

Community Sustainability Council
Greensboro, North Carolina
March 14, 2011
(draft)

A regular meeting of the Community Sustainability Council was held on Monday, March 14, 2011 in the Plaza Level Conference Room of the Melvin Municipal Office Building, beginning at 3:05 p.m. Members present were: Co-Chairs Joel Landau and Bob Powell, Tom Duckwall, Valerie Vickers, Carolyn Allen, Tom Clary, Marlene Sanford, Derrick Giles, Bob Skenes, Bob Kollar, and Art Davis. Staff present included: Dan Curry, Manager of Community Sustainability; Josh Mullins, Planning and Community Development; and Steve Randall, Energy and Sustainability Program Manager.

Approval of Minutes from February 14, 2011 Meeting:

Mr. Davis moved to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2011 meeting as revised, seconded by Ms. Allen. The Council voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

BetterBuildings Update:

Mr. Curry updated members on several components of the BetterBuildings Program, a \$5 million grant to do energy efficiency upgrades on existing buildings. Status of the components is as follows:

(1) Marketing

Staff went before City Council recently to ask for support to move forward with a contract to assist with marketing and outreach information. City Council put the request on hold until staff returns with specific information about financing programs.

(2) Financing

Staff has gone into the lending community to solicit interest in providing loan products for residential and commercial energy efficiency upgrades. As a result of these efforts, six lenders have proposed seventeen different loan products for staff to review and determine which products to move forward with. Staff will have recommendations on financing for City Council in April, 2011.

(3) Early Adopter Policy

The Early Adopter Policy provides rebates to property owners for assessment and upgrade work. Information about the policy is provided on the City website.

Mr. Clary joined the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

(4) Contractor Solicitations

A contractor focus group is planned for later in the week. Their feedback will be reviewed by staff.

(5) Other Service Solicitations

A RFP will be issued for software to manage the large volume of work. In addition, staff will solicit for quality control services to assist with monitoring the work.

(6) Outreach Program

Staff will begin setting up neighborhood outreach within the next few months.

Responding to a question, Mr. Curry stated that City Council is being updated on BetterBuildings activity through IFYI communication.

Earth Day Participation Update:

Mr. Mullins gave an update on the following Earth Day activities being planned: (1) April 2, 2011 event at Kathryn Clay Edwards library, (2) April 16, 2011 event in Winston-Salem, NC sponsored by the Piedmont Environmental Alliance, (3) April 21, 2011 event at UNC-Greensboro, and (4) April 29, 2011 event sponsored by VF Corporation.

Mr. Mullins will send an e-mail link so members can sign up to volunteer at the events in blocks of two to three hours. The Education Subcommittee met last week to discuss activities to be offered at the CSC booth. The subcommittee decided to take a kids-focused home energy direction in the form of a home energy mini-assessment. Ms. Vickers is working on the development of the mini-assessment and Sara Ladd, Education Subcommittee member, is working on a take-home item for visitors to the booth.

Eco-Friendly Carpet Cleaning:

David Brockman, Information Alliance, gave a presentation on eco-friendly carpet cleaning. He pointed out the advantages of eco-friendly dry extraction versus traditional methods in terms of energy and water usage necessary to create steam, down time and environmental issues. Mr. Brockman stated that a local company, Ecoflo, plans to use the by-product from the eco-friendly process as an absorbing material in landfills. For every one pound of by-product taken out of carpet, two pounds of solidification is created. Another benefit of the by-product is that the solidification burns well and creates BTU's that can be sold back to Duke Power.

SAP Priorities:

Using recommendations from CSC members, Mr. Mullins broke down SAP priorities into three categories: (1) tasks being accomplished under the EECBG Formula Grant, (2) tasks that will be accomplished by the BetterBuildings Program, and (3) remaining tasks to be focused on by members. He has broken down the remaining prioritized tasks by the subcommittee areas of Transportation and Land Use, Green Jobs and Buildings, Waste Reduction and Recycling, City Operations, Nature in the City, and Education and Outreach.

Mr. Curry requested feedback from members on narrowing down priorities under the topics. Once real priorities are determined, more analysis will be done to help the Council determine implementation steps and recommendations.

Mr. Curry pointed out that under Transportation and Land Use, there are four primary topics: (1) expansion of transit system, (2) encouraging shared parking arrangements, (3) promote accessory uses, and (4) bicycle infrastructure.

Ms. Allen felt that a direct conversation with GTA would be advisable to ascertain what tasks they may already be working on. Mr. Skenes suggested that staff organize a presentation by GTA at an upcoming CSC meeting.

Ms. Sanford commented that the Transportation and Land Use subcommittee's intent regarding the transit system was to expand the transit system to make it work better as a viable alternative for automobile usage. In addition, more park and ride lots should be created through the use of existing parking lots.

Mr. Giles felt that three themes emerged from the Transportation and Land Use category. The themes were GTA, bicycle use and pedestrians, and land use issues. He stated that a broader issue would be increasing transit rider ship.

