the City Manager

Review of Meeting Summary Reports of February 4, 2019:

Mrs. Morris made a motion to approve the minutes from February. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gomez and was approved with a 3-0 vote.

Public Comment

None

OLD BUSINESS

Ad-hoc Committee Update- The Ad-hoc Committee last met on February 1, 2019. Community Development Director Bridget Susel and Mr. Wicks will analyze data received up to this point to input into the ICLEI ClearPath software being used for the Climate Action Plan. The next meeting will be scheduled at a future date.

Farmers' Market Update- Ms. Gomez confirmed the Commission is able to attend the Haymaker Farmers' Market on March 16th. Ms. Gomez agreed to attend during the morning session, 10-11:30am, and Mrs. Morris and Ms. Jackson agreed to attend during the afternoon session, 11:30-1pm. Mrs. Morris commented that the month of April may be a better time for a food drive at the farmers' market. Mrs. Christie Anderson at Kent Social Services (KSS) has agreed to attend the farmers' market during a future date in April for a food drive. Mrs. Morris received a confirmation from the Kent Socially Responsible Sweatshop on a donation of t-shirts to be made into reusable tote bags. Mrs. Morris confirmed she can pick up the t-shirts at a future date. There was a consensus to advertise upcoming events and programs at the farmers' market such as the Environmental Film Series, the Kent State University (KSU) Earth Fest, Who's Your Mama Earth Day Festival, River Day, the Edith Chase Symposium, and others. Mrs. Morris commented she can confirm a date in late April to attend the farmers' market.

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Informational Solar Energy Meeting- Mr. Wicks confirmed a second informational meeting was held in the Kent Police Station community room on March 2, 2019. Approximately 25 interested residents of Kent and Portage County attended. Luke Sulfridge with the organization Solar United Neighbors presented on the solar program and confirmed the Portage County Co-op is seeking 10 more residents to sign up before moving forward with a Request for Proposals (RFP). Mr. Wicks confirmed he is planning to schedule an additional meeting for county and local government representatives later in 2019.

Single Use Plastic Straws- Mr. Wicks confirmed that National Skip the Straw Day occurred on February 22, 2019. There was a consensus to continue outreach on the awareness campaign into 2019.

Community Outreach Update-

- a. Kent Environmental Council (KEC)- No update.
- b. KSU Office of Sustainability- Mrs. Morris confirmed the Commission has been invited to attend the KSU Earth Fest on April 10th from 11-3pm. There was a consensus to do a t-shirt reusable tote bag activity during the festival with shirts donated from the Socially Responsible Sweatshop. The event will be broken up into two shifts. Mrs. Morris confirmed she can attend during the later shift. Schedules will be confirmed at the next meeting in April.
- c. Haven of Portage County- Mrs. Morris confirmed plans were approved for the Haven's new building with construction beginning later in 2019. Fundraising is still in progress with events such as a pancake breakfast on March 16th and a spring benefit concert on March 24th. Mrs. Morris also confirmed that Townhall II in downtown Kent recently made available an opioid recovery clinic with evaluation and treatment services now available.
- d. Family & Community Services- Mrs. Morris commented planned renovations to Kent Social Services will include additional pantry space and a newly constructed cold storage space. The renovations will allow for larger donations, additional storage, and more space in the common area.

Tree City Bulletin- Ideas for the summer 2019 edition of the Tree City Bulletin were discussed. One article idea included a focus on local downtown businesses to highlight their progress on using less single use plastic products. Also a prompt was discussed to potentially ask residents: What are you doing to reduce the use of single use plastics? More article ideas will be discussed during the meeting in April. Ms. Gomez confirmed she can reach out to Heather Malarcik with Main Street Kent to see about contacting select businesses downtown.

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2019 Environmental Film Series- The Kent Environmental Council confirmed they will share the film series flyer with their members. Mr. Wicks commented he can invite Renee Ruchotzke and Lis Regula to speak at the March 19th showing of the movie Growing Cities. For the last movie in the series, The Human Element, there was discussion to include Dr. Scholl to be a guest speaker but further consideration is needed. There was a consensus to examine other ways to promote the series including reaching out to Melanie Knowles and Leah Graham with the KSU Office of Sustainability.

Phosphorus in the Cuyahoga River- Mr. Wicks confirmed more research is being completed. There was a consensus to ask the Kent Environmental Council to recommend water specialists the Commission can speak with to discuss phosphorus in the Cuyahoga River.

NEW BUSINESS

OTHER BUSINESS

The Commission considered a memo to Kent City Council recommending council support a resolution in opposition to the State of Ohio HB 393 and SB 165 discussed during the last legislative session. Ms. Gomez moved to recommend to council to support the draft resolution currently under consideration by City Council. Seconded by Ms. Jackson and approved with a 3-0 vote.

NEXT MEETING

April 1, 2019

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Gomez made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Morris and was approved with a 3-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.