

Sustainability Commission Meeting

August 1, 2022

Meeting called to order at 5:33 pm by Renee Ruchotzke

Roll Call: Renee Ruchotzke Andy Scholl, Rick Hawksley, MaryJayne Stone

Also present: Judy Nelson, Bill Wilen, Lorrain McCarty

Absent: Wilder Hritz

Staff: Patti Long, Assistant to the City Manager

Approval of the agenda:

Mrs. Stone moved to approve and Mr. Hawksley seconded. Approve by vote, 4-0.

Meeting Summary Minutes:

Minutes filed, no adjustments.

Public Comment

The Keramida team was present via zoom to introduce themselves, their service and to have the Commission and Committee members introduce themselves. The presentation will be shared soon via email. The video was recorded and is available in the Climate Action Plan Google drive at:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1XpsbUk3s0qRAB3_vjzW93smrmWFMaO3O

Ms. Long reviewed the possible schedule of the Keramida meetings during the first week of October and the group determined that Thursday (10/6) would work best for the town hall style meeting.

Mr. Wilen asked about the budgeted amount for the team's travel. Ms. Long stated that the total amount the City is paying covers all of the expenses.

Ms. Ruchotzke suggested that we ask the Keramida team if they would be interested in attending the farmers market to meet more constituents. Mr. Hawksley suggested they come Wednesday through Saturday. Possibly they could come Monday through Saturday so they can come to the sustainability meeting and invite the public and move the meeting to the training room in the police department. A meet and greet at the community garden and a KSU visit are other ideas mentioned by Mr. Hawksley. Ms. Ruchotzke mentioned that they could go to the KEC breakfast Friday morning and be the guest speakers.

Old Business:

- a. Ad Hoc Update – Dr. Scholl stated that the zoom meeting was the update from the Ad Hoc. Ms. McCarty added that she and Ms. Nelson had recently attended the PARTA board meeting and shared that PARTA is using CNG and RNG vehicles in their fleet. Ms. Long said she would share the PARTA information with the group.
- b. Light Pollution – Ms. Stone stated that Brad is working on an article for the KEC newsletter to keep the topic active and increase awareness. Mr. Hawksley said he had spoken with the City Engineer and they will schedule a night to walk on N. Water and talk about the light pollution there.

Ms. Ruchotzke suggested adding that fireflies need it to be darker, as a way to promote the bugs because people like fireflies. Ms. Stone added that it affects the monarchs and their migration as well.

- c. Community Gardens – Ms. Ruchotzke stated that there may be another garden tour next year. Ms. Stone asked if the tour might happen in another neighborhood next year. The plan, according to Ms. Ruchotzke is to move the tour around town and perhaps next year it will take place on the west side of Kent.
- d. Farmers Market – Perhaps Keramida will be able to stay long enough to participate in the market on October 8th.
- e. Pollinator Pockets/Noxious weeds – Ms. Ruchotzke said she is still waiting on Akron to finish their legislation to see how their language reads. In the mean time she is also concerned about neighbors over spraying poison beyond their own property to prevent weeds from spreading into their lawn. She is looking for examples around Kent which prevent that practice or other tactics used to eliminate organic yards while trespassing on property that belongs to another resident.

Dr. Scholl suggested that proving who committed the offense could be difficult. Mr. Hawksley suggested that the Law Director be included the discussion. Ms. Ruchotzke added that there are residents who are using illegal chemicals on lawns and that should be taken into consideration. One spraying could ruin a lawn. Mr. Hawkley suggested people could put up “No Spray Zone” signs instead of the “Wild Your Yard” signs. Perhaps KEC could make the signs. Ms. Long to ask the Law Director about Kent’s legislation surrounding this issue.

- f. Tree City Bulletin article – At the printers at the time of this meeting. February 3 is the deadline for the Spring issue. Ms. Long suggested running an article about the CAP and what Keramida’s plan looks like.
- g. Community Composting – Ms. Ruchotzke reported her husband, Randy Ruchotzke and Randy Bish have been in communication with Rubber City Reuse and the high school to research the idea of local community composting. Dr. Scholl mentioned that the City hosted a rain barrel workshop and he wondered if it might be possible to have a composting workshop for residents. Kent State hosted one in the past and gave attendees a plastic collapsible box to take home to use. He was wondering if the City might do something similar.

Ms. Ruchotzke mentioned that Reeds and Roots is hosting two workshops for that. She added that she prefers to not promote the use of plastics. Dr. Scholl agreed but fears that not everyone has the time or ability to build wooden boxes. Ms. Long suggested checking with the Construction Technology program next spring to have the students build them out of pallets. Ms. Stone will reach out to Don Titko in the late winter to explore the possibility. It was suggested that we could possibly stage them at the yard waste site or other service department location then organize a crew to deliver the boxes to attendees’ homes after a late spring workshop.

New Business

None

Adjournment

Mrs. Stone made a motion to adjourn and Dr. Scholl seconded it. All in favor, 4-0. Meeting ended at 6:35.

Next Meeting

September 12, 2022 at the Kent Police Department Chief's Conference Room, 3rd floor.