



MINUTES

Eugene Sustainability Commission
Atrium, Saul Room
Eugene, Oregon

June 18, 2014
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Shawn Boles, Howard Bonnett, Joanne Gross, Kathi Jaworski, Dawn Lesley, Sasha Luftig, Steve Newcomb, Howard Saxion, Carolyn Stein, Sue Wolling, Alan Zelenka, commissioners. Babe O'Sullivan, Matt McRae, City Manager's Office.

ABSENT: None

Ms. Jaworski called the June 18, 2014 meeting of the Sustainability Commission to order.

1. Opening - agenda review, approval of minutes

Ms. Jaworski noted two additions to the meeting agenda including: 1) introductions of new commissioners, 2) proposed City Council motion to create a food task force. She then called for corrections or clarifications to the May 21, 2014 minutes.

Ms. Bonnett, seconded by Ms. Luftig, moved to approve the May 21, 2014 minutes as submitted. The motion passed, 8:0. Commissioners Boles, Stein and Lesley abstained.

2. Public comment

Mel Bankoff and Tammy Darby with the Partnership for Sustainable Schools (PSS) presented ideas for how the commission could support the Green Partnerships Schools (GPS) program. The program provides curriculum around climate change, supports student advocacy, and hosts the Hope in Action conference. Five local schools are currently in the program and PSS staff hopes to add a few middle schools for next year. Suggestions for a partnership with the commission include: 1) advocacy with the local school boards to promote sustainability education and activities, 2) adding sustainability education to commission's FY 15 work plan, 3) commissioners could join PSS board, 4) sponsorship of this year's conference "Our Children, Our Future" and 5) including PSS information in the Monthly Sustainability Report. Commission Bonnett suggested that Mr. Bankoff and Ms. Darby contact Babe for a form to request sponsorship of the conference.

Mark Robinowitz addressed the commission on several points including: 1) to ignore peak energy is climate denial, 2) he predicts energy rationing based on revised estimate of oil from Monterey shale, 3) peak pollution comes after peak resources, and 4) city carbon neutral plans/targets are not achievable with transportation projects (Beltline Hwy) underway. Mr. Robinowitz recommended a number of books on these topics and that the City and Oregon Department of Transportation abandon the Beltline project.

3. Sub-committee reports

Housing Density

Commissioner Wollong met with Councilor Syrett to discuss R1 code changes. A council majority advised taking neighborhood leaders recommendations for zoning. The commission can help frame the issue that the city needs to find acceptable ways to increase density or it will have to expand the Urban Growth Boundary. Councilor Syrett suggested that the commission could focus on transit corridor decisions, though the timeline for this is not clear. The Technical Resource Group advised the City Manager to focus on standards for transition zones between residential areas and transit corridors. They've also recommended looking at establishing a development commission.

Triple Bottom Line meeting tomorrow, no report today.

Commissioners Gross and Bonnett reported on a meeting organized by city staff on the subject of environmental justice. Some highlights from that meeting:

- Staff notes from the meeting have some omissions. The definition of environmental justice suggests no region of the City should bear disproportionate impacts of environmental pollutants.
- A portion of the City on the west side already experiences disproportionate impacts - and the expansion of industrial lands in this area will further that inequity. Will there be a TBL analysis done in the area where expansion is suggested?
- Planning staff has removed the homes that were planned for near the industrial expansion area. The area that was housing is now designated "campus employment." This is not a clear designation and should be clarified.
- There appeared to be no discussion about whether or not it was appropriate to propose the industrial expansion in this area in the first place.
- A graduate student intern is working with Planning staff to do additional analysis of this area looking at regulatory and non-regulatory tools that can be applied to improve compatibility with other non-industrial uses.
- It is not clear what the next steps will be - so participants may want to propose clear next steps.
- Commissioner Bonnett raised the question at the meeting about whether greenhouse gas emissions were a part of the discussion or decision-making process.

On other matters, Ms. Gross met with Dr. John Talberth, an economist, about a Genuine Progress Indicator and she will report the details of her meeting to the TBL sub-committee. She doesn't know how much Dr. Talberth plans to charge for GPI analyses.

Transportation

The sub-committee is looking into when and how the Beltline project will be incorporated into the Transportation System Plan (TSP). Commissioner Bonnett is looking into a Complete Streets policy that would be included in TSP and has received a draft policy from city staff.

In considering commission input on the Beltline project, commissioners shared that:

- The commission should prepare and recommend a policy on highway/auto-centric planning and projects for Council consideration.
- How does Beltline fit within TSP? It's an ODOT project and may not align with City objectives. Opportunity for public input but feedback from city staff and Councilor Syrett suggests that it is unlikely to make a difference.
- Commissioner Newcomb talked with Councilor Clark who also felt the commission shouldn't waste time on this project.

