

**CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE**

**CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

MARCH 11, 2008

MEETING CONVENED: 7:00 p.m., City Manager's Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Dentel Presiding, Robert Bennett, Steven Beard, Thomas Fruehstorfer, Kurt Philipp, Ajay Prasad, Kass Sheedy, Fred Stiegler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Wayne Casanova

STAFF PRESENT: Charlie Emerson, Parks & Recreation Director

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 12, 2008

MOTION BY MR.FRUEHSTORFER, SECONDED BY MS.SHEEDY: THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 12, 2008 MEETING BE APPROVED AS WRITTEN.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. VOTE: 8 to 0.

AYE: Beard, Bennett, Dentel, Fruehstorfer, Philipp, Prasad, Sheedy, Stiegler

NAY: 0

ABSENT: Casanova

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

(a) University of Delaware student Laura Yayac was present to discuss World Health Day scheduled April 21st from 11am-1pm outside Trabant student center. This year's theme was "Protecting Health from Climate Change" and was the first World Health Day to be held at the University. The Committee advised Ms