

SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Agenda

Tuesday, October 16, 2012

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

A. Call to order (chairperson)

B. Roll Call (staff liaison)

Commissioners Anderson, Jacobs and Knoerr not present.

C. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

D. Discussion Items

1. Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI) Program Proposal

Commissioner Segel presented. He noted that he would like to explore the education and outreach components of the sustainability plan, as there are many materials in existence for every age level and every issue. Commissioner Segel felt that this process of education should be an on-going.

Commissioner Segel noted that the Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin has put on an NWEI training, which the membership found quite beneficial. Commissioner Segel felt that NWEI trainings could be used to bring any group that meets regularly together to discuss important environmental issues. He recommended that participants have a dollar commitment for the courses (i.e. pay for course books). Commissioner Segel pointed out that thirty-nine community colleges are currently using NWEI courses in their curriculum.

The commission agreed that Commissioner Segel's ideas were worth pursuing and committed to brainstorming groups that could benefit from such a program. Commissioner Martin suggested incorporating an NWEI course into the Elgin Civic Leadership Academy's training program.

Commissioner Segel committed to developing an action plan for further implementation of the NWEI proposal.

2. BPAC Banner Request

Staff Liaison Aaron Cosentino presented a proposal from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee for a table sized banner for use at conferences and public events. The banner would measure approximately 2' x 8' and read:

BIKE.WALK.MOVE.ELGIN

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

City Logo

Related Graphic
BPAC Web-link & Facebook-link

The cost of the banner is approximately \$130. The commission voted unanimously to fund the banner.

3. Revised Conservation Kit Program

Staff Liaison Cosentino presented a proposal to revise the Conservation Kit program to encourage greater participation. Currently the program, funded by EECBG funds allows homeowners to receive energy efficiency items free of charge if they agree to allow their utility bills (electricity and gas) to be tracked. This requirement of the program has greatly limited the number of participants. Staff has found that individuals are weary of taking even free items. Therefore staff recommends that the program be revised to allow residents to receive the kits with only their name and address. Residents will still receive educational materials as well as instructions for each item within the kit.

The commission voted unanimously to approve the program revisions.

E. Working Group Reports

F. Old Business

1. Complete Streets Policy

It was decided to inform the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee that a draft complete streets policy has been developed. Over the month of November, BPAC members will review the draft. Commissioner Jacox will then present the draft to the BPAC members at their December meeting.

2. Solar and Wind Energy ordinance creation

No update.

3. ITEP Grant Application

Aaron Cosentino reported that a decision is forthcoming from the Illinois Department of Transportation.

4. No Mow Conversion Proposal Status

Aaron Cosentino reported that an additional quote was being developed by Pizzo and Associates. The item should be ready for the commission's November meeting.

5. Conservation Foundation for Educational Services at Hawthorne Hill Nature Center

This item was passed by city council at its Oct. 10 meeting. Although, council did raise concerns about the city paying for transportation costs. Council would rather see School District U46 pay for transportation of their students. Also council would like to encourage participation from home schooled children.

6. Review of WaterSense Toilet Rebate Program Proposal

Commissioner Martin acknowledged the commission's comments on his first proposal. Commissioner Martin presented two versions of the program. The first was similar to his original proposal (geared towards businesses and apartment buildings) with the addition of a local sourcing requirement. The second choice was an instant rebate administered by the Elgin retailers themselves, open to all Elgin residents that can show proof of residency.

Based on the previous meeting, Commissioner Martin reviewed the commission's concerns over staff burden and program oversight. Commissioner Martin felt that the commission's concerns were irreconcilable. The commission 1) wanted sufficient checks on program abuse (i.e. verify the toilet was purchased and installed and 2) wanted to place as little administrative burden on city staff. To ensure no program abuse however, Commissioner Martin felt that the program would have to be administered by city staff. Whereas limiting administrative burden would mean that retailers would be processing the rebates and therefore the city would have little control over program abuse. Based on research conducted by city staff on the Batavia, Illinois program, there is no check on where the toilets are installed.

After discussion, the commission agreed to adopt the second version of the program whereby retailers administer the rebates at the point of sale. City staff will work to get the program adopted by the city council. Aaron Cosentino suggested a Facebook poll be conducted to determine resident interest. This would help substantiate demand.

G. Commissioner comments/announcements

None.

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.