- The topic could be discussed at the work planning retreat, including when, where, and how the Commission weighs in on different topics.
- Is there something timely now that the Commission should weigh in on.

In related news, the City of Eugene received ConnectOregon grant funds for two bike/pedestrian bridges in Eugene.

4. Introduction of new commissioners

Ms. Jaworski invited two new commissioners to introduce themselves:

- Summer Cox, who was appointed by Councilor Poling, is a University of Oregon student and works as staff for Trillium Health Plan. She has volunteered with Food for Lane County, Long Tom Watershed Council, WomenSpace, and other organizations.
- David Tam, who was appointed by the City Council to an at-large position, works in real estate development and international business consulting. He has a background in water purification and renewable energy technologies.

5. Commission work planning retreat

The commission selected August 26, 4-9 PM for the upcoming work planning retreat. Other feedback on the retreat included:

- Use July meeting to reflect on FY 14, including where the commission has succeeded and where it hasn't.
- Include written sub-committee reports as background for the retreat.
- Review the operations of the sub-committees - public meeting requirements (notice of meetings, publishing minutes, etc.) are challenging.
- Retreat and facilitation in 2013 were effective. Advance work to review FY 14 accomplishments and challenges will make retreat more productive.
- Staff will look into retreat locations and facilitation.

6. Break

7. Climate Recovery Ordinance

Vice Chair Steve Newcomb reiterated his call for a volunteer to serve as a Chair or Vice Chair. Elections will be held at the July commission meeting.

Climate and Energy Analyst Matt McRae provided a presentation on the proposed Climate Recovery Ordinance, the subject of a public hearing on July 21. Some feedback from commissioners included:

- There is some confusion with terms: greenhouse gas reductions vs. fossil fuel reduction vs. carbon neutrality. This could delay or complicate action at Council.
- A cheat sheet would help commissioners in communicating about plans, goals and targets.
- An information sheet for the public would help that includes a matrix of goals and a glossary with definition of terms.
- Concern about social equity aspects of carbon offsets, especially if the offset projects are not local. They could create inequitable impacts on different communities. Should ensure that offsets don't exacerbate inequities.
- Call for commissioners testify at the public hearing on July 21.

8. Food Task Force - motion for City Council

Councilor Zelenka circulated a proposed motion for City Council calling for the establishment of a Food Task Force. He and Councilor Evans plan to put it forward next week. The Food Task Force proposal draws on the commission food policy letter to Council in May 2012 and builds on the ideas from the team that attended the training in Memphis on Urban Agriculture and Sustainable Food Systems.

Feedback from the commission included:

- Commissioners could speak in support at public forum on June 23.
- The proposal calls for a regional team - is there a need to bring on other jurisdictions or regional partners?
- Looking at funding possibilities, the Partners for Places grant is on the horizon but has short timelines. Proposals are due July 3.
- There may be options from Chambers Family Foundation, Woodard Family Foundation, Gray Family Foundation, Oregon Community Foundation, or Meyer Memorial Trust.
- It would be helpful to know the timing of the next round of funding from Partners for Places by the time of the commission's work planning retreat (Aug. 26).

9. Items from commissioners and staff

Commissioner Wolling reported on a conversation with Councilor Syrett in which she reminded the commission to not hesitate to resend communications to council when it is deciding on something the commission has already weighed in on in the past. Councilor Syrett indicated that she expects the City of Eugene will sign on to the Heal Cities campaign and that it could be an opportunity for the commission to advocate for related projects/goals.

Commissioner Gross has been advocating walking and biking in Bethel but air pollution and road flooding are barriers to more active transportation. Need to focus on the environment and infrastructure to support more active transportation.

Commissioner Luftig shared that the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee tries to get representatives from across the city, geographically. Projects are also to be funded with geographically equitable distribution.

Councilor Zelenka reported on glass recycling. Glass from Eugene is now going to a new facility in Portland and remade into new glass bottles. The City Manager has agreed to define glass recycling by administrative order to prohibit its use in landfill road beds and drainage. The Council just passed a request for a study to assess the economic impacts of the reuse and recycling industries.

He also reported that the subject of fossil fuel divestment will be coming back to council on July 14. Currently, the City has no direct investment in the fossil fuel industry. Staff will be coming back to council with letters to the PERS board and other investment managers to signal to these investment managers the council's interest in divesting from fossil fuels.

10. Outgoing commissioners

The commission thanked outgoing commissioner Chair Kathi Jaworski for her leadership and contributions.

11. Closing

The next meeting of the commission is July 16, 2014. Ms. Jaworski adjourned the meeting at 7:54 PM.