

CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION
Council Chambers
Tuesday, October 1, 2013

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Marya Ryan, Vice Chair Stephen Wald, John Marlin, Amelia Neptune, Todd Rusk, Rachel Vellenga, Ryan Wolber

Staff Present: Scott Tess, Kate Brickman

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Declaration of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. Kate Brickman called the roll and a quorum was present.

Changes to the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Motion was made by Mr. Wald, second by Mr. Marlin, to approve the minutes from the September 3, 2013 meeting. Motion carried.

Public Input

Carol McKusick, 1907 N. Cunningham, addressed the commission regarding municipal aggregation, public listing of City Green Team members, and an issue with not posting unapproved minutes of the commission.

Communications

Staff Report

Scott Tess gave the monthly Staff Report that included updates on various Goals and Actions from the Climate Action Plan and the Sustainable Water Management Plan, the new City Employee Bike Share program, an update on municipal electric aggregation, and interest by the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center to perform a waste audit at a City facility. He noted that the November SAC meeting is scheduled for November 5, 2013 in the council chambers.

Presentation by Urbana Middle School Future City Club

Three students from Urbana Middle School presented information about their participation in the National Future City Competition, a project-based learning experience where students imagine, design, and build cities of the future. The group reported that multiple student teams are forming at Urbana Middle School and need mentoring support from engineering and planning professionals. They requested support from the City of Urbana. The City will include information about them on its website. More information is available at www.urbanafuturecity.webs.com.

Continuing Business

Discussion of Recreational Waters Access Metric

Scott Tess discussed classification of and metrics related to recreational waters as presented in September by Regional Planning Commission planner Andrew Levy. He requested feedback from the SAC.

Marlin suggested that degree of public accessibility should probably be a part of the definition of recreational waters. SAC members agreed that pedestrian access is not necessary; visual access is

sufficient. They also agreed that swimming pools should not be included in the metric but that other human-made bodies of water—such as landscaped drainage ponds—could. Rusk urged that the Commission remember the reasoning for the metric and that the motivation should not be to have the highest numbers but to make the best of what is in place. Marlin also commented on the potential issues that may result from the use of the phrase “drainage ditch” versus the term “stream” and advised more neutral language.

New Business

Renewable Energy Credits (RECs)

Scott Tess provided a memo to Mayor Prussing and Council detailing the current awarded bid for purchase of electricity. The new contract for Homefield Energy will run from June 2014 to June 2016. SAC discussed Urbana’s choice to purchase 100% RECs to offset greenhouse gas pollution generated by electricity production. RECs represent the environmental attributes of the power produced from renewable energy projects and are sold separately from commodity electricity.

Alternatives to Renewable Energy Credits (RECs)

The Commission discussed alternatives to RECs that included the Environmental Protection Agency’s cap and trade program and carbon offsetting. It was agreed to pursue information from various subject matter experts as a multi-disciplinary understanding of RECs is needed for future evaluation of programs.

Announcements

Scott Tess made the following announcement:

- *Long Range Transportation Plan: Sustainable Choices 2040* public input meeting hosted by the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission & the Champaign-Urbana Urbanized Area Transportation Study on October 2 from 6p.m. to 8 p.m. on the 4th floor of the Illinois Terminal in Champaign.

Ryan Wolber made the following announcement:

- *Illinois Green Business Summit* being held October 15 at 8 a.m. at the Tinley Park Convention Center. More information is available at www.illinoisgba.org/summit2013.

Amelia Neptune made the following announcement:

- *3rd Annual Sustainability Week* hosted by the University of Illinois Center for a Sustainable Environment being held the week of October 21 through October 25. Schedule is available online at <http://sustainability.illinois.edu>.

Stephen Wald made the following announcements:

- *The Illinois Prairie and its People: Past, Present, and Future* lecture by John White on October 22 at 4 p.m. at the Beckman Auditorium of the Beckman Institute.
- *Prairie River Networks Annual Dinner* at the I Hotel and Conference Center in Champaign on October 11 at 6 p.m. See more at <http://prairierivers.org>.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

This meeting was recorded.