



Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, March 10, 2020 • 6:00 p.m.  
Edward Schock Centre of Elgin  
West Conference Room  
100 Symphony Way, Elgin, IL 60120

- A. Call to order:** 6:00pm
- B. Roll Call:** Commissioners Anderson, Armstrong, Kroiss, Biss, Kenney, McMullen, Flaherty. Chairperson Agesen and Councilwoman Carol Raushenberger.
- C. Approval of last meeting minutes:** Commissioner Armstrong motion to table Feb. Meeting Minutes for approval at April commission meeting; seconded by Chairperson Agesen.
- D. Other persons present:** Kathleen Hamill, Teece Bowman, Cheryl and Chris Brumbaugh-Cayford, John Zawada, Mary Shesgreens-Fox Valley Citizens for Peace/Justice, Susan Swing, Nancy Voross, Angela Talbert, Berland-Elgin Green Group 350, Mary Harlos, Julia Havius, and Kerry Berland.
- E. Presentation**
1. Kim Dewis, Elgin City Clerk provided brief review of OMA guidelines and best practices. Stressed agendas needed to be posted 48 hrs. In advance and location must be accessible to public and agenda posted on door. Event planning is okay as long as you are not discussing commission/council business. Clarified that only City Council members could attend council meetings electronically attended if approved in advance. OMA states you must have a physical presence to obtain a quorum. Commissioner Anderson suggested that it would be nice if commissions had regular review of OMA guidelines. Chairperson Agesen asked if City Clerk could look into possible concerns we could have when it comes to using project mgt. software such as Basecamp when event planning.
- F. Work Group Update**
1. Green Infrastructure Work Group Commissioner Armstrong reported on finalizing the turf mgt. pesticide reduction plan recommendation, an Eagle Scout badge program to promote the City's tree bank program. They plan on working with Greg Hulke and Northwest Neighborhood Assoc. on the tree bank promotion. Reported on the approval of the Bike Share Sponsorship of \$3000 for 2020. Commissioner Anderson mentioned that the commission passed a policy that we wouldn't fund a project for more than 1 year.
  2. Waste Work Group Chairperson Agesen reported that they are working on a date on Plastic Bag Ban with council. They met with city staff and have planned for waste management forums for Green Expo, farmer's market date, public works day and another date later in the year.
  3. Solar Work Group Commissioner Anderson reported next meeting is on April 9<sup>th</sup> and he will give more updates during their discussion items.
  4. Earth Month (Green Expo) Commissioner Anderson reported that Facebook posts, podcasts and any social media sharing is appreciated and will increase outreach. Molly Gillespie is working on Strong Town poster and we will need to get them distributed.
  5. Water Work Group Commissioner McMullen reported she is now working with this work group.
  6. GIS Work Group Commissioner Kroiss reported that they will probably need legal review and approval to be able to list resident information publicly on with GIS mapping.

## G. Discussion Items

### 1. Ordinance Changes

- a. Kim Dewis reported that the commission's proposed ordinance changes are still being reviewed and nothing has been submitted for approval to council.

