

Community Sustainability Program Committee
March 17, 2010
City Hall, Public Works Conference Room

The meeting of the Community Sustainability Program Committee was held in the Public Works Conference Room of City Hall on February 17, 2010. The following members were present: Cornelia Barr, Garfield Duncan, Jason Frichner, Donald Hamrick, Janet Loew, Peter Marsh, Jennie Mowery, Dr. Irene Phillips, Robert Smith, Anne Tambling, and Shannon Terrell. Staff present was Martha Wheelock, Assistant City Manager, Randy Rogers, Facilities Management Director, Wendell Hardin, Sustainability Program Manager, Lindsey Smith, Energy Management Coordinator, Sandy Barfoot, General Services Director, Ed McNeal, Marketing and Communications Director, Tim Grant, Recreation and Parks Director, James Mitchell, Vegetation Management Director and Bettye Bates.

Jake Cashion, Nancy Dunn, Justin Gomez, Dr. Kendall Jones, and Mose' Belton-Perry were unable to attend the meeting. Visitors who attended were Barbara Lawrence, Abdullateef Uqdah and Shaneka Shipman.

In the Chairman's temporary absence, Vice Chairperson Anne Tambling called the meeting to order at 5:38 pm. She asked the committee members to introduce themselves to Wendell Hardin, Sustainability Program Manager. Mrs. Tambling asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes of the February 17, 2010 meeting. There were no changes. A motion to approve the minutes was seconded and passed unanimously.

Go Lead Follow Up

Wendell Hardin informed the committee of the status of following up on the GoLead summit. Staff is sending out thank you letters to participants on the round table, persons who attended and persons who did not attend. Mr. Hardin plans to go over the signed "Call to Action" forms and get with the person/company to see what the committee can do to help them fulfill their commitments.

Earth Hour/Earth Day

Mr. Hardin informed the committee about Earth Hour which is a global event. It is to take place on Saturday, March 27, 2010. Everyone is asked to turn off their lights at 8:30pm for an hour to save on CO2. The City will participate by turning off lights in city buildings except where safety is a concern. The City is encouraging businesses to participate also. The City has information on their website about Earth Hour. Ed McNeal stated a news release will be done to encourage participation.

Ed McNeal elaborated on Earth Day. He is sending out a letter to department heads around City government for the name of the person who will lend their effort in manning and representing the 20x20 booth at Wake Forest on Earth Day. Lynette Shaull, Marketing and Communications, will manage the website. The main goal is organization of people, getting materials proofed and approved, make sure everything is consistent with the message of the City and then lay out a timeline of how it will be staffed. It is

expected to have representation from the committee that is on a materials standpoint having the copies of the report that was put together. The next steps are to have an organizational meeting to decide how to use the booth space, submission of all the items for display and workout parking arrangements for city staff. On the marketing side, it has been worked out with WSTA to place signs on the outside and inside of buses, plotted out the next City NOW's (ad that is in the Chronicles). An ad will go out April 1, 2010 in Chronicles, the first Sunday in the Journal, broadcast on TV13 and on the website. Also, Earth Day was advertised with an insert in the water bills, is on facebook and Fox 8.

Gardens Presentation

While setting up the presentation, Martha Wheelock acknowledged Tim Grant, Recreation and Parks Director, James Mitchell, Vegetation Management Director, and Beverly Lawrence who attends the county meetings. Mr. Grant and Mr. Mitchell along with other staff have met with Mark Tucker to discuss how to proceed on the community garden initiatives. Mrs. Wheelock also acknowledged the visitors Abdullateef Uqdah and Shaneka Shipman, who have interest in community gardens as well.

Wendell Hardin introduced Mark Tucker, County Extension Director. Mr. Tucker did a presentation on "Forsyth County Community Gardens". He elaborated on what a community garden is, where are community gardens, history of community gardens, the interest in community gardens, benefits of a community garden, what it takes to have a successful community garden. Websites for more information were made available. Per Mr. Hardin, the City will be looking at a lot of the issues (water, legality, soil, etc.) concerning community gardens and aim most of the questions and empowerment to the County.

Question and Answer Session for Community Gardens

Question: Is there any precedent for rain collection in these gardens since water seems to be one of the bigger issues?

Answer: Family Services but it is not recommended for community gardens; it is a reclamation. There is a program administered for agencies or private organizations or individuals to actually get a little cost share on rain water harvesting.

Question: Explain the liability insurance concerns from a community garden versus the City.

