

SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Agenda

Tuesday, June 12, 2012

6 PM, Centre of Elgin, 100 Symphony Way, West Conference Room

A. Call to order (chairperson)

B. Roll Call (staff liaison)

Commissioners Anderson, Frazier, Jacobs, Jacox, Knoerr, Martin and Segel present.

C. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Minutes unanimously approved.

D. Discussion Items

1. Country Brook Revised Neighborhood Improvement Grant

Commissioner Martin motioned that the grant application be reviewed at the end of the meeting to allow for a representative from the Country Brook HOA to arrive. No member of the HOA arrived during the course of the meeting. The application was to install native planting at the two entrances of the subdivision at Bode and Longford and Bode and Suman Road. The total project cost is \$6,600, the grant application was \$3,300.

The application was reviewed:

1. Municipal Compatibility

- a. Project integrates with the City's Sustainable Master Plan and is consistent with City policy and ordinances (0 to 20 points) **20 points**
- b. Project or activities require minimal maintenance and staff time (0 to 10 points) **10 points**

2. Community Benefit

- a. Project proposes a creative approach to a neighborhood need or enhancement that helps meet the SMP goals (0 to 15 points) **6 points; fewer points than usual were given as the commission questioned the overall community benefit of providing native plantings to just one subdivision entrance.**
- b. Project activities address a highly recognized need within the neighborhood (0 to 15 points) **7 points**

3. Participation

- a. Project includes opportunities to involve neighbors in shaping and carrying out the project (0 to 10 points) **10 points**
 - b. The project promotes opportunities to form partnerships with other groups or organizations to complete joint projects or activities (0 to 10 points) **5 points; the application noted that the Elgin Garden Club has been and will continue to help the HOA establish and plant the landscaping.**
4. Project Feasibility
- a. The proposal demonstrates excellence in design, planning, and execution of the proposed project or activity (0 to 10 points) **8 points**
 - b. Budget reliably represents the projects expenses and revenue (0 to 10 points) **8 points**

Total: **74/100 points**

Funding amount: **\$3,300**

Match: **\$3,300 in cash and in-kind contributions to install and maintain landscaping indefinitely**

Decision: **Approved**

Comments: The commission agreed that the revised application was more reasonable in both cost and content than the first, which only asked for a monument sign.

2. Conservation Foundation Services

Staff Liaison Cosentino noted that he met with representative from the Conservation Foundation (CF). They expressed interest in helping the commission implement elements of its plan. The CF developed a list of objectives within the city's sustainability plan they would be interested in implementing. The CF asked the commission to review this list and arrive at focus areas to which a more detailed scope of work could be developed.

Commissioner Jacobs noted that he was not familiar with the Conservation Foundation. Commissioner Segel responded, noting his familiarity with the CF, said they work mostly in DuPage County but are expanding to Kane and Kendall County. The CF works to educate, preserve open space, protect watersheds and conduct planning activities.

Staff Liason Cosentino noted that the CF created the city's Ferson Creek Watershed Plan and at one time supplied the city with rain barrels and educational seminars on rain barrel use. Commissioner Anderson noted that the CF has placed some of their materials at Hawthorne Hill Nature Center and are well thought of in the environmental community.

The commission then spoke about the Fox River Country Day School (FRCDS) site. Commissioner Anderson noted that there are discussions among the environmental community about the former FRCDS site once again becoming a hub for environmental education for Fox River communities. However currently, the fate of the FRCDS site remains unknown as the school has closed and its owners are seeking buyers for the land. In the interim, commissioners suggested utilizing Hawthorne Hill Nature Center to provide education and environmental programming.

The commission agreed that the Conservation Foundation should provide their opinion on how the city could best utilize the Nature Center. Commissioner Anderson, who also serves as the coordinator of the nature center noted that there is a desire to provide many programs to elementary, middle, high-school as well as those in college. The commission also showed interest in learning more about the operations of the Nature Center, including budget and current programming.

The commission motioned to have the Conservation Foundation provide their opinions on how to best to utilize our existing the Nature Center and its resources. The commission would also like to focus on outreach to the schools and learn more about how the CF could help the commission receive grant funds and collaborate with other groups in the area. The commission asked the CF to weigh in on the FRCDS site. The commission invited the CF representative to attend its July meeting to present these items in more detail.

E. Working Group Reports

None.

F. Old Business

1. Complete Streets Policy

Commissioner Jacox presented the current draft of the Complete Streets policy. The policy draft is modeled on examples from the National Complete Streets Coalition website. The policy lists ten elements that are integral to complete streets. In general Commissioner Jacox recommends the policy be short, spanning six or seven pages. He noted that a final draft would be complete by the commission's July meeting. Once presented to the commission, the policy would need to be reviewed by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, city staff and the public. Commissioner Jacox noted that a challenge in creating this policy is making it broad enough to be understood by the general public, and yet specific enough to provide value for planners and engineers. He recommended the policy be financially responsible, providing for exceptions, but not so many exceptions that the policy is easily sidestepped.

2. Solar and Wind Energy ordinance creation

Commissioner Martin presented the commission a complete draft of solar panel ordinance that would allow residents to install solar panels on their roofs. The ordinance is still in draft form. The commission voted to have staff review and refine the ordinance and when complete, submit it to city council for approval.

3. ITEP Grant Application

Commissioner Martin and Jacox presented the final Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) application. This program is Federally funded but administered by IDOT. The application seeks to obtain funding for phase I engineering. Based on additional calculations during the application development process, it was found that phase I engineering would be \$170,000, not \$200,000 as it was originally thought. Commissioner Martin also shared the letters of support he gathered for the project including letters from Representative Keith Farnham, State Senator Michael Noland, the Kane County Forest Preserve, The Northeast Neighborhood Association and Judson University. The ITEP was submitted May 31.

G. Commissioner comments/announcements

Commissioner Jacox asked how the commission spreads awareness about its activities. Staff Liaison Cosentino noted that the city's website/Facebook page, its sustainability newsletter, newspaper coverage and commission meetings are the primary ways. The commission suggested using its recently created banners as outreach mechanisms. It was suggested to ask local high-traffic areas such as the library, banks, schools, churches and the Centre of Elgin to display the banners for a given period of time. The commissioners agreed they would develop a list of locations.

H. Adjourn

The City of Elgin is subject to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or the facilities, are requested to contact ADA coordinator, at (847) 931-6076, or TTY/TDD (847) 931-5616 promptly to allow the City of Elgin to make reasonable accommodations for those persons.