

**Community Sustainability Council
Greensboro, North Carolina
December 8, 2008**

A meeting of the Community Sustainability Council was held on Monday, December 8, 2008 in the Plaza Level Conference Room of the Melvin Municipal Office Building, beginning at 3:10 p.m. Members present were: Co-Chair Joel Landau, Co-Chair Bob Powell, Art Davis, Eric Hoekstra, Bob Kollar, Joe Venable, Marlene Sanford, Tom Duckwall, Tom Clary, and Carolyn Allen. Staff present were: Dan Curry, HCD; Steve Randall, Energy and Sustainability Program Manager; Pat Boswell, Public Affairs; and Jeryl Covington, Director of Environmental Services.

1. Approval of Minutes from the November 10, 2008 Regular Meeting:

Mr. Hoekstra moved to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2008 meeting, seconded by Mr. Davis. The Council voted unanimously 9-0 to approve the motion. (Ayes: Landau, Powell, Davis, Hoekstra, Kollar, Sanford, Duckwall, Clary, Allen. Nays: None.)

2. Presentation from Greensboro Beautiful – Ann Steighner and Mike Cusimano:

Ann Steighner, Chair of Greensboro Beautiful, introduced Andrena Coleman, Chair of the Clean Community Committee, along with Mike Cusimano, who is Greensboro's Urban Forester and serves as the City's liaison to the Greensboro Beautiful Urban Forestry Committee.

Ms. Steighner proceeded to give an overview and slide presentation to the Council highlighting the many activities of Greensboro Beautiful. These activities include educational classes, community landscaping programs, the Neighborhood Initiative Grants program, the Clean Community Committee's Big Sweep event, the Great American Clean-Up, the Litter Index, and the Clean Campus program.

Mr. Venable joined the meeting at 3:21 p.m.

Mr. Cusimano, Greensboro's Urban Forester, explained that urban forestry is an important component of Greensboro Beautiful. He shared documented tree facts with the Council pointing out the efficient filtering capabilities of trees for air and water pollution. He pointed out local forestry programs such as Neighborwoods, Arbor Day, and the Memorial Honor Tree program and also presented a recent canopy study of Greensboro and Council members discussed Greensboro's 2000 Tree Preservation Ordinance.

Mr. Cusimano advised the Council of the Urban Trees = Clean Air internet seminar series and he encouraged members to participate to be informed of the benefits of trees regarding pollution.

3. General Follow-up Discussion on the November 13, 2008 Sustainability Gathering:

Co-Chair Powell led a discussion on the November 13, 2008 Sustainability Gathering. He advised the Council that there were 130 representatives from over 60 organizations present. He suggested that the Group review the online summary of the 12 topics and the ideas participants contributed regarding the topics. Council members commented on their impressions and the key points of the gathering including overall enthusiasm; the abundance of student groups, church groups, businesses, and other small groups; small group discussions, serious interest in

sustainability, high infill development and high density development discussions, and community-wide education.

Mr. Duckwall suggested the formation of a contact list by category from the information collected at the gathering in addition to the online survey. Mr. Curry confirmed that there is an attendee list with contact information which he will forward. Co-Chair Powell encouraged the Group to review the gathering summary and make suggestions for discussion topics at the January, 2009 meeting. He indicated that the Council should begin putting together a plan at the January, 2009 meeting based on the information that has been gathered.

Philip Gillespie, with Thunderhorse Sustainable Agriculture, spoke from the audience and questioned how sustainability could be feasible with no money available for funding. Mr. Clary referenced ed possible federal funding available to communities.

4. EPA Sustainable Skylines Proposal -- Review and Approval:

Co-Chair Powell stated that the application deadline is December 19, 2008. He stated the purpose of the program is to identify project areas where there might be some planning for the types of things the community might want to do to promote sustainability and improve air quality. \$125,000 is the maximum amount of grant money available to a city to conduct project planning. This money is not for implementation, but for planning. He reviewed EPA's criteria, the planning group's process for project selection, and stated that eight projects have been identified. These projects are: (1) Green Bike Program (2) Home Audit/Upgrade Program (3) Greening the Greenway (4) Water Use Reduction/Lawn Reduction (5) Intergenerational Collaboration for Sustainable Greensboro (6) Bus Idling Program (7) Commercial Building Educational Program and (8) Educational/Community Based Project. An overview was given on each of the eight projects.

It was noted that the end result that the EPA is looking for is a measurable reduction of air pollution.

Mr. Duckwall suggested finding a way to tie into the efforts being made by Piedmont Natural Gas in auditing home efficiency. Co-Chair Powell stated that communication and collaboration among groups is necessary and he added that Duke Power and the Housing Coalition also have similar programs.