Answer: Mrs. Wheelock stated a big challenge is water availability. There are about 25 to 50 (50 ft. lots) in the city's purview that are available. Another challenge is soil contamination. On the liability side, someone could get hurt, property damaged, goods stolen, complaints the City would have to address, abandonment costs, if property is not properly taken care of, then the runoff could cause storm water problems, etc. The city is more regulatory in nature than the county; therefore the City did not want to make it difficult for people to understand if they were in the county/city or out of the county/city. That's why from an initial aspect, the county is considered the community garden resource and it is allowing the City time to create a community garden program. There has been discussion with Tim Grant and James Mitchell on expanding a concept that

does exist at Historic Bethabara. There is not capacity at Historic Bethabara; there may be a waiting list. There are challenges with the existing garden but after discussion with Mr. Grant, his staff and Mr. Mitchell, they want to consider it in a program development through Recreation and Parks where some of the liabilities can be addressed.

Question: Is there any interest as far as the school system is concerned?

Answer: There is interest through the school board and they are facing some of the same challenges.

Question: Is there a timeline as to when this will be feasible to implement?

Answer: Prior to Mr. Hardin coming aboard two weeks ago, Mrs. Wheelock and support staff have been doing the legwork. The purpose of the presentation was to inform and update the committee on what was going on. Mrs. Wheelock and Mr. Hardin will make contact with persons who have contacted the City about a community gardens program.

Mrs. Wheelock requested Mr. Tucker to email his presentation to Mr. Hardin for distribution among the committee. Mr. Tucker distributed his business cards.

Resource Center Update

Wake Forest Law Center has completed the articles of incorporation. The City Attorneys are editing the paperwork and making sure the City's protocols are met. The City has submitted a grant to State Energy for six interns (two interns every six months) to pilot the Resource Center. This grant is for an eighteen-month program and will be working with interns in a prescribe program that pertains to sustainable architecture, environmental studies and science of CO2 reductions and ways to take and reduce emissions. The objective is to prepare interns for job readiness. The interns will finish with a product to bring to one or two entities whether it is residential, commercial or industrial to present their findings and assure they have the public relations component to relate it to the community and industry. The next steps are:

- The City attorneys will review the draft articles of incorporation
- Looking at a board of directors
- Getting an assistant director
- Starting the actual program

At 6:25pm, Mrs. Wheelock excused Mr. Tucker, Mr. Grant and Mr. Mitchell from the meeting.

Environmental Sustainability Prioritization

Question: Where does community gardens fit in as far as sustainability?

Answer: Community gardens sustain a way of living because some people go back to a simple way of life, sustain communities because people come together, and sustain basically the whole source of a food chain.

Mr. Hardin stated what he has been doing the two weeks he has been with the City of Winston-Salem. The items are as follows:

- Written a grant for the interns

- Attended several meetings on community gardens
- Attended a bike pedestrian meeting
- Attended program at Reynolda Gardens discussing techniques on community gardens (set up a table to get the committee's message out on Saturday, March 13, 2010)
- Attended an educational event at USGBC
- Will sit on a panel in May in Greensboro with other cities' Sustainability Managers

Mr. Hardin's calendar is extended until June, 2010; that's how much people are interested in sustainability and what the committee is doing.

Mr. Hardin elaborated on education, energy, programs/events/projects, GoBloom and Go Local.

- 1) Education: How to educate people
 - Public service announcements
 - Brown bag lunch series (for employees)
 - Green lunch networks (persons purchase own lunch and learn about green)
 - Met with Neighborhood Services, leaders in neighbor organizations
- 2) Energy – 77% of greenhouse gases are produced by electricity. Duke Energy is working on the larger spectrums. Mr. Hardin plans to meet with the Weatherization Group out of Asheboro to discuss ways to improve and or save on energy.
 - Perform energy audits
 - Do weatherization
 - Find monies for energy audits
 - Change thermostats
 - Use CFL's
 - Rebate incentives
 - Focus on where is the money, how to use it, who benefits the most
 - Lighting audit for houses
- 3) Programs/Events/Projects – Put on programs that will reach the community; make these single issue items; do not overwhelm the same group of people
 - There is a website for rebates and incentives
 - GoLead Summit – successful event
 - Earth Day – April 17, 2010 – successful event
 - GoExpo event - Mr. Hardin will explain the difference between Earth Day and GoExpo in the future
 - Biking events
- 4) Go/Bloom
 - The County is handling community gardens.
 - Community Urban Forester works for the City. The City plan to purchase and plant 400 trees. Committee may try to do a matching campaign.
- 5) GoLocal – There is a 3 to 1 return if you buy locally. Most people are unaware of this concept.

