

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

4pm, Monday, May 11, 2020
Virtual Meeting, using the Zoom videoconferencing tool

CSC Members Present:

Vicki Foust, Chair	Veda Howell	Nicole Gaines
Jacques Pierre, Vice Chair	Jonathan King	Susan Phillips
Sophia Dubrovsky		

Staff and Others Present:

Will Years, CSC Advisor, Construction & Real Estate	Michelle Robbins, Interested Resident
Jeff Sovich, Planning	Jim Wright, Living Roofs
Christine Swanson, Planning	Jessica Obermeyer, Interested Resident
Charles Birkner, UNCG, Sustainability Group at the Library	Sean MacInnes, UNCG Sustainability
Laura Oxner, Food Recovery: Rock & Wrap It Up!	Stephen McCollum, Past CSC Chair
Paula Sieber, Guilford Urban Farming Initiative	Steve Drew, Interested Resident
Will Pharr, Social Media Director for Sustainability in Greensboro	Michelle Robbins, Interested Resident
Princess Thompson, Student, Middle College at UNCG	Angie Kenny, Interested Resident

1. Chair Greeting / Welcome Visitors

Chair Foust called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm and welcomed visitors in attendance.

2. Approval of February 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Ms Phillips made the motion to approve the February minutes, Ms Gaines seconded, and the CSC unanimously approved the motion (8-0).

3. Motion to Amend Sustainability Action Plan to Meet LEED for Cities Solid Waste Management Prerequisite

Chair Foust asked Mr. Sovich whether, except for the amendment regarding the Materials and Resources prerequisite to be considered during this meeting, all remaining LEED for Cities documentation had been submitted to USGBC for final review. Mr. Sovich responded that the final updated documentation will be completed and submitted following today's meeting.

Chair Foust provided a brief history regarding the Sustainability Action Plan and how it was created. The certification process and prerequisite under waste was explained. The City of Greensboro does not currently have a plan to address food waste, which was preventing the city from meeting the Materials and Resources prerequisite in the LEED for Cities. An amendment to the SAP to address this deficiency was developed by Jeff Sovich and the City Manager's Office so that Greensboro can meet this final prerequisite. It is before the

CSC to amend the Sustainability Action Plan to add a new Strategy 7E which would develop a food waste handling and processing program. Chair Foust read the full text of the proposed amendment:

Strategy 7E. Develop a Food Waste Handling and Processing Program

- Implement a pilot program for composting food waste from residential and business sources; set an annual target for tons of food waste processed; and develop a pathway for scaling up the pilot program to operate as an integral component of the City's solid waste program.
- Seek opportunities for partnering with area businesses, institutions, and non-profits to expand and enhance food waste reduction and composting initiatives.
- Explore the feasibility of using anaerobic digestion to convert food waste to biogas.

A motion to amend the SAP by adding the proposed Strategy 7E was made by Ms Dubrovsky, seconded by Mr. King. The CSC unanimously approved the motion (8-0).

4. Responsible Business Awards Discussion/Decision in light of Coronavirus

The CSC discussed how to handle the awards nomination deadline in light of the Pandemic and businesses struggling with the Coronavirus. Members expressed concern as to whether an award would be feasible or appropriate at this time. The discussion shifted to whether the deadline should be extended, rescheduled, postponed, or cancelled. Chair Foust stated that the situation was bittersweet, as everyone had worked so hard on it and now it was going to be delayed due to this unprecedented time. A suggestion was made to reevaluate the awards to identify changes that could be applied in light of how businesses are affected and are adjusting to quarantine and the ongoing spread of the virus.

Chair Foust thanked Mr. Sovich for creating the Google document used for the application. Ms Gaines stated there were two webinars USGBC has offered and will continue to offer going forward. Ms Gaines provided a brief representation of the meeting and encouraged everyone to log on the webinar to read the information available there. The consensus of the CSC was to cancel the awards for now, and to revisit and re-evaluate the Responsible Business Awards program during the first meeting in 2021. Chair Foust will send emails advising of the reasons for the postponement to those that have submitted applications.

5. PowerPoint of CSC History

Chair Foust stated the CSC does good work and would like to have a living document outlining the accomplishments of the Council. Types of forms and/or documents were discussed among the council members such as slide presentations or booklets providing the CSC's history and accomplishments. Chair Foust suggested a page for every year, resulting in a 12 page document that would also include some key accomplishments and suggested each member pick a year and review the minutes to conceptualize the highlights of the CSC for that year. Another thought was to interview past CSC Chairs for their input and insight. Chair Foust stated she felt strongly this history was important as over time the knowledge of CSC and what has happened in the past is being lost and would like it preserved for the future. A suggestion was made for discussion at the next meeting regarding creating a visualization of what that would look like and general ideas of what should be included in the document.

Break – At 4:58 pm, Chair Foust adjourned the meeting for a brief break. Chair Foust reconvened at 5:08 pm.