Ms. Sanford commented on commercial green buildings and referenced a study in California showing that commercial buildings built today are much more efficient than those built prior to 1990. She cited that the problem lies in buildings built prior to 1990. She added that to make a difference in energy consumption, energy audits and renovation programs should be looked into. Local government programs and programs for commercial customers of Piedmont Gas and Duke Power were cited. It was also suggested that tenants should be educated on energy conservation.

Mr. Kollar stated that education regarding energy conservation should be ongoing, and he inquired about efforts to alert homeowners and tenants on how to conserve. Mr. Duckwall suggested placing inserts into monthly utility bills. Pat Boswell, Public Affairs Director, referenced announcements on Channel 13. She added that announcements are aired in shorts bursts to

prevent overloading of information. Steve Randall stated that as Energy and Sustainability Program Manager, education is a large component of his job and he added that there will be more information going out to the public.

Al Webb spoke from the audience and stated that he is a concerned citizen. He proposed that the Downtown Greenway should be Greensboro's signature project. He suggested that the Greenway could be the process enabling the community to become green and could be the jumping-off point for conservation education.

Ms. Sanford suggested the grant proposal involving the Greenway should be written in partnership with Action Greensboro. Members indicated they were in agreement. There was more discussion about the Greenway and the issue of how it connects into neighborhoods.

Ms. Sanford moved to approve the proposal to the EPA from the City for the noted range of projects, with the understanding that the green building project would focus on existing buildings, seconded by Ms. Allen. The Council voted unanimously 10-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Landau, Powell, Davis, Hoekstra, Kollar, Sanford, Duckwall, Clary, Venable, Allen. Nays: None.)

5. Planning for January CSC Meeting:

Co-Chair Landau stated that the time has come to begin working on the report containing recommendations to give to City Council. He suggested that members identify areas to be included in the report and that they form sub-committees to study the individual topics. Three to four sub-committees could present their topics at monthly meetings until all topics are addressed. He asked the Council to consider areas they feel should be included as a whole as well as areas they would like to be involved in more intensely. He reiterated that members should read through the available summary notes along with any other material available to them including websites for information on what other cities are doing.

In response to a question from Ms. Sanford, Mr. Curry indicated that the EPA will respond to the City regarding the grant sometime in the spring of 2009.

6. Items from the Public:

None.

7. Items from Co-Chairs:

a) Developing a Regional Food Economy—Meeting 12/10/08 in Winston-Salem, NC

Co-Chair Landau stated that regional meetings will be held throughout the state regarding the development of a regional food economy. The Winston-Salem meeting will be held Wednesday, December 10, 2008 at SciWorks.

b) Cool Cities Workshops – 1/24/08

Co-Chair Landau indicated that he would send out more information in the near future regarding the Cool Cities Workshops.

c) Update on Status of Emissions Inventory

Co-Chair Powell stated that progress was being made on the Status of Emissions Inventory. He stated that software had been acquired which was needed to convert the data to greenhouse gas emissions. Data gathering had also begun. He hopes to have a first draft available of greenhouse gas emissions at the January, 2009 meeting.

Co-Chair Landau commented on the large number of sustainability events occurring lately and his hesitation to send an unlimited quantity of information out to Council members at one time. Members agreed that Co-Chair Landau should continue to send out all pertinent information regarding sustainability events.

Co-Chair Landau advised the Group that only ten people have taken the online survey. He urged members to encourage people to take the survey and noted the importance of the survey as a distribution list in the future. Members agreed that the survey should be kept online for at least another month.

8. Items from Group Members – Status of CSC Website E-mail Protocols and Usage:

Co-Chair Landau advised the Council that no e-mails have been received on the website.

Mr. Kollar suggested that when an event is labeled worthwhile by the Group, at least one participant from the Council should attend and report back. Members agreed that this was a good idea and they discussed attendance at the Regional Food Economy meeting on December 10, 2008.

9. Items from Staff:

Mr. Curry informed the Council that it is customary for new Boards to participate in an Ethics and Responsibility session. Members discussed next month's agenda and agreed that the session should be held at the January, 2009 meeting.

10. Acknowledgement of Absences:

Mr. Davis moved to acknowledge the absence of Debbie Leiner, Kim Yarbray, Maurice Allen, and Jim Brady, seconded by Mr. Duckwall. The Council voted 10-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Landau, Powell, Davis, Hoekstra, Kollar, Sanford, Duckwall, Clary, Venable, Allen. Nays: None.)

11. Adjournment:

Brian Higgins, Sustainable Greensboro, informed the Council that the Carolina Canopy Workshop will be held December 12, 2008 at the Extension Office, and he invited all to attend.

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There being no further business before the Group, the meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Landau and Bob Powell
Co-chairs

JL-BP:sm/jd