Mr. Hardin plans to communicate with more people about sustainability and see what

the committee can do.

Chairman Jason Frichner stated Mr. Hardin has come aboard working hard but what steps should the committee take to prioritize the approved initiatives? Mr. Hardin stated educating the people is the number one thing to do. Once you educate the people and they do one thing such as changing a light bulb or thermostat then they have reduced CO2. Mr. Hardin will submit to the committee a top ten list and the group will go from there. It was discussed to use churches to educate people and know your audience.

Janet Loew asked “how do you feel about the word sustainability or do you have an alternative word? Have you been successful in using that word?” Mr. Hardin stated sustainability means to “Sustain” over time. He quoted Thomas Jefferson idea of sustainability “no generation shall gain a greater debt of its own that the next generation has to pay for. Thomas Jefferson was not talking about debt as debt but he was referring to the ground, what comes out of it and how we use it.

Janet Loew stated people use the term sustainability to mean the opposite of what it really is and that can be damaging. She would like to see a great campaign educating people about the meaning of sustainability.

Mr. Hardin stated a scenario and by educating the young (middle school students) helped educate older people such as their parents because the child carried the message home.

Shannon Terrell stated the committee needs a tool/matrix to help prioritize the list Mr. Hardin will be submitting to the group.

Chairman Frichner stated there has been a lot of talk about sustainability in the past year and now the committee is ready to act. So what steps does the committee take to prioritize the initiatives?

Cornelia Barr stated she hopes the resource center will be used as an umbrella that will bring resources together to help educate people about sustainability.

Question: What is the time table as well as the audience for educating people?

Answer: Since the audiences are so broad, you have to look at what is being asked and how effective the results are. For instance, will the results take care of and/or eliminate issues?

Question: Will social concerns be a part of the flow?

Answer: Yes, social justice is just as important as economic justice.

Peter Marsh stated the City has given the committee a charge to focus on GHG inventory and what the committee can do in terms of mitigation measures, setting priorities and strategies to pursue GHG reductions in the entire community. In the very first meeting the question was asked “is this about only that or the broader areas of

sustainability? The answer was “the broader areas of sustainability”. So the committee could focus on water, materials and resources, social justice, a lot of viewpoints on the ecosystem, etc. The real charge is trying to do something about GHG emissions, the ecosystem from the point of energy. The committee is asking staff for guidance on prioritizing the initiatives based on cost, savings and effectiveness and/or greatest impact. For instance, changing CFL’s versus weatherization, which has more impact based on cost, savings and effectiveness?

Jenni Mowery stated that subcommittees need to be addressed. Staff is working on communicating with subcommittees collectively as well as individually.

Robert Smith asked “could the City build infrastructures?”

Mrs. Wheelock responded “what you are asking for is what this committee was formed for to make recommendations like that to come from the body to Council to consider. This question is something staff cannot respond to because that is a policy decision and as a body would need to be recommended to Council through this group and considered as a policy and budget decision.”

Chair Frichner asked “what criteria do we measure everything by?” Per Mr. Hardin, take the list and do simple matrix based on time frame, cost and impact. By the next meeting, Mr. Hardin will take the initiatives and prioritize them and submit to the committee.

Sandy Barfoot reported that he had submitted a grant for three more CNG vehicles. He will get a response in May.

Peter Marsh stated the City buses that have been implemented are fabulous and the emissions reductions are like night and day on that corner.

Robert Smith passed out a pamphlet about Piedmont Local Food. Piedmont Local Food (PLF) is a non-profit group assisting local farmers in sustainable agricultural practices as they bring healthier food fresh to you. They are located at 525 NC Hwy 65 Suite 200, Reidsville, NC 27320, email info@PiedmontLocalFood.com. They are looking for chefs to use local foods.

GoExpo

Anne Tambling and Mr. Hardin talked before this meeting. They will meet and report to the committee. Mrs. Tambling request the committee’s time and help. The event will take place in the fall. Mr. Hardin and Mr. McNeal are working on a date. A date will be given at the next meeting. There is a big difference between Earth Fair and GoExpo. Mr. Hardin will elaborate on that aspect in the next meeting. He stated the GoExpo is very educational.

Housekeeping Item

Garfield Duncan does not like the plastic cups that are used for water during the meeting. Also someone stated not to use plastic bottles and Styrofoam cups are

recyclable.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.