Mr. Curry saw four themes under the category of Green Jobs: (1) permit and code work, (2) promoting green buildings through awards, (3) water conservation and grey water re-use, and (4) green job training. He saw many of the items under Green Jobs as educational items.

Responding to a question regarding enforcement of codes, Mr. Curry stated that the City is engaged in code issues through Building Code Council work, supporting initiatives at the state level, and promoting codes that exist through education programs.

Mr. Curry felt that it may be timely to put the permitting area on the priority list to support. Staff will take the other themes, determine if specific elements need support, and bring back the information to the Council at a future meeting.

Relative to the Waste Reduction category, Mr. Curry stated that many of the recycling recommendations are being implemented through Energy Block Grant work. One remaining item is the idea of a recycling incentive program. The City did some work with that policy several years ago. Staff will investigate the status of the City's work.

Mr. Giles left the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

Many of the items under the City Operations category are being addressed through Energy Block Grant work. Items left to focus on are the cash flow sustainability account; whether or not the City will have a green standard for its building and remodeling work; and establishment of a City green team.

Under the Nature in the City category, Mr. Curry pointed out the themes of community farming and agriculture, including the educational efforts; working with local conservation organizations to conserve and restore wild areas in the greenway system; and identifying a funding source to provide resources for sustainability and green initiatives.

Council members identified organizations to contact to find out what is being done in the area of conserving space for wild areas. Ms. Allen suggested Piedmont Land Conservancy in addition to Greensboro Beautiful and Greensboro Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Vickers felt that the recognition area under the Education category needed to be publicized showing work that is going on in the City along with work that has already been done. She felt that a network should be created to consolidate information that would allow individuals to go to one central place for links.

Members discussed creating a clearinghouse for information with links to the City website for updating. A modest budget was proposed for the site. Mr. Curry stated that he will discuss the concept with the City Manager.

Mr. Curry summarized the themes under the Education category as creation of a community information hub, the recognition piece, and neighborhood initiatives.

Mr. Curry said the next step was to invite a GTA representative to the April CSC meeting; for staff to do more work on primary themes that members have shown interest in; and further shorten the list down to the two or three elements in each category where strong interest was indicated.

Co-Chair Landau suggested that members attend the upcoming district budget meetings to express their opinions regarding items to incorporate into the budget. The schedule for the budget meetings is as follows:

District 1	Brown Recreation Center	March 26, 2011	10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
District 2	Maple Street Police Substation	April 4, 2011	6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
District 3	Natural Science Center	April 11, 2011	6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
District 4	Lindley Recreation Center	March 21, 2011	6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
District 5	Trotter Recreation Center	April 28, 2011	6:30 p.m.
District 5	Oakridge Meadows Clubhouse	May 12, 2011	6:30 p.m.

Plastic Bag Petition:

A film was recently presented as part of UNC-Greensboro's series on sustainability issues that focused on the hazards and problems associated with plastic bags. Following the film, there was a discussion on the idea of circulating a petition to ask City Council to ban plastic bags at counter sales. The petition was created and is currently being circulated. Co-Chair Landau pointed out that there is an item in the SAP to eliminate plastic bags at counter sales. Members discussed the petition and whether or not the CSC should endorse it. Stores would provide paper bags to customers or would offer reusable bags for sale.

Mr. Kollar moved that the Community Sustainability Council endorse the petition effort on plastic bags, seconded by Mr. Davis. The Council voted 9-1 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Landau, Powell, Duckwall, Allen, Clary, Davis, Sanford, Kollar, Vickers. Nays: Skenes.)

Items from Co-Chairs:

Co-Chair Landau provided an article for interested members entitled, *Going Solar—Big Time*. The Triad Business Journal article focuses on solar efforts in the Triad.

Co-Chair Landau, Co-Chair Powell, and Mr. Curry recently gave a presentation on the SAP to the New Garden Friends Forum. The group was supportive of the SAP and expressed their interest to promote the plan.

Items from Council Members:

Ms. Vickers stated that Environmental Stewardship Greensboro recently attended a luncheon in support of Temple Emanuel's solar efforts. Environmental Stewardship Greensboro has also started a recycling program for Styrofoam #6. They are trying to encourage congregations to gather their rinsed Styrofoam monthly in one location where it will be transported periodically to a recycling site.

Items from the Public:

Marty Blackwell is a Greensboro resident who works with the State Energy Office. He explained that his background is in water conservation; however, he is in the process of gaining knowledge in the energy arena. He thanked the CSC for letting him attend the meeting.

Items from Staff:

Mr. Curry informed the Council that Mr. Mullins is now a full-time employee of the City of Greensboro in the Executive Department.

Acknowledgement of Absences:

Mr. Skenes moved to acknowledge the absences of Ms. Hancock and Mr. Hoekstra, seconded by Mr. Davis. The Council voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Adjournment:

There being no further business before the Group, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Landau
Co-Chairman

JL:sm/jd