

City of Ann Arbor Environmental Commission

June 25, 2015

Action Meeting

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

Roll Call:

Present – 10

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

Absent - 2

Mike Anglin and Benjamin Muth

One vacant position on the commission.

Quorum present

Staff Present:

Matthew Naud

Approval of Agenda:

Approved

Motion by Commissioner Frenzel, second by Commissioner Graham

Motion Approved on Voice Vote

Public Commentary:

Nancy Ogilvie

- Spoke in support of upcoming event *Standing Together to Create a Vibrant Earth Legacy – A Collaborative Summit for Grandparents and Elders* on September 25th and 26th.

Unfinished Business:

Resolution to Recommend an Idling Reduction Ordinance to City Council

Commissioner Hollins introduced the ordinance and addressed changes made since the previous meeting, and commissioners discussed the resolution.

- Is ordinance limited to where signs are posted?
 - No, commercial vehicles are covered everywhere. Signs are targeted at private vehicles and suggest placing these signs first at schools and hospitals. Other organizations could request signage.
- Does this include all vehicles and not only diesel motors?
 - Yes, but does include exemptions for vehicles with necessary equipment.
- What about commercial vehicles on private property?
 - Yes, this ordinance impacts them.
- Does this apply to City vehicles?

- Yes, would apply, and City has internal policy as part of Green Fleets Policy.
- Reached out to Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority and Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) for feedback on ordinance.
- Diesel torque motor operators had concerns about restarting and turning off engines in past. Was there feedback from school bus or fleet operators about this?
 - No specific comments about turning diesel engines on and off. Exemptions for cooling down engines are included in ordinance. AAPS policy recommends starting the cooling process before arriving to the school, so that the engine can be turned off on arrival to limit idling.

Motion to approve resolution by Commissioner Graham, second by Commissioner Appleyard
Motion Approved on Voice Vote.

New Business:

Resolution - Recommendation to City Council Concerning an Ordinance Banning Coal-Tar Based Sealants

Commissioner Frenzel introduced the resolution and provided background on coal-tar sealants.

- Two types of sealants used on driveways, roads, and parking lots; coal-tar sealant is primarily used in the east. Coal tar is a byproduct of an industrial process. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are highly concentrated in coal tar and are highly carcinogenic and hazardous to health. Alternatives to coal-tar sealants do exist, and many retailers do not sell coal-tar sealants because of health and environmental concerns. Huron River Watershed Council is working with Washtenaw County to propose a ban. The County restricts use of coal tar sealant in request for proposals. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Public Schools, and the City limit use of coal-tar sealants.

Commissioners discussed the resolution.

- Before resolution is presented to City Council, suggest quantifying percentage of projects at different agencies, UM, City, Washtenaw County, that use coal tar sealants. Provide a list of alternatives and implications of using the alternatives (e.g., cost, effectiveness, availability, application).
- How would this be enforced? Do individuals need permits to seal driveways?
 - Individuals do not need permits to seal driveways, but companies do.
- How would this be implemented? Is there a staff person that would enforce the ordinance?
 - Model for implementation with the phosphorous ordinance. This would be outright ban, and as seen in the phosphorous ordinance, this changed the market, and stores stopped carrying phosphorous fertilizers. This required little to no enforcement.
- What percentage asphalt, pavement in the city uses these materials?
 - The City is currently not using coal-tar sealant, but did use it in the past.
- Need to include more information and citations and propose bringing back resolution at next month's meeting.

Motion to table resolution by Commissioner Graham, second by Councilmember Briere

Motion Approved on Voice Vote.

Report from Committees and Chair:

Planning Commission Update by Commissioner Woods

- Working with ENP & Associates to evaluate downtown premiums and will see preliminary options this week
- Will share recommendations with other commissions, including Energy Commission and Environmental Commission
 - Expect to share within the next month for comments

Planning Commission Update by Commissioner Appleyard

- Continuing to move forward on benchmarking ordinance, and City is in the process of benchmarking city-owned building
- Working on a recommendation for community solar by end of year

Park Advisory Commission Update by Commissioner Stults

- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan update underway
- Dog Park Master Plan has been approved by Park Advisory Commission

Discussion of Organics Management Plan

- City Council passed a resolution to look at year-round organics collection and directed Environmental Commission to make a recommendation
- Need to determine how the commission wants to be involved
- Two models – have commission lead effort or participate in the effort
 - Need to focus on both residential and commercial sectors
 - \$100,000 allocated to plan development
- City Council needs an update by December
- Commissioner Skinner and Needham expressed interest in participating on committee
- How is the compost collection business going to date?
 - Not sure about the business, but expanded curbside collection going well. Discussion of pilots with commercial vendors. Contract is likely up for renewal. Managed by Christina Gomes at the City.
- Does compost facility have capacity for expanded organics collection?
 - Likely would discuss biodigester options. City Wastewater is interested. Potential to partner with the County.
- Would like presentation from Gomes on current state of programs at next meeting

Update on the Ann Arbor Climate Partnership by Commissioner Hutton

- Soft launch at Green Fair of a year focused on transportation
 - Distributed a pledge card to encourage sustainable commutes for two-mile trips

City Council Update by Councilmember Briere

- Councilmember Eaton to bring forward ordinance about flooding
 - Ordinance could lower cost of flood insurance for residents
 - Would like Environmental Commission to review
 - Ordinance, if approved at council, would go before Planning Commission
 - May address building requirements for new and reconstruction located in the floodway
- Commissioner Woods requested presentation in advance of this ordinance
- Commissioner Stults interested in providing feedback

- Intent is to apply to be a Community Rating System (CRS) community to lower premiums
- In last 30 years, annual precipitation increased 42%
 - Naud will distribute recent University of Michigan report that is driving resolution

Joint Commission Meeting

- September 16th will be joint planning session with focus on Sustainability Action Plan at 7pm
- Likely held at Cobblestone Farms

Report from Staff:

Staff Update by Naud

- Ann Arbor signed on to Mayors National Climate Action Agenda
- Still working to hire sustainability associate position
- Will likely propose amendment to current contract with Clean Energy Coalition and Ecology Center to implement community-facing climate work
- Met with Comerica Bank staff regarding energy financing models
- DTE put out notice for RFPs for five to 50 megawatt solar projects
 - Plan to approach with an option at the City-owned landfill

Items for Next Agenda:

- Update from Christina Gomes on organics
- Coal-tar sealant resolution
- Stormwater presentation focused on floodplain ordinance

Public Commentary:

None

Next Scheduled Meeting:

July 23, 2015

Adjourned

8:00pm