

Greensboro Community Sustainability Council
Minutes, Regular Meeting
November 10, 2014

The regular meeting of the Community Sustainability Council (CSC) was held on Monday, November 10, 2014 in the Plaza Level Conference Room of the Melvin Municipal Office Building, commencing at 3:05 p.m.

CSC Members Present:

Joel Landau, Co-Chair	Bob Powell, Co-Chair	Carolyn Allen
John Kavanagh	Art Davis	Tom Duckwall
Chad Carwein		

Staff and Others Present:

Jeff Sovich, Planning	Hanna Cockburn, Planning
Dana Clukey, Planning	Steve Randall, Engineering & Inspections
Judson Clinton, City Urban Forester	Alex Arnett, Field Operations
Dan Curry	Bill McNeil
Sigrid Marks	Tom Clary
Alexa Powell, Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation	Raven Brown

1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2014 MEETING

Mr. Kavanagh moved approval of the September 8, 2014 meeting minutes as written, seconded by Ms. Allen. The Council voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Landau, Allen, Kavanagh, Carwein, Davis, Duckwall. Nays: None.)

2) RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT INCREASED SOLAR ENERGY USE IN GREENSBORO

Chair Landau indicated that members are in receipt of the latest draft of the resolution as recommended by the CSC an earlier meeting. He noted that solar jobs increased by 121% in 2013 and North Carolina is actually second in the country for growth in solar energy use. He explained that there is urgency to support increased solar energy use due to uncertainty surrounding the extension of current state and federal tax credits.

The resolution proposes to ask City Council to commit to establishing a goal of generating 10% of the electricity used by the City of Greensboro and its residents from solar by 2022. Co-Chair Landau commented that there have been no negative responses to the proposal to date.

Mr. Davis moved to endorse the resolution and submit it to City Council as proposed, seconded by Ms. Allen. The Council voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Landau, Allen, Kavanagh, Carwein, Davis, Duckwall. Nays: None.)

Co-Chair Powell joined the meeting at 3:17 p.m.

3) GREENSBORO URBAN FORESTRY INITIATIVES

Judson Clinton, City of Greensboro Urban Forester, reviewed activities occurring in Greensboro relating to urban forestry initiatives. He discussed the Tree Protection Ordinance that establishes required landscaping measures which help reduce negative effects of development. He also described Duke Energy's Vegetation Management Program and indicated that they have done a good job improving their communication to neighborhoods. Community meetings with Duke Energy are scheduled in the near future, and tree trimming is currently in progress in Kirkwood and other areas. Duke Energy is required to notify the City and property owners 60 days prior to trimming activities. Their 2015 vegetation management plan is currently being reviewed by City staff. Greensboro Beautiful has a program that provides replacement trees where larger canopy trees have been removed by Duke Energy's trimming activity. Greensboro Beautiful has been providing maintenance tips for the newly planted trees and Field Operations personnel have been providing maintenance and watering the new trees as needed in the parks.

Mr. Clinton stated that he would like to see improved communications with Duke Energy. The Management Program is geared to enhance the streetscape and he noted the challenge that a large number of trees being removed near utility lines are located in backyards. He commented that both Duke Energy and residents often neglect responsibility of taking care of the right-of-way. There have been patterns of oversight and poor workmanship by Duke Energy in the past. In addition, contractors for Duke Energy tend to be production driven and they sometimes fail to discern whether the end product is appropriate or desirable.

Ms. Allen is on Greensboro Beautiful's Urban Forestry Committee. She agreed that there is room for improvement; however, communication with Duke Energy is now 100% better than it was.

Mr. Clinton indicated his plan to speak with each neighborhood and tailor management components of the plan for each community. Mr. Davis asked Mr. Judson to speak to the Neighborhood Congress about tree protection and landscaping initiatives occurring in the City. They discussed scheduling the event in January, 2015.

4) GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY 2013 UPDATE

Co-Chair Powell presented the greenhouse gas inventory update comparing the 2007 City benchmark to 2013 data. In 2007 there was an estimated 5.5 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalents. This is the amount of greenhouse gas emissions associated with Greensboro's energy use, primarily electricity, natural gas, and transportation, along with a small portion of methane emitted by solid waste at landfill facilities. The most aggressive goal was that the greenhouse gas production would be a flat line so that as Greensboro grows, the conservation would match the rate of growth of the City.

