

Sustainability Commission Meeting

June 6, 2022

Meeting called to order at 5:30 pm by Renee Ruchotzke

Roll Call: Renee Ruchotzke Wilder Hritz, Rick Hawksley, MaryJayne Stone (arrived 15 min late)

Absent: Andy Scholl

Mr. Hawksley made a motion to excuse Dr. Scholl, seconded by Mr Hritz. Approved by vote, 3-0.

Staff: Patti Long, Assistant to the City Manager

Approval of the agenda:

Mr. Hawksley moved to approve and Mr. Hritz seconded. Approve by vote, 3-0.

Meeting Summary Minutes:

Minutes filed, no adjustments.

Public Comment

None

Old Business:

- a. Light Pollution – Mr. Hawksley mentioned that Ms. Stone has been doing a great job finding people who have good information about dark sky ordinances and how to initiate change. Ms. Ruchotzke added that there was quite a bit of interest in it at the booth on River Day.
Ms. Stone provided an update. Brad Broche contacted her to let her know that he mentioned to KEC that it would be a good idea to have a forum with KEC and the Sustainability Commission where the groups work together on light pollution. Ms. Ruchotzke suggested planning a group walk to explore the areas of light pollution. Mr. Hawksley added that he needs to contact the City engineers again about the problems of light pollution. He will also reach out to the Clerk of Council to find details of the discussion on the revised code from last year.
- b. Community Gardens – Ms. Ruchotzke stated that the gardens are all coming along nicely.
- c. Farmers Market River Day booth – Ms. Ruchotzke said there was good traffic flow during the entire market with good conversations. Mr. Hawksley asked if the commission historically participates in the market more than once a year. Ms. Ruchotzke stated the group usually participates once in the summer and once during the indoor market. Mr. Hawksley suggested we do one in the fall outside as well to have more opportunity to spread awareness. The group agreed.
- d. Pollinator Pockets/Noxious weeds – Ms. Ruchotzke stated she is still looking for Akron and Summit County's examples so she can use the same language but it has not passed yet. This list of the Ohio Revised Code list of noxious weeds has been shared with the group. As soon as the Summit County ordinance has been published. She added that she would like to have language in the revised ordinance to include the pause of enforcement of tall grass during "No Mow May" as well. She also would like to increase community awareness of the benefits of pollinator

gardens. Ms. Long shared a honey bee situation that just took place recently. There was a swarm near the side walk along Haymaker and a bee expert was called in to collect them. He was able to successfully find the queen and gather the swarm into his boxes. Ms. Ruchotzke added that at the community garden, the plants didn't appear to be pollinated so she suggested installing a bee hotel. At first the idea was not welcomed but after she explained the fact that the bees are needed there and that they rarely sting, the organizer change her mind. This is an example of how education can make things better.

- e. Tree City Bulletin article – Ms. Ruchotzke will edit the article that was written by Eric Groczynski, bringing it down to an appropriate reading. July 11th is the deadline for submission. Conversation around the date discussion moved to the next meeting time since the holiday falls on the next regularly scheduled meeting. It was decided we skip the July meeting and that Ms. Ruchotzke simply sends the article to Ms. Long via email.
- f. Community Composting – Mr. Hawksley asked Ms. Ruchotzke if the group had been told by the City that there's not enough space to offer it for the residents. She confirmed that but added that there are some residents who are exploring the idea privately. They mentioned wanting to use the old Carter Lumber site. Mr. Hawksley said that the gentleman who bought the property was looking at using it for a storage facility. He added that perhaps leasing part of the space might be an option. Ms. Stone asked what Rubber City Refuse does. Ms. Ruchotzke explained that they have residents collect their compost material in 5-gallon buckets and either pick it up or the residents can drop it off at the facility. Ms. Ruchotzke added that the Health Department ought to be involved if residents decide to compost at their home due to rodent and pest control suggestions.

Mr. Hawksley mentioned the Zero Waste station at a race he ran in Ann Arbor, where volunteers were sorting refuse (banana peels, napkins) by hand to be processed resulting in no waste. He added that he would see what else Ann Arbor does in the area of composting. Ms. Ruchotzke added that it would be great to ask Rubber City Reuse to come to a skill share event.

New Business

None

Good of the order

Ms. Stone asked when the garden walk will take place. Ms. Ruchotzke stated it is on June 25th in the afternoon.

Adjournment

Mr. Hawksley made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Wilder seconded it. All in favor,

4-0. Meeting ended at 6:00.

Next Meeting

August 1, 2022 at the Kent Police Department Chief's Conference Room, 3rd floor.
No July meeting.