6. Update on Greensboro Strategic Energy Plan

Chair Foust stated that no significant progress has been made as there have been no meetings. The goal is to try to plan a meeting before the end of the month to iron out what arrangements will be needed regarding data collection and analysis. Chair Foust stated that COVID-19 has interfered with the plans, but hopes to have the first official meeting of the core team for developing the Strategic Energy Plan meeting in late May, or before the next CSC meeting.

7. Discussion on LEED for Cities – Outcomes Communication Tool

Chair Foust stated that once USGBC has completed final review of the LEED for Cities submission, and has announced Greensboro's score and certification level, it will be helpful for the CSC to know how many points are available under each credit, and how many of those points the city was awarded. The goal was to move forward with working groups to start planning on how to improve the score and reduce the city's carbon footprint. In order to begin conversations with community members, it will be important to have a communication tool that clearly and concisely illustrates Greensboro's current score and performance metrics. Something that can actually be presented and shown as a tool externally and internally for each category, representing credits, possible score, actual score, and a comment section. Everything is ready to be submitted and the finalized score and performance for each category will be published soon. The next step is to present the document in a succinct manner. Ms Gaines referred to the presentation of the Comprehensive Plan and asked Mr. Sovich to expand on how that was presented. Mr. Sovich advised that presentations in the Comprehensive Plan process used different styles and levels of detail, based on the stage in the process, the target audience, and other factors. There was not a single format that was used throughout the process. Ms Gaines suggested a simple spreadsheet or a table that would be very basic for each of the credits. Chair Foust stated she would like to see a simple presentation of how they scored on each credit. It was suggested a draft be shown at an upcoming work session as a starting point for ideas.

8. Discussion on Inviting Sustainability-Focused Speakers to Future CSC Meetings

Chair Foust stated it may be beneficial to provide a platform for people to state their ideas or practices that could be incorporated into Greensboro's sustainability efforts. This would allow residents to present proposals for elevating sustainability around the city. Possible topic ideas and speakers were discussed for the possibility of monthly speakers to speak to what they are doing within the community regarding sustainability. Chair Foust inquired if anyone had a speaker they would like to propose. It was suggested to have a city speaker, as well as someone from the different universities and within the community. A suggestion was made by Mr. McCollum to start with the Engineering and Inspections Department as they are responsible for all of the City's buildings, facilities, maintenance, and management and touch every other department throughout the city as they run the contracts for those departments who may be doing innovative things. Names were suggested to be contacted to speak at meetings.

Chair Foust asked since this meeting an official meeting and should have been a work session, should the meetings be reversed for the remainder of the year and have 2 back to back formal meetings. The continuation of Zoom meetings was discussed. Mr. Sovich advised City Council is following the state phasing plan and felt in-person meetings would

probably resume in June but there is no actual official announcement to date. An informal vote was taken, with the result that the June CSC meeting would remain a work session, as scheduled.

9. Update on CSC Green Drinks Presentation

To be rescheduled after social distancing is lifted.

10. Acknowledgement of Absences

Chair Foust moved to acknowledge the absence of CSC member Raleigh Stout.

11. Incidental and Announcements

- **Items from Chair** – None.
- **Items from Vice-Chair** – None.
- **Items from CSC Members** – Ms Gaines commended Chair Foust and staff for a successful Zoom meeting.
- **Items from Public** – Paula Sieber of the Anti-Poverty Committee stated they are anticipating working with the NAACP and Farmers of Color from eastern North Carolina going directly to the food deserts. The Greensboro Housing Authority is struggling with food demands. The City of Greensboro is buying and delivering food to people who are hungry. Ms Sieber stated she was very proud of Greensboro and Guilford County schools who are doing a great job, but more needs to be done and asked for prayers and help.

Charles Birkner stated that NC State has composting bins everywhere. The only ones on the UNCG campus doing composting are food service groups. As the library is a place where people eat and they are trying to start a pilot program, Mr. Birkner stated he would very much like to have suggestions, advice, and comments to get people interested. Ms Gaines advised Mr. Birkner that she has contacts regarding compost education and will be in touch with Mr. Birkner. Chair Foust advised she will be reaching out to Mr. Birkner as she has some resources also.

Mr. Wright stated that his company, Living Roofs, recently worked with a hydrologist and engineer to conduct storm water analysis for three green roof installations in the southeast. This has been presented and shared with other cities in the southeast and recently spoke to the Asheville Sustainability Advisory Committee on Energy and Environment, covering the different types of environmental, economic, and social benefits of green infrastructure. Mr. Wright offered to speak and share more information to the CSC. Chair Foust thanked Mr. Wright and advised the group they had one speaker which will be discussed at the work session.

- **Items from Staff** – Mr. Sovich requested to have the record show that there were no members of the public who contacted him in advance to speak on any of the items on the agenda. All items brought forward by members of the public were included at the discretion of the Chair.

12. Adjournment

Chair Foust adjourned the meeting at 6:04 pm.