



City of Ann Arbor

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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Meeting Minutes Energy Commission

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

6:00 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron St. - 2nd Floor Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Appleyard called the meeting to order at 6 PM

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Charles Hookham, Wayne Appleyard, David A. Wright, Diane Kurz, Brigit Macomber, Mike Shriberg, Mark Clevey, Erik Eibert, and Elizabeth Gibbons

Absent: 2 - John Hieftje, and Kenneth J. Wadland

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approved unanimously on a voice vote

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approved unanimously on a voice vote

13-1251

Ann Arbor Energy Commission Meeting Minutes of July 9, 2013

Attachments: Minutes Energy Commission 7-9-13.pdf

Approved by the Commission and forwarded to the City Council due back on 1/21/2014

13-1394

Ann Arbor Energy Commission Meeting Minutes of October 8, 2013

Attachments: Energy Commission Minutes 10-8-13.pdf

PUBLIC INPUT

None

ENERGY REPORT - NEWS FROM THE ENERGY OFFICE AND COMMISSIONERS

Geisler: Last Friday the solar kiosk installed at Farmers Market, as part of Ann Arbor Solar Cities partnership (worked with Hands On Museum). Reads present, sunny, and cloudy production in kilowatt hours, with a QR code coming to allow real time readings from the Sunny Boy inverter system.

11/13 is advisory meeting of XSeed Energy advisory committee (from Noon to 2 pm at CEC offices). Looking to see how XSeed might fit with community solar

efforts underway at the City.

Staff and Chair Appleyard met with MPSC Commissioner Sally Tallberg to relay issues and interests in Ann Arbor, including delivery of the adopted resolution supporting the piloting of community solar in DTE territory. Also discussed challenges and opportunities with our Climate Action Plan, PACE, and green rental housing work under the HUD grant.

November 26th is an all-day conference in Lansing on anaerobic digesters (Clevy stated that Consumers Energy is adding biodigester power to the EARP program in addition to solar.)

Commissioners Wright and Kurz worked with staff on comments for the State's renewable energy report comment period, in addition to comments submitted by Commissioner Appleyard. Hookham stated that there appears to be movement on strengthening the renewable portfolio standard as a result of the report and comments. Renewables integration studies are showing positive results in terms of how far we can go with renewable integration with the grid (studies by PJM, a regional transmission organization). Wires and capacity still have to be factored into our understanding of a more renewable future.

Staff is looking into Chapter 105 of the City Housing Code dealing with requirements of landlords to provide budget plans to prospective tenants, and whether any language can be updated. Looking to see whether any Commissioners are interested in helping review this as part of broader code updating coming in 2014. (Appleyard Shriberg, and Eibert volunteered to assist.)

Shriberg: Ann Arbor Hands On Museum has some funding to do energy education in middle schools and related audiences and will be bringing some of the ideas to the Commission for our collective expertise (perhaps in a few months as this is still in early planning stages).

Community Solar

Wright: Met and discussed the GLREA feasibility report. Interveners in the DTE rate case are looking to get community solar in the biennial review of the renewable portfolio standard (RPS). Will meet in December to determine next steps.

(Staff confirmed the final vacancy on the Commission was approved by City Council.)

Fossil Fuel Divestment

Shriberg: After initially failing to get the required six votes at Council we did a lot of educating with Council to get them to approve our resolution (particular thanks to Commissioners Kurz, Appleyard and Mayor Hieftje). Over 300 hundred constituents contacted Council as well in support (final vote was 9 to 2 in favor of divestment request). Some language was amended in the final resolution but with little impact to our goals for it. Now it is in the hands of the Retirement and Pension Board to consider this request of Council, as the resolution cannot mandate divestment occur. The Board's internal investigation of issues related to divestment showed about one-third of their investments are in funds without fees or structural constraints to removing

fossil fuel investments. Our research showed little to no risk to investments; their issue was incurring fees. Index funds are the exception where there is no alternative substitute (they are used because they are low cost/low management). Our message was there is divestment they can do now. The Board will likely look to us for energy related expertise and so in some ways our work may just be beginning. Unlike other cities in other states the City has total control of the investments, since they are not pooled with other localities/funds (as in California, for example). Appleyard noted Ann Arbor 350.org and the national organization were very helpful with grassroots advocacy and information. Outlining our next steps on the topic is part of what needs to happen (per question from Macomber). Most of the financial accounting does not fully consider the "carbon bubble" from the standpoint of risk management.

D1 Zoning Input

Kurz: Consultants gave report to Council. Not a comprehensive look at D1, more a focus on 4 or 5 parcels. At this point unclear what Council will do with the recommendations Planning Commission has offered. Appleyard: While building can't be required to exceed state code Council recognized this is a unique opportunity to do something better than normal, and Commissioner Kurz commented to this end which appears in the approved resolution. There are more city-owned parcels that will be sold, so it is important to continue to work with the Planning Commission to create language that enhances the long-term value by ensuring energy efficiency. The CEC is working on Architecture 2030 district concepts for Ann Arbor as a related effort. (Kurz sending out the resolution for the former YMCA lot that includes energy efficiency language.)

Commercial Energy Disclosure

Appleyard: There are an increasing number of cities requiring commercial buildings of a certain size to disclose their energy use. We would need to set our own parameters as everywhere is doing it different. Still compiling the data on Ann Arbor building sizes for this. (Clevey offered to assist on this issue.)

Reformulating Committees

Appleyard: Would like to see subcommittees form around projects we can focus on (like Community Solar) than broad issue areas.

Hookham: Consider finding out staff and Council's needs.

Appleyard: Based on past experience, we often need to be proactive as we are deemed the experts and Council has many things they are focused on.

Hookham: The Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) that comes out every two years has a prioritization tool, and now the sustainability framework is roled in with that. (Geisler confirmed the framework goals have updated the 10 broad environmental goals as a scoring element to the City CIP prioritization tool. (Geisler gave a brief summary of the CIP process and would approach relevant staff to uprise the Commission more fully at an upcoming meeting on how the climate and energy goals will be incorporated.)

Shriberg: Coming up with positive screens for energy/sustainability is something some City Council members said would be useful (they specifically referenced local solar, efficiency, and geothermal).

Kurz stated that work on fossil fuel divestment and community solar fit within the realm of Renewable Access and Energy Production committees now in place, but that the Climate Action Plan area may need to be reframed. Shriberg noted the former committee focused on community engagement and how that can fit well with the Climate Action Plan now that it is beginning to be more fully rolled out with interesting potential projects.

Gibbons said the Climate Action Plan is a document to draw from for ideas to pursue. (Staff reminded Commission of the Community Climate Partnership and attempts to engage on the effort to implement and gather support for some activities.) Appleyard said the bylaws impart the Chair with the ability to create committees and he will take in to advisement the discussion for next time. Clevey stated the Plan can be a good framing tool for presenting the work of the Commission to Council and other audiences.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Climate Action Plan

See agenda item "Reformulating Committees"

Energy Production

See agenda item "Reformulating Committees"

Renewable Energy Access

See agenda item "Reformulating Committees"

PUBLIC INPUT

None

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- Commercial Disclosure (Macomber to draft a proposal)
(Members briefly discussed the Environmental Commission's fracking resolution; not taken up as next agenda item. Commissioner Hookham offered to explore in more detail the issue at the March work session, if available or in the future)
- Community Solar

ADJOURNMENT

Appleyard made a motion to adjourn at 7:06 PM, moved by Wright and seconded by Kurz.

Visit www.a2energy.org for community energy information in Ann Arbor,
or
www.a2gov.org/energy to learn more about the City's Energy Programs

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www.a2gov.org/ctn