

City of Ann Arbor Environmental Commission

August 27, 2015

Action Meeting

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

Call to Order:

7:08pm

Roll Call:

Present – 10

Wayne Appleyard, Sabra Briere, Jason Frenzel, Chris Graham, Katherine Hollins, Susan Hutton, Allison Skinner, Missy Stults, Bob Needham, and Wendy Woods

Absent - 2

Mike Anglin and Benjamin Muth

Open vacant position on commission

Quorum present

Staff Present:

Matthew Naud

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Commissioner Woods, second by Commissioner Appleyard
Added future commission items to agenda

Motion Approved on voice vote as amended

Approval of Minutes:

Action Meeting Minutes – March 26, 2015

Motion by Commissioner Graham, second by Commissioner Stults

Motion Approved on voice vote

Action Meeting Minutes – June 25, 2015

Motion by Commissioner Graham, second by Commissioner Frenzel

Motion Approved on voice vote

Public Commentary:

None

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Environmental Commission Recommendation to City Council Concerning an Ordinance Banning Pavement Sealcoats Containing High Levels of PAHs

Commission Frenzel introduced the resolution, and commissioners discussed the resolution.

- What does the City use?
 - City does not use coal-tar sealants in contracts
- Need to provide guidance for what tools can be used. Are there preferred alternatives?
 - Asphalt-based sealants are preferable
 - Major chains, like Lowe's and Home Depot, stopped selling coal tar sealants
- What other cities have implemented bans?
 - State of Washington and DC
 - Potentially would be first community banning high-PAH level sealants, not just coal-tar sealants, but other communities are looking at taking this approach
- Has this been vetted through city staff?
 - Resolution not reviewed by staff but conversations with key staff occurred, including with the field manager and city is looking at sampling detention ponds for evidence of PAHs
- Products on shelf are not labeled, and store staff is not knowledgeable. Need to couple with educational campaign. How do individuals find information?
 - Home Depot has MSDS sheets for products and locates them next to products, and also online
 - During the phosphorous ordinance banned use instead of sale, and vendors were asked to display educational pamphlets
 - Could provide serial numbers of products
- Do you need a permit to seal coat a residential driveway?
 - No
- Should sale also be regulated?
 - Could propose sale and use to council, but will need legal review
 - With phosphorous ordinance, saw retailers stop carrying the banned item. Expect this would also happen with this ordinance.

Commissioners inserted regulating sale and use to the resolved clause.

Resolution approved on voice vote as amended

Resolution from the Environmental Commission to City Council regarding reducing the use of Salt

Commissioners discussed the resolution that recommends supporting a winter educational program to support environmentally friendly deicer.

- Councilmember Briere noted first reading of the snow ordinance expected at September
 - Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force proposed recommendations for snow removal and this recommendation should be coordinated in this ordinance
 - Need to check council agenda for timing of this issue
- Resolution does not approve banning salt, but recommends finding ways to reduce the use of salt as a deicer

- Salt loading in the Huron River is problematic
- Roadway salt and salt used on commercial properties are the biggest contributors and recommend changing resolution to address all sectors
- What does the City use?
 - A mix of salt and sand
 - Seems to be the best alternative
 - Sidewalk salt impacts the trees, and tree-friendly salt is a concern of City forestry
 - High level of trees are dead because of salting on downtown sidewalks
 - Should look for products that do not cause aquifer issues or tree damage
 - Are salt/sand mixes available for general public to buy?
 - City offers it
 - Generally mixed salt and sand is not sold at stores
 - Focus of resolution is on education and gives room to adjust education with science

Commissioners amended the resolution to reduce the use of salt for all deicing activities within the city and to address municipal, business, and resident use.

Resolution approved on voice vote as amended

Report from Committees and Chair:

Organics Management Plan

- Awaiting request for proposals (RFP) responses

Update on Climate Partnership by Commissioner Hutton

- Did not meet in August

Update on Park Advisory Commission by Commissioner Stults

- Smith and Kuras at the City are working on how to engage environmental commission in the Parks and Recreation Opens Space (PROS) plan process

Report from Staff:

Staff Update by Naud

- Joint commission meeting, originally set in September, is now being rescheduled
- DTE Energy has RFP out for private entity to build a large solar installation
 - City was approached by a contractor to look at 10-MW system on city-owned landfill property
 - Could generate approximately \$400,000 a year for energy programs
- RFP for organics management plan and biodigester were released today and will close in September
- Working to post sustainability associate position online
- Michigan Green Communities received grant from the Mott Foundation
- City is looking at developing a partnership with the university for the 100 Resilient Cities grant application

Naud responded to questions from commissioners.

- What is the time horizon on DTE RFP?

- Likely quick, but not sure
- Would like to look at surface lot park and rides for solar.
 - City has looked at this and spoken with the Downtown Development Authority. There is an additional cost to adding solar as canopy.

Future Commission Items

Councilmember Briere asked the commission to discuss future items that the commission what work on.

- Revisit natural features ordinance to address wetlands impacts, impact of development on natural features, and future maintenance
 - Councilmember Briere would like input from commissioners on areas to improve
 - Current ordinance is over 20 years old
 - Looking to revise ordinance by October
 - Zoning Ordinance Reorganization (ZORO) is expected to be completed soon and would like to bring revisions to natural features at same time
- Natural features committee has list of items for natural features ordinance
 - Single-family projects do not require site plans and most homeowners do not know or consider the impacts of trees on their properties or adjacent properties
 - Compact soils from construction impacts trees on private property
 - Permits should be required for all construction on all properties, including single-family
 - Need more involvement from Water Resources Commissioner and City stormwater management
- Councilmember Briere asked commissioners to send recommendations to her before the next commission meeting
 - Commissioner Woods recommended reacting to ordinance after reviewed by staff
 - Looking for areas of concern, not solutions to issues, and then will seek staff input
 - Suggest way to share comments online – Commissioner Hutton to start document, and will make public on website
- Dashboard for 16 sustainability framework goals is now posted online – a2gov.org/actionplan

Items for Next Agenda:

- Recommendations for natural features ordinance

Next Scheduled Meeting:

September 24, 2015

Public Commentary:

None

Adjournment:

Adjourned 8:08pm