

**City of Ann Arbor Environmental Commission**

*March 27, 2014*

G.C. Larcom, Jr. Municipal Building, Council Chambers  
301 E. Huron, Ann Arbor, MI

**Call to Order:**

7:12pm

Called to order by Chair Graham

**Roll Call:**

Present – 6

Mike Anglin, Wayne Appleyard, John German, Chris Graham, Susan Hutton, Kirk Westphal

Absent - 6

Sabra Briere, Rita Loch-Caruso, Patti Smith, David Stead, Valerie Strassberg, Missy Stults

*Quorum Not Present*

Commission has one vacant position

**Staff Present:**

Jamie Kidwell

Matthew Naud

**Approval of Minutes:**

Minutes from January 23, 2014 Meeting

Motion to Approve by Commissioner Westphal, Seconded by Commissioner German

***Motion Approved as Amended on Voice Vote***

Minutes from February 27, 2014 Meeting

Motion to Approve by Commissioner Hutton, Seconded by Commissioner Westphal

***Motion Approved on Voice Vote***

**Approval of Agenda:**

- Urban and Community Forest Management Plan Discussion moved to top of agenda

**Public Commentary:**

None

**Unfinished Business:**

**Urban and Community Forest Management Plan – Discussion and Comments**

*This commission meeting provided an opportunity for members of the public and commissioners to provide comments on the draft Urban and Community Forest Management Plan. Comments will be accepted until March 28, 2014. Kerry Gray, City of Ann Arbor Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Coordinator, was present to hear and respond to comments.*

- Commissioner Anglin expressed thanks for effort and for the engagement process
- Commissioner Graham noted he sent comments to Gray to call more attention to native forest fragments on private property

## **Environmental Commission Bylaws –**

*Commissioners discussed the possibility of including a representative from the Housing Commission on the Environmental Commission.*

- Opportunity to increase collaboration and to include more equity issues in discussions
- Potential to recommend to City Council
- Would require changes to existing city code

*Bylaws were moved to next meeting's agenda due to lack of quorum.*

- Bylaws have been made more uniform and will need approval from City Council
- Next month's meeting moved to an action session

## **New Business:**

**DRAFT - Sustainability Action Plan** - Jamie Kidwell, Sustainability Associate

*Kidwell provided an overview of the draft sustainability action plan and discussed next steps for the plan. Kidwell noted the plan is still in draft form and is intended to be a staff-level document.*

- Action plan follows the sustainability framework
- Plan nests targets and actions underneath each sustainability framework goal to help track progress
- Plan highlights short-term action items
- Potential to connect with commission work plans
- Aim is to connect plan to the budget cycle and update the plan every two years
- Next steps include internal staff review and review by additional commissions

## **Discussion:**

*Commissioners discussed the action plan and Kidwell and Naud responded to questions.*

- Are these target and actions meant to be priorities?
  - Plan is not intended to be all inclusive, but includes measurable and short-term targets and actions
- Was Ann Arbor SPARK involved in the process?
  - Not at this time, but am working with the Office of Community and Economic Development to work on the Economic Vitality section
- What kind of feedback is useful?
  - Looking to establish if this document has utility for the commissions, and to determine if further additions can better communicate the goals. Additionally, feedback on indicators and how the commission would like to be engaged in this process as it moves forwards
- Are there metrics assigned to indicators?
  - Indicators are intended to be measurable, similar to the [State of Our Environment Report](#). Indicators are intended to follow from targets
  - Commissioner Hutton noted the potential to strengthen the indicators in the Engaged Community section
  - Naud noted the STAR Community Index is a potential resource to look at indicators
- Councilmember Anglin stated that this document helps give direction, and referenced the Diverse Housing goal as an example

- Commissioner Appleyard suggested including more information when including a reference to a plan to help readers identify where to look in a plan for the targets and actions
- Commissioner German stated that this plan highlights difference between environmental and sustainability commission, including areas that focus on housing, and may support including a Housing Commissioner on Environmental Commission
- How does this plan relate to budget goals?
  - Each city unit, during the budget cycle, identifies short-term goals and these goals were incorporated into the sustainability action plan
  - Plan tries to connect to the budget cycle
  - Budget goals are posted online in the [Accounting and Financial Services section](#)
  - Budget cycle is updated every two years
- Is the potential to have Environmental Commission representative on capital improvements plan (CIP) process?
  - Typically this is a staff process, but it is reviewed by Planning Commission
  - Opportunity to share CIP with commission and have staff present to commission
  - Subcommittee of Planning Commission works through process of CIP with staff
  - Each CIP project has to explain how it relates to sustainability framework goals and are looking to incorporate climate adaptation into this prioritization model
- How does staff get oriented to what goals in the CIP process mean before scoring on projects begin?
  - Action plan will help develop better targets to measure progress towards goals
- Commissioner Hutton noted that other commissions also have shown in interest in working on energy efficiency in buildings

## **Biofuels Discussion –**

*Commissioner German discussed potential changes to biofuels policy, as follow up to the presentation from John DeCicco at last month's commission meeting. Commissioners discussed two directions to potentially move forward: 1) stop purchasing biofuels for City use 2) establish requirements or incentives for biofuels that would reduce carbon impacts.*

- Company now exists to offer certification for fuels that do not have indirect land use change
- Commissioner Appleyard suggested supporting fuel efficiency and alternative forms of transportation, rather than switching from food to fuel
- If food is used for fuel, there are ripple effects and demands that more land is used for food
- Naud noted that City's Green Fleets policy allows City to pay a premium on fuel efficient vehicles and makes a commitment to buy more renewable fuels
- What about biogas from landfills? Does this have the same impact?
  - Using waste products is a better option to create biofuels
- What would a carbon off-set program look like for the City fleet?
- Should have numbers for biodiesel and ethanol used by the City fleet
- Interest in proposing way to use saved money from fuels into community energy efficiency work
- What are AAATA buses running on?
  - Biodiesel – likely B10 in winter and B50 in summer

*Commissioner German will work with Naud to draft a policy to bring to the commission.*

## **Report from Staff:**

*Staff Update by Naud*

- Biodigester proposal out, expected to be done by end of fiscal year

- Working with University of Michigan to look at different feed streams
- Naud serving on stakeholder work group for Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to make a recommendation on clean up criteria in the state
  - Willing to share documents as they come out of this process

**Report from Committees and Chair:**

*Energy Commission Update by Commissioner Appleyard*

- Resolution in support of additional energy staff was passed at City Council
  - Resolution was modified to support projects not to hire staff directly, but to have City Administrator report back on staffing needs

*Commissioner Graham discussed implications of the deer population in the community.*

- As deer population rises, this increases the amount of garlic mustard, an invasive species
- Increases in deer population lead to significant changes in ecosystems

**Next Scheduled Meeting:**

- Bylaws
- Sustainability Action Plan
- Green Fleets Policy
- Bottled Water - Smith

April 24, 2014  
Council Chambers  
7pm

**Adjournment:**

Adjourned  
8:19