



City of Ann Arbor

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

Tuesday, February 12, 2013

6:00 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron St.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Wayne Appleyard, John Hieftje, David A. Wright, Joshua Long, Diane Kurz, and Kenneth J. Wadland

Absent: 5 - Charles Hookham, Michael Delaney, Brigit Macomber, Cliff Williams, and Mike Shriberg

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approved unanimously on a voice vote

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approved unanimously on a voice vote

[13-0126](#)

Meeting Minutes of the Ann Arbor Energy Commission, January 8, 2013

Attachments: FINAL Minutes Energy Commission 1-8-13.pdf

Approved by the Commission and forwarded to the City Council due back on 4/1/2013

PUBLIC INPUT

None

ENERGY REPORT - NEWS FROM THE ENERGY OFFICE AND COMMISSIONERS

Naud: Still working on PACE bonds, which were postponed at the last Council meeting for newer members to be better educated prior to approving. The bond is expected to be closer to \$600,000.

Just approved purchase of five solar powered trash compactors for Gallup Park. Will help weekend trash over usage issues faced there, with help from EECBG grant.

National Climate Assessment is out and is something this group may want to comment on, for the midwest portions. There was an all day event today hosted at UM hosted by climate-focused groups at the University, in the form of a town hall discussion. MI only had 10% of typical fruit crop last year.

City staff are going to meet with DTE on February 20th to talk about a variety of incentives and other programs. We have had interesting meetings thinking about a large solar array lease arrangement as they did with U of M; EV parking infrastructure possibilities; pilot opportunities possibly with DDA.

Appleyard: Minneapolis has just passed an ordinance requiring buildings over a certain size to disclose their energy use. Using DOE Portfolio Manager, they will have a website and work in phases. Seattle, New York and DC doing something similar. This fits some with time of marketing concept we have discussed.

In 2012 wind topped coal and natural gas for most capacity installed (13 Megawatts).

There is a move to divest in fossil fuel companies. Tufts University study body resolution states many Universities are already divesting, so this is beginning to happen.

This weekend is the rally in DC opposing the Keystone pipeline and there is at least one bus going from Ann Arbor.

EPA came out today with a climate adaptation plan draft.

Wadland: Are there any locations in discussion yet for the solar install?

Naud: Still in early talks. The biggest hurdle is interconnection agreement language asking us to indemnify certain things that we typically don't. We walked an area down by the landfill with Ray Zoia of DTE. Talked about a ballasted, non-puncturing system. Since the landfill is capped, trees will not be on the site for at least 30 years. Just south of the dog park there is good infrastructure that they look for. We drove by an area near the airport that could work in the 2-3 acre site range.

Long: Is there still a deadline to use dollars for PACE? (Also suggestion to keep pushing DTE in discussions for aggregated energy usage data to calculate carbon footprint for Ann Arbor.)

Naud: March 7th, which leaves some time, as reallocation of funds with DTE is not an insignificant process.

Hieftje: I think DTE conversations are moving things in the right direction and it is good we are starting to walk sites. The Minneapolis idea is interesting and reminiscent of many years ago when pollution disclosure moved many companies to act proactively. This could help the hurdle of not being able to exceed state building codes, with different owners becoming aware of their own usage and those around them.

Appleyard: Reminder, Thursday is the first of the Governor's energy policy forums in Lansing. Here will be six of these meetings, with one coming up in Detroit being the closest.

Naud: This Thursday is also our second Sustainability Forum on economic vitality at the downtown library.

DDA Presentation – Connecting William St. (Susan Pollay)

Susan Pollay: Connecting William St. project a living project. Our DDA is one of the only ones in Michigan with a sustainability tenant, we strive for. We did an energy efficiency grant program, paying for energy audits for local businesses in the downtown. DDA board just approved more grant dollars for this program, complementing MI Saves and PACE program. Demand at the eighteen downtown electric vehicle charging stations continues to grow even from our last presentation here. First downtown in the nation with LED streetlights. GoPass program covers 95% of bus pass for workers, as our way supporting local transportation.

Downtown redevelopment is one of the most sustainable things we can do as a community. Compared to suburban parts of the community, our ecological footprint is smaller. You can walk to markets, libraries, or the bus in our downtown. We are interested in your thoughts on how Connecting William St. can be strengthened.

We wanted to improved the RFP process for developing city owned properties in the downtown, so requested to lead that effort with these properties, for the city. Council authorization directs us to work through existing plans. We wanted to find agreement on ideas, so when the city is ready to move forward with developing the properties there will have been community input. Goals for this project was to find higher and better uses for these parking areas. Also important that developers knew what we were interested in. We also had to be sure there was market readiness for these areas, so that we were not asking for unrealistic things. Since these are city owned properties, there are things we can do that are not market fundable but can be a part of premiums and other planning and zoning tools we can use.

Our steering committee was very diverse. We surveyed community and delved deeper at meetings and webinars (heard from people unable to attend meetings). Surveys told us that A2D2 goals were important, and that vibrancy downtown and density in the core is appropriate. Frequently heard desire for people to live downtown but cannot afford it. People want closer commutes with the workplaces downtown. There is a demand for open space downtown, and making connections with greenways and existing parks. We heard long-term best interest of the land is better than short-term gains.

Companies increasingly have a hard time staying downtown (desire for more office space). We have not seen large commercial areas come in the downtown since the early 1980s. There are restaurant and retail demands in the downtown. Hotel demand is also growing (sixty years since a new hotel in downtown). Performing arts and cultural venues desired by community as well.

William Street along these properties does not have the character of much of the downtown, but we hope to bring the vibrancy to this area as part of this process. All five sites are D-1 (areas community has said they want to see density).

The downtown library site, in this area, draws in over 600,000 people per year - a real anchor in the area. Our community transit center for AATA (Blake) is also in this area, and 5,000 people a day board or de-board a bus at the center. Main Street and Liberty Street are other nearby anchors. Streetscape on William is a

hodgepodge: some areas have no trees. Capturing more area for pedestrians here is something laid out in the Non-motorized Transportation Plan. Stormwater infiltration will be an important part of street improvements. Some are concerned with removing parking. We just added the underground parking garage offsetting this.

There was agreement that mixed use is important and a strength now in downtown. A best practice is to achieve public good with having private sector pay for it, which relates to how to achieve open space in some of this land, without creating a park ownership burden. DDA is developing a grant whereby if a developer exceeds the sustainability standards in place in the city's zoning, say with LEED Platinum, it may be worth investing assistance. Looking for feedback from you all.

Long: Fourth Street is key, south of Liberty especially. Scale of massing on the images makes me wonder if density may be large right against residential, so possibly consider larger buildings more interior to the blocks. Credit card metering, in terms of street parking, would be helpful.

Pollay: We are regularly seeing new library garage filled already, at all times of day.

Kurz: When we talk about best practices for sustainability we need to recognize that the climate is changing at a faster rate and more dramatically than anticipated. There are four pieces of land that are not contributing to greenhouse gases, and I don't know if we have a framework for understanding the greenhouse gas impacts of development there. How do we do (develop) something bold, unusual, and amazing?

Pollay: Job growth at the University means more people will be driving into work if we don't accommodate them. Density in the downtown limits transportation emissions. Compact development also allows more easy capture of interesting information and data in one site that can help our understanding of sustainability.

Amber Miller (DDA): We are pointing to city policy that encourages sustainability and grants coming from the DDA (in terms of doing something amazing).

Pollay: It is a tradeoff as you said. There are contributions from the unused parcels though, including flooding impacts in the corridor.

Long: Have you done any studies on expense of living downtown versus outside (and how we address that)?

Pollay: I don't have data for this downtown, but I am on the board of the International Downtown Association so go to many presentations and while people many places are spending more to be downtown they spend less on transportation related expenses. As part of this project we are recommending downtown development be smaller so rents/costs will be less. Main Street sidewalks are urbanites' living room - they don't need as much house.

Miller: The economist involved on this has explained that affordability is hindered because demand is stronger than supply of downtown housing, so

until those two things get closer we will see higher rents.

Hiefertje: There is an opportunity to ensure development is LEED (exceeds state building code); we could offer incentives. Professor Kelbaugh and others maintain that carbon footprints are less among urban dwellers than in subdivisions or suburban areas. There has been one parcel of land sold by the city in decades (First and Washington), so there is time to consider options. The sentiment from Council that I am also in favor is arranging the internal layouts of housing on at least one of these properties in a way that is not designed for student occupation (though students could still rent it). The 1-2 bedroom offerings will be the next wave. We are seeing a tech boom downtown with one node alone harboring 1,000 plus workers. UM has hired over 9,000 people in the last ten years. The rental market is tight, pointing to possible population growth in town.

Wadland: Is the creation of a new central park considered a burden or non-starter?

Pollay: A park's success or not is all about what we do with it (place management). You need active elements and oversight. Parks Advisory Committee does not simply want more empty parks spaces, they want active places that are energetically used. Bigger is not always better with parks (clarifying proposed open spaces in the scenarios near the sizes of Sculpture Park and Liberty Plaza). The higher intensity of the maintenance of a downtown park points to possibility of private ownership - can we get what we want on others' dime.

Wright: Interplay of public and private spaces is key to good open space downtown.

Long: Has there be discussion on two-way streets in the area, so as to not just make avenues for cars?

Pollay: As part of the urban framework plan several years ago we had this discussion, there was fear of cutting off areas by doing away with one-ways. How we have tried to overcome this is increasing the pedestrian elements. On-street parking helps pedestrians feel more removed from traffic. Ten years ago there was not an appetite for doing away with one-way streets, but that does not mean in ten years there still will not be.

Hiefertje: Parks Commission has to balance priorities. North Main task force helping see first leg of the greenway after working several years on it. 415 W. Washington site we are spending money investigating building for potential community art center, and as part of a greenway. Then First and William there is a parking lot property we are examining. Clean-up work continues at the DTE property north of the river. There is a lot of potential in connecting all the greenway elements as well as examples of the private partnerships that happen with Sonic Lunch or Top of the Park, where the public has access but the city is one partner not the sole entity involved.

Kurz: How can the city ensure the green practices described for Connecting William Street? Does that live with the Planning office?

Pollay: One place this can be written in is during the request for proposals for

the properties, as well as among the competition among respondents to compete. Site review process, because these are city owned, means approval can be withheld until we see the elements we are striving for. Again, there is the possibility of a DDA grant program where if we were to set LEED Gold as a minimum, but desire LEED Platinum, that incentives to help would be available.

Kurz: Charlotte, NC has had a huge investment in creating walkable and outdoor spaces not necessarily at the street level - is this part of the thinking for these properties? One thing this commission has talked about is solar access zoning, and the development of the Landmark building and the shadow it would create. With the possible densification of these properties we should be clear what this means for the developers and the city in terms of solar access.

Pollay: One of the student group ideas received during our process for the library lot parcel was a multi-level building that is conscious of the change in topography and that offered an elevated look down to the other nearby plaza, which gets close to what you are describing. In the core area we have the opportunity to be conscious of these kinds of issues (solar).

Hieftje: As the Parks Advisory Commission is recommending open space elements, it would be appropriate for Energy Commission to recommend energy components going forward.

Appleyard: In terms of process from here on out I think it is important to look at the street. As soon as library lot is sold it will determine widths of street, sidewalk, planters; all the things that work on Main Street. William St. does not have that width so it may be worth a setback into that lot space to achieve this. Triangular cuts, like the sculpture park are worth considering, for easing you into the street areas and creating a space that can be maintained by the building owners. The city has a unique opportunity to have a say that what goes on should be really special here and an example of what we want elsewhere in the city.

AAPS Wind

Appleyard: A couple commissioners met with city staff to make sure we knew about these systems and how they might work. The city and school system are in discussions on how to proceed and hopefully make this the best it can be.

Commission Input for Governor/MPSC Fact Gathering Sessions

Appleyard: We had one meeting about giving our feedback for the Governor's fact finding effort on energy policy, and we have until around the end of April to put together comments. There are about one hundred questions they are looking for responses (not opinions) on, so please take some time to add what you can (Commissioner Kurz offered to have materials sent directly to her in place of Ctools uploading).

Delaney: What were the themes we were focusing on with feedback?

Appleyard: Themes are: renewables, efficiency, "additional areas" (dealing with reliability and non-renewable generation), and electric choice.

Delaney: Should the energy commission identify what good energy policy from the state looks like, then are there a couple areas we want to focus on.

Kurz: Email exchanges talked about energy efficiency and renewables as being a form of risk management. We also want to suggest policies that stem the flow of money for energy out of the state. Thirdly is a state policy supporting our climate action plan goals.

Commercial Energy Disclosure

Appleyard: We touched on this earlier in the meeting, as to cities requiring energy consumption information. Staff sent over a square footage breakdown of building (commercial/industrial) square footage across the city. This is something we should continue to look at considering to determine the right scale for Ann Arbor. (Comm. Wright and Appleyard offered to assist Comm. Williams to lead this topic.)

Commission Vacancy

Hieftje: We have a couple applications and some older ones and so are following up with people to make sure they are still interested.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Climate Action Plan

Naud: Staff met with Monica Patel at Ann Arbor350 and discussed a model Berkeley is using, but it requires outside funding which we have not yet identified. Are there local foundations, local sources? Otherwise, the Commission's recent EV Readiness resolution is an element from the Climate Action Plan. (Naud further elaborated that Berkeley was able to get community foundation money for full-time climate staffing, and use a local non-profit to run meetings. On the order of perhaps \$25-\$50,000 toward the non-profit support.)

Energy Production

No meeting.

Renewable Energy Access

No meeting.

PUBLIC INPUT

None

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Wadland, seconded by Long. Commission adjourned at 7:40pm.

**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**

**Regular meetings shown Live and replayed on CTN Channel 16 and at
www.a2gov.org/ctn**