

**ADVISORY GROUP ON SUSTAINABILITY
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA
JUNE 23, 2008**

A meeting of the Advisory Group on Sustainability was held on Monday, June 23, 2008 in the Plaza Level Conference Room of the Melvin Municipal Office Building, beginning at 3:30 p.m.. Members present were: Co-Chairs Joel Landau and Bob Powell, Art Davis, Joe Venable, Debbie Leiner, Eric Hoekstra, Carolyn Allen, Kim Yarbray, Tom Clary, Tom Duckwall, Jim Brady, and Jenny Grant (sitting in for Marlene Sanford). Staff present were: Dan Curry, HCD and Pat Boswell, Director of Public Affairs.

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

Co-Chair Joel Landau called the meeting to order and asked each member to introduce themselves with a brief summation of any prior work in sustainability efforts and their interest involving their membership.

BACKGROUND

After introductions were made, Co-Chair Landau addressed the background information related to how the group was established and the future possibilities. He stated that Mayor Johnson had expressed an interest in starting up an advisory group on the environment. In December there was a meeting with the Mayor and she stated she was going to ask the Council to create this group. During future meetings there will be references made to the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement which is the doctrine that City Council approved last August in response to widespread citizen requests. The Agreement pledges the City to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 7% below 1990 levels by the year 2012. When Council adopted it, they decided not to set a specific reduction target as they wanted to take the baseline inventory, which is the first step, to estimate what emissions were in 1990 and see what they currently are and then to set reduction targets. It is hoped that this information will be available some time this fall. Some possibilities for the group may be to adopting land use policies that reduce sprawl, preserve open space and create compact walkable urban communities, promote transportation options such as bicycle trails, etc., increase the use of clean alternative energy, make energy efficiency a priority through building code improvements, retrofitting city facilities, purchase only EnergyStar equipment and appliances for City use, practice and promote sustainable building practices, increase average fuel efficiency with municipal fleet vehicles, evaluate opportunities to increase pump efficiency in waste and waste water systems, increase recycling rates, maintain healthy urban forests, and educate the public schools and others about all these efforts. These areas can be discussed more in future meetings.

MISSION STATEMENT

Co-Chair Bob Powell stated that a book of information will be developed and one of the initial pieces is the mission statement that was drafted. This group will research, advocate, coordinate and provide outreach for local measures related to sustainability including reducing energy usage. The point is, they will be looking to see what measures the City can take on to improve its performance in terms of energy conservation and reducing greenhouse gases. He presented a handout for review. As an advisory group to the City Council, the task is to present proposals both to Council and staff for things that the City can do as a government and also things that citizens can be encouraged to do throughout the community. The general activities are taken from Cool Cities and the first thing to do is identify the base line, figure out the existing conditions and from that establish targets for improved performance and think about what strategies can be used to achieve that performance and then present those to the Council. Public outreach will be the main goal throughout the process. He asked that each

group member think about what topics the group should discuss during future meetings, with the idea being that there will be a workshop as a committee to define a vision for Greensboro consisting of what are the cluster topics, i.e. transportation, development, green building, waste management, etc., will be and what the group may suggest for these areas. Having developed that vision, the next step would be to determine what strategies that can be taken on to fulfill that vision and based on those discussions, the group would be in a position to make recommendations to the Council.

Kim Yarbray noted that it would be helpful and useful to give a lot of thought to the outreach and possibly have one meeting that is dedicated to thinking about some of the effective ways for the group to work together most strategically.

Co-Chair Powell stated that the EPA has a program called Sustainable Skylines and they have asked Greensboro to apply for this money and so far they have funded Dallas and Kansas City and have had a meeting so they are very interested in this group writing that proposal. There will also be an energy Block Grant Fund that would be available to the City at some point in the future.

DISCUSSION OF POSSIBILITIES FOR THE GROUP

Co-Chair Landau stated that Council will be looking for the group to come with specific proposals and ways to affect some of these areas and the more the group can suggest and provide funding sources information, the more receptive Council will be. He pointed out that other groups will be reporting on what they are doing and to compare notes and try to get people working together more effective in their efforts and be aware of each other's initiatives.

Dan Curry stated that at the request of the City Manager's office, concerning who is doing what in the community, staff can build on this information. The Homebuilders Association has had a green building council that works with home builders certification program, the US Green Building Council has a local chapter that will be operational this summer, Action Greensboro has a committee that has finished their work and they have indicated that they may want to be a hub of information. There are several entities that would like to be the hub for information trading. There is a solar group that has websites and UNCG, A&T and, Guilford College have sustainability programs in place. Elon College also has a sustainability coordinator so they are plugged in with a person on board. The Housing Coalition is working on Healthy Homes as well as several other committees and groups that are very interested in working with the group. The News-Record is taking on the responsibility of having a website that coordinates information to the community.

Carolyn Allen pointed out that Greensboro Beautiful is very much concerned with drought and gardening practices that will save water and plantings, in general.

Co-Chair Powell asked that any group member that has suggestions or additions should send that information to Dan Curry.

Pat Boswell stated that she would be happy to coordinate this information on the City's website and to create links.

In response to a question about storing documents, Dan Curry stated that staff would be capable of setting up a secure area where only committee members would be able to access to certain portions of the website and others could be opened to the general public. He will

work with the committee in this effort. Pat Boswell stated she would investigate the possibility of storage space and let everyone know at a future meeting.

Tom Duckwall asked if the group shouldn't be talking to the Department heads and/or people in the departments to study City operations. Co-Chair Landau stated that there has been discussion about having a session with an update of what the City is doing now with different Department heads, for example Butch Simmons is interested in reporting what is going on with Inspections and Engineering and other departments have updates also.

Jenny Grant suggested that two other entities that would be very important to talk with are Duke Energy and Piedmont Natural Gas.

ESTABLISH DAY AND TIME FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

There was some discussion about the designated meeting day and time for future meetings. The Co-Chairs suggested that they would be working with group members and staff to determine what the most appropriate time and day should be and members will be notified as soon as that is established.

ITEMS FROM CO-CHAIRS

Co-Chair Landau stated that there will be a presentation on Peak Oil, July 12th from 10:00 until 12:00 at the Catherine Clay Edwards Family Library. He invited everyone interested to attend. He also mentioned the Proximity Hotel's sustainable practices symposium is Wednesday, July 9th from 2:00 until 6:30 p.m. Attendees would need to register beforehand. It is presented by Dennis Quaintance and there will be a discussion of the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Environment and Energy Design (LEED) rating system. If anyone is interested in attending, contact Joel Landau for information.

ITEMS FROM GROUP MEMBERS

Art Davis asked for information about topics that would be discussed at future meetings, as well as speakers.

Pat Boswell noted that the City Academy is starting up in the fall and applications are due by July 15th. This is a wonderful way to get to know the entire city. There will be visits to the waste treatment plants, fire stations, etc., and they would love to have members of this committee involved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ABSENCES

The absence of Maurice Allen and Marlene Sanford were acknowledged by unanimous vote of the Group.

ADJOURN

There being no further business before the Group, the meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,