Referring to a chart, Co-Chair Powell stated that the residential, industrial, and overall electrical use has been flat from 2003. There are 14% more residential accounts but the per capita residential energy use has gone down. There are savings and it is apparent that residents are using more efficient energy systems. The number of commercial accounts has grown by 6% but the savings in commercial usage matches the growth. In addition, he noted that it was disturbing that the number of industrial users has decreased by 8% and the accounts that exist are less energy-intensive than the previous users. There are fewer industries using less energy and this is the largest drop within overall

electrical energy use. He stated that in summary, the City's total electrical energy use remained virtually unchanged from 2007 to 2013 at 5 million kilowatt hours.

Co-Chair Powell described natural gas usage and said that the number of residential accounts has gone up by only 4%. The per capita savings is up to 11%. The number of commercial of accounts using natural gas has declined slightly, while usage declined by 9%. In industrial use, there are now half as many customers and these customers are using much less natural gas. The overall natural gas energy used in the City has gone from just under 14 million BTUs down to 10 million BTUs which is about a 29% drop since 2003.

Co-Chair Powell stated that he was able to find the actual purchase amounts for gasoline and diesel fuel in Guilford County and arrived at an amount for Greensboro. The actual amount of fuel that has been bought and then burned in the City is essentially the same, with just a 3% reduction.

The number of tons of municipal solid waste being collected and put into the landfill has remained essentially unchanged between 2005 to 2012.

Given this information, Co-Chair Powell stated that overall, greenhouse gas emissions in Greensboro between 2007 and 2013 have been reduced by 1 million tons of CO₂ equivalent (or 18%), to a 2013 total of 4.5 million tons. He felt that there has been conservation and the inventory provides a good snapshot of what is happening in Greensboro.

Responding to a question from Mr. Carwein, Co-Chair Powell indicated that the methodology used to gather this data is a common methodology used by most cities. These numbers are based on the actual kilowatt hours and therms of natural gas consumed in Greensboro.

Mr. Sovich pointed out that by looking at the raw numbers there is a reduction of 18%, however, if viewed on a per capita basis, with the increasing population of the City, there is actually a 27% reduction over the time period, going from about 23 tons per person down to 16 tons per person.

Bill McNeil asked if the inventory took City operations into account. Steve Randall, City Energy and Sustainability Manager, stated that City data was used in the inventory taking into account usage at municipal facilities. He said that City energy usage has been dramatically reduced. He cited two performance contracts that significantly reduced energy use in 57 City buildings.

Members discussed what the next steps should be following the inventory. Co-Chair Landau indicated that the information would be shared with City Council at some point.

Ms. Allen felt that public education in some form was important to get the information out to the community.

Mr. Davis suggested sharing the information in a presentation to the Neighborhood Congress. He also felt that the information should be disseminated to key groups who attended the 2008 gathering of community members.

Mr. Kavanagh recommended presenting the information to City Council first to determine what they would like to do with the data. Co-Chair Landau agreed that would be the

proper protocol. He plans to contact the Mayor and City Manager to put the item on City Council's agenda.

Dan Curry encouraged members to think about the messaging as they move forward. He suggested that when the information is presented, there should be discussion on what happened in the different sectors of residential, commercial, and industrial, and why. Details should be given concerning the impact to the residents of Greensboro.

Ms. Allen commented that the apparent loss of industry in Greensboro as reflected by the data will be of great concern to City Council members, as jobs are on their priority list.

Co-Chair Landau said that it would be useful to get data on energy usage from other cities in North Carolina for purposes of comparison.

Mr. Sovich suggested that another way to present the information would be in the form of a pie diagram showing what proportion of the 18% reduction came from each of the different sectors.

6) SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A) **ECONOMY, *Green Technology Forum*** - Mr. Kavanagh informed members that the committee is having difficulty raising money for the forum. They have a date and location for the event but they want to make sure it will be successful before moving forward. The committee is working with the U. S. Green Building Council, a non-profit organization. Mr. Carwein indicated that he will be attending the Clean Air Forum where he plans to distribute information and speak with people regarding fundraising for the event.
- B) **ENVIRONMENT, *City Green Team*** - Co-Chair Landau stated that Mr. Randall will be following up with the City Manager regarding the City Green Team. Mr. Sovich updated members on the Bike Sharing Program and indicated that there have not been any recent developments on the Bike Sharing Feasibility Study. He announced that Chandler Concrete is selling their property clearing the way for the rail line to be abandoned which will form the western leg of the Downtown Greenway, a piece of infrastructure that will be a key to making a bike sharing system successful if one is implemented. He has not heard recently from Action Greensboro on this item, but will inquire about its status.
- C) **EQUITY, *Tree Canopy Inventory*** - Mr. Davis stated that the community garden effort is ongoing and an inventory has been conducted. The committee is continuing to monitor Duke Energy. Ms. Allen commented that among the current efforts of City Urban Forester, Judson Clinton, is promoting more even attention City-wide regarding plantings and new developments. He has noticed a difference in parts of east Greensboro, compared to the rest of the City and this could be considered an equity issue. There are fewer plantings in east Greensboro and some of the new developments have no trees at all. The committee will follow-up with Mr. Clinton on this matter.

7) INCIDENTAL ITEMS

- A) **ITEMS FROM CO-CHAIRS** - None.
- B) **ITEMS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS** - None.

- C) ITEMS FROM PUBLIC** - Raven Brown is with NC WARN (Waste Awareness Network), based in Durham, North Carolina. She stated that NC WARN has 250 solar rooftops in the state of North Carolina producing 1.25 megawatts of energy. They are expanding the Solarize Durham and Solarize Chatham County programs and plan to add Solarize Triad that will include both Guilford and Forsyth counties. Planning meetings for Solarize Triad will begin in December, 2014. She described NC WARN's efforts to help facilitate solar energy in lower income areas. Ms. Brown stated that NC WARN will be hosting the North Carolina Climate Justice Summit the weekend of November 21, 2014 at Haw River State Park.
- D) ITEMS FROM STAFF** - Alex Arnett, Field Operations Department, informed members that a new social media account called "Greensboro Goes Green" has been created. The account posts sustainability related information and news from other departments. Mr. Arnett stated that the City is launching "Recycle First. It Matters", a new recycling campaign. A mailer has been prepared for every resident that contains a calendar for 2015 with a recycling guide attached to it. An e-mail address has been created to address any recycling questions.

8) TERM EXPIRATION DATES

Co-Chair Landau explained that the CSC by-laws indicate that the terms of three members, Ms. Allen, Mr. Davis, and Mr. Duckwall, will expire at the end of this year. Three additional terms are set to expire at the end of 2015, with remaining three terms expiring at the end of 2016. The terms of Co-Chairs Landau and Powell, along with one other member are to expire at the end of 2015.

Members thanked Ms. Allen, Mr. Davis, and Mr. Duckwall for their long service.

Co-Chair Landau informed members that Steve Armstrong will be stepping down from the Council. Therefore, the seat appointed by Councilman Fox, District 2, and one of the At-Large seats are open. It was noted that there are two Advisory seats to be filled for TREBIC and the Chamber of Commerce. Co-Chair Landau plans to ask TREBIC if they want to appoint an advisor to the CSC to be approved by City Council.

Following discussion, it was determined that one of the terms expiring in 2016 should be changed to expire in 2015. It was suggested that the seat appointed by District 2 seat be changed to expire in 2015.

Mr. Davis moved to change the seat appointed by District 2 to expire in 2015, seconded by Ms. Allen. The Council voted 7-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Landau, Powell, Allen, Kavanagh, Carwein, Davis, Duckwall. Nays: None.)

Co-Chair Powell pointed out that this is Mr. Duckwall's first term and he is eligible to be appointed for another term. Co-Chair Landau plans for follow-up with the City Clerk regarding the status of open seats.

9) MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2015

Co-Chair Landau stated that new officers will be elected at the January, 2015 meeting.

Members were supportive of continuing to meet on the second Monday of every other month. The following meeting dates will be scheduled: January 12, 2015; March 9, 2015; May 11, 2015; July 13, 2015; September 14, 2015; and November 9, 2015.

10) ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ABSENCES

Mr. Davis moved to acknowledge the absence of Mr. Armstrong, seconded by Mr. Kavanagh. The Council voted 7-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Landau, Powell, Allen, Kavanagh, Carwein, Davis, Duckwall. Nays: None.)

11) ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Group, the meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Landau
Co-Chairman

JL:sm/jd