

GREENSBORO COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL
greensboro-nc.gov/sustainability
Minutes, Regular Meeting

3pm, Monday, October 8, 2018
 Plaza Level Conference Room
 Melvin Municipal Office Building
 300 West Washington Street

CSC Members Present:

Faun Finley, Chair	Jacques Pierre	Kevin McDonald
Vicki Foust, Vice Chair	Jonathan King	Nicole Spivey

Staff and Others Present:

Steve Drew, Interim Assistant City Manager	Stephen McCollum, interested citizen
Dana Clukey, Planning	Ellen Van Velsor, Citizens Climate Lobby
Jeff Sovich, Planning	Benjamin Moore, interested citizen
Doug Marken, The Marken Group	Hester Petty, Democracy Greensboro
Erin Marken, The Marken Group	

1. CHAIR GREETING / WELCOME VISITORS

Chair Finley called the meeting to order at 3pm and welcomed visitors.

2. TASK FORCE UPDATES

c) **STAR Communities Program** - Vice Chair Foust gave an update regarding STAR Communities, pointing out that during a work session, the City Council voted to direct staff to create an online account and proceed with assessing the feasibility of applying for STAR certification, and the identifying the resources needed.

3. GREEN LEGACY INITIATIVE

Interim Assistant City Manager Steve Drew started with a description of the Water Resources department; the revenue it receives from meter boxes, the permits that it obtains from the state, and the importance of producing clean water. Mr. Drew then detailed all of the projects that are a part of the Greene Legacy Initiative and project ideas for the future. He gave further detail about the proposed Greene Street Water Garden, which would be located on the governmental complex, at the corner of South Greene and West Washington Streets. The main purpose of the project is to demonstrate the value and vital importance of water. It will provide a relaxing walkway, with educational and passive recreation spaces. The education piece will detail how Greensboro is reliant on rain, whereas other cities can rely on rivers or large bodies of water. Also, storm water runoff will be treated in tree wells and a bio cell, with extra water from heavy rains stored in an underground cistern. The next steps for the project: continue private fundraising, set aside Storm Water Enterprise Capital Funding for infrastructure, environmental and educational components, and incorporate environmentally themed public art. The proposed timeline anticipates the project will be built by 2020.

Chair Finley asked where the other project ideas are. Mr. Drew said Greene Street Water Garden is the project that is furthest along, but North Buffalo is next. It is a much larger project.

Chair Finley asked how the CSC could help. Mr. Drew said it would be important for this team to give feedback regarding the project. Mike Borchers would be the best person to stay in touch with for stakeholder input.

Guest Ben Moore asked if there would be a way to offset power needs of this project. Mr. Drew said that solar power may be used for pumps, and it may be possible to pull energy off the

water flow of the small artificial “stream” that will be created.

Ms. Spivey asked if people would be allowed to enter the water. Mr. Drew said probably not, rules for this project would be consistent with those of other downtown fountains and water features.

2. BRIEF TASK FORCE UPDATES

- a. **Responsible Business Awards & Recognition Program (Faun/Kevin)** - Chair Finley stated that Mr. Yearns will no longer be the lead and she will take over. At the last workshop, she stated that there was lots of discussion. The group is working on establishing their mission with a focus on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.
- b. **SUSTAINABILITY SPEAKER EVENT (Faun/Jeff)** - Mr. Sovich stated that the attempt to engage Peter Calthorpe had fallen through, but they are hoping to succeed in 2019. Chair Finley stated that we captured his interest and attention, but it was just a matter of scheduling. As a result of this change of plans, the CSC speaker series will start in 2019.
- c. **ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE FUND – CITIES INITIATIVE ROUND TABLES (Faun)** - Chair Finley stated that work on arranging a local summit around the Mayors National Climate Action Agenda was put on hold in order to wait for completion of the Environmental Defense Fund’s series of round table meetings among the cities in North Carolina that have signed onto Climate Action Agenda. The intent being to learn what outcomes and actions are generated by the EDF Round Tables, which could then be useful in organizing a local summit in support of the Climate Action Agenda.