### 2. Climate Emergency Declaration

- a. Paul Berland, Elgin Resident and EGG350 member gave a statement to Commission proposing a Climate Emergency Resolution be adopted by the City of Elgin. Paul Berland's Statement: I am here because the time has come for the City of Elgin to recognize that its people, along with our entire species, face a climate crisis of existential proportions. It is time for our city to join other municipalities worldwide, including Chicago, New York, Boston, Berkeley, Austin, Hoboken, and one thousand four hundred and fifty-two other governmental bodies in twenty-eight countries, and pass a resolution declaring a Climate Emergency. In 2016, the leader of the Paris Accord, Christiana Figueres summarized the plight of humanity as follows: "The decade we have just started is the Most Consequential decade humanity has ever faced. If we are not able to cut our current global greenhouse-gas emissions by 50% over the next 10 years, we will be poised to enter into a world of constant burning and flooding, mass migrations due to extensive droughts, heat or land loss leading to the abandonment of uninhabitable areas, and political turmoil as people fight for food, water, and land. "At the current level of emissions, that is the world we are headed for. If, on the other hand, we set our minds and determination to the necessary transformation, reducing our global greenhouse gases by half over the next TEN YEARS, we would have actually co-created a path toward a very different world: a reforested planet with regenerated agriculture, clear and efficient transport, enjoyable cities, clean air and ubiquitous cheap energy for everyone." As Ms. Figueres makes clear, we do not exaggerate the degree of the danger we face when we use the term "existential threat." The very livability of the Only planet we have is at stake. We ALL have a moral imperative to do whatever we can to protect our children and grandchildren, as well as ourselves, from the suffering that will be caused by unchecked human-induced climate change. We strongly urge this commission to recommend that the Elgin City Council pass our proposed Resolution Declaring a Climate Emergency and Mobilization to Restore a Safe Climate. We recognize that, by doing so, we place you commissioners in a difficult position, as you must respond by saying either yes or no to our request that you label the situation an emergency. Perhaps you are not yet 100% convinced personally that the danger is as immediate as we say. We ask you to imagine explaining a decision to refuse our request in a few years, to the Children who are Now Being Born on our Endangered Planet. What if today's decision imperils their survival tomorrow? Clearly, you, like everyone in this room, have a moral imperative to err on the side of safety. A decision to recommend this resolution will not be made in error. The science is indisputable, with over 11,000 scientists declaring that this an emergency, and the result of years of research by the UN-backed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we know that humanity faces an existential threat and is Swiftly Running out of Time in which to combat it. The City of Elgin must recognize the emergency proportions of the danger presented by the climate crisis and upgrade its efforts to combat that danger to the emergency level. For all these reasons, I ask this commission to recommend passage of our proposed resolution. Once this resolution is put into effect, then the city can operate in a More Coordinated Way to implement the changes needed. When the governments operate in a state of denial, no effective action can take place. Once the seriousness of the climate crisis begins to permeate into the people's consciousness, then there will be more will to effect change, whereas if this problem is not acknowledged by our leaders, then it will always be pushed aside by both people and the government by what is seen as more pragmatic goals, but are actually very short-sighted and not clearly thinking about what lies in the future. If such a Climate Emergency Resolution were to pass, I would hope that we could have regular public meetings to bring new ideas of policies to enact under this resolution to continually advance towards our goals. Just a few examples of policies that could be enacted if such a resolution were to be adopted by the city of Elgin: --banning of plastic bags; --mandating the placement of recycling bins where ever there is also a garbage can in businesses; --purchasing renewable energy as whole municipalities/organizations; I hope that the Elgin Sustainability

Commission will now deliberate on this matter and recognize the importance to recommended Elgin Climate Emergency Resolution be passed swiftly that I present to you today. The following persons present also stood up in support of such resolutions: Kathleen Hamill, Mary Shesgreens, Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford, Angela Talbert and Susan Swing. All these person(s) stated that the resolution is not enough and the City needs to be leading the way and playing a bigger role in choosing our environment over profits.

- b. Commission discussion on Climate Emergency resolution. Chairperson Aagesen made statement that the purpose of the commission is to operate in a coordinated way to effect change and policy in matters of Sustainability as it pertains to City operations. An example is banning plastic bag use. Commissioner Flaherty stated he felt there should be a measurable action in this resolution. Commissioner Armstrong mentioned that there is no benchmarks for climate change in the Sustainability Action Plan and that would need to be added. Commissioner Kenney requested that a new work group that would focus on climate change initiatives would need to be formed, Commissioner Anderson agreed. Commissioner Anderson stated that a lot of communities are not addressing Climate Change, making concrete strategies, reducing CO2. Elgin needs to be a leader on Sustainability but it can't just come from the commission. Chairperson pointed out that the commission needs residents and concerned citizens to act, attend council meetings, support funding of sustainable practices, attend commission meetings, join a work groups. All this will help to encourage more sustainable practices at city government level. Commissioner Kenney stated that their needs to be science behind the climate change action plans. Councilwoman Rauschenberger commented on how a resolution approval by city council would require it to be placed on the council agenda and each councilperson would vote on it in order for it to pass and be approved. Carol would like the City to have someone dedicated to Sustainability full-time and every department should have sustainable goals. She feels the City should act now on this climate change and we need the community to voice their support to all councilpersons. Commissioner Kroiss commented that sustainable jobs should be a focus and an investment by the city. Councilwoman Raushenberger said she would work with the Commission and get the recommendation on the council agenda for April 8 or 22. It would take two council meetings for passage.
- c. Commissioner Anderson motioned to recommend to City Council to adopt the Climate Emergency Declaration Resolution and for the Sustainability Commission to create a separate work group focusing on climate change with climate change action plans. Commissioner Armstrong seconded motion. Motions was approved by vote of 8-0.

### 3. Turf Management Pesticide Reduction

- a. The Turf Management Pesticide reduction draft was reviewed by the Green Infrastructure Work Group at their last work group meeting. Greg Hulke, Supt. of Parks and Facilities and Councilwoman Carol Rauschenberger attended meeting. Creation of a resident survey was discussed to ask residents on what parks they would want to reduce pesticide use and identify additional park and right of way areas that could be zero pesticide areas. Discussed need to have more resident feedback on what they will tolerate in weeds. Councilwoman Raushenberger commented that it was a very positive meeting with respect between work group and staff, it is a great step forward. Chairperson Aagesen what if any measurable benchmarks are you putting in the recommendation. Commissioner Flaherty commented that there should already be numbers due to the documented reduction from 5 to 3 sprayings per year and it should be integrated into the contract. Councilwoman Raushenberger asked if Greg could report back to commission on what reductions he implemented each year.

- b. Commissioner McMullen motioned to approve the turf management pesticide reduction plan. Chairperson Agesen amended motion by adding staff give commission a yearly update of treatment and reduction to work group. Commissioner Kroiss second motion. Motion approved vote of 8-0.
4. CS2 Program Subscription Options
  - a. Commissioner Anderson gave a review of the Solar Work Group CS2 recommendations to staff on the CS2 Solar subscription options. Community Solar Subscriptions can reduce total electricity costs for subscribers. There were two subscription options to consider for Option #1 was a 20 yr., no cancellation fee, 10% discount of Com-Ed rates; Option #2 is a 30 yr., cancellation fee (if no replacement found), 30% discount of Com-Ed rates. Work group recommended to city staff to pursue option #2.
5. Solar Panel Code Update
  - a. Commissioner Anderson reported changes to the City's solar panel code. The work group met with Mark Mylott, Community Development Dir., Matt Falco, Development Mgr. and several solar installers. Those solar installers approached the solar work group about the city's restrictive setback restriction codes where deterring residents from getting the most efficient solar panel installation. It was discovered a discrepancy within the World Building Codes vs. World Fire Codes. City staff changed the code in the areas of setback requirements and it should lead to more installations allowing for more solar panels on resident roofs.
6. Future Search Committee
  - a. Chairperson Agesen discussed how we will be participating in an exercise after the meeting of creating a list of potential Future Search committee members. Commissioner Anderson gave an overview of the Sustainability Action Plan and that it is 10yr. And many of the goals have been achieved. It was explained that Future Search is a planning model that the commission has decided to follow to establish a new action plan for the commission and community. The exercise will be to identify who to ask to serve on the planning committee. Identify who on the list each person could recruit for the committee. The planning committee will then help to recruit attendees to the conference and who will have a role to play in creating new action plan initiatives.
7. Committee Member Responsibilities
  - a. Please review draft document created by incoming chairperson Tom Armstrong. Please give feedback to Armstrong on how you feel about the responsibilities. Would like to get it approved at the next meeting.

#### **H. Commissioner comments/announcements**

1. Chairperson Agesen announced that Commissioner Bryan Miko had sent an email resigning from the commission due to new work responsibilities.

#### **I. Adjourn: 8:20pm**

- a. Motion to adjourn Commissioner Armstrong, seconded by Commissioner Kroiss. Approved 8-0