4. PRESENTATION: SUSTAINABLE INVESTING – WHAT’S HAPPENING GLOBALLY AND WHY IT MATTERS LOCALLY

Doug Marken and Erin Marken of the Marken Group at Morgan Stanley presented about the work they do, managing clients’ money by investing in sustainable companies. They have seen a lot of growth in the amount of sustainably invested assets and now use the United Nations’ 17 Global Sustainable Development Goals to help their individual and corporate clients evaluate their investment and fiscal practices. Sustainability has become a lifestyle and something to share in the board room. “Every dollar you send into the world makes an impact. What do you want your impact to be?” The Endogenous Growth Theory states that changes happens internally.

Mr. McDonald asked if sustainability investments are possible from small business. Ms. Marken stated that it typically relates to a product or project that is sustainable. Mr. Marken stated that there are new resources and capital available at the small business level. Mr. Marken also pointed out that there may be new needs with the growing economic strength of the millennial generation. Vice Chair Foust stated that the City has a problem losing students from the local universities when they graduate. Ms. Marken stated that Greensboro’s increasingly vibrant downtown attracted her to the area. Stephen McCollum pointed out that the nanotech center is a great possibility for economic and sustainable development. Mr. McDonald stated that there was one firm, Wexford Capital, that put down the capital to start the Innovation Quarter in Winston-Salem. Mr. Marken stated that the CSC can be the feeder organization for the City for sustainability and economic success. Chair Finley stated that conversations about promoting synergy are happening around the City and Greensboro really needs to find its identity. Mr. Marken pointed out that major corporations in Greensboro such as Volvo, American Express, and Lincoln Financial. What do the people already here think?

Mr. Sovich stated that in updating the Comprehensive Plan, we are trying to get as many people involved and get input from as many people as possible. Greensboro doesn’t currently have a clearly defined identity, but an identity isn’t something that can be created with an ad campaign – it has to arise organically from within. Mr. King pointed out that contrary to most prior generations, millennials first decide where they want to live based on quality of life, then

find a job in their chosen location. He suggested that in 50 years, advances in manufacturing technology will allow most industrial activity to locate to wherever the most suitable workforce and best quality of life are. Mr. Pierre stated that the City and local employers need to go to the universities and market to students before they graduate. Mr. Marken stated that the affordability of Greensboro makes it attractive. Chair Finley asked Mr. King what kept him here in Greensboro. Mr. King stated that Greensboro has great prospects for placemaking and the idea of a scaled city that still has a sense of community.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

- a. **ITEMS FROM CHAIR** – Chair Finley reminded CSC members that elections will be held in December and there needs to be some forethought into who to nominate as officers. Also, Chair Finley stated that the by-laws of the CSC need to be amended to clarify that regular meetings include work sessions. If a member misses more than two meetings without an excused absence, they would be dismissed CSC.
- b. **ITEMS FROM VICE-CHAIR** – Vice Chair Foust thanked Chair Finley, Jeff Sovich, and Steve Drew for their help with the STAR Communities presentation.
- c. **ITEMS FROM CSC MEMBERS** – Mr. McDonald asked if there are any open seats on the CSC. Chair Finley stated that there is one open seat pending, with the possible appointment of Sue Phillips. Vice Chair Foust congratulated Mr. King on his appointment with the CSC.
- d. **ITEMS FROM PUBLIC** – Mr. Marken stated that he could provide some of the metrics related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals for the CSC. Ms. Spivey stated that she is interested in the social equity of Greensboro. Chair Finley stated that *The Life and Death of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs speaks to sustainability and urban living through a planning lens. Ms. Spivey stated that Council Member Hightower voiced her support for the CSC by asking if we needed anything to let her know.
- e. **ITEMS FROM STAFF** – Mr. Sovich stated that the *PLAMT* GSO kick-off was held Friday night at Center City Park, with stirring remarks by both Mayor Vaughan and Councilmember Outling, and was a successful, well-attended event.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JUNE 11, 2018

Chair Finley pointed out several needed edits in the June 11th meeting minutes. Ms Spivey moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Mr. McDonald. The CSC voted unanimously to approve the minutes as revised.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ABSENCES

Chair Finley acknowledged the excused absence of Kelli Swain. Vice Chair Foust seconded the motion and the CSC unanimously approved.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Finley adjourned the meeting at 5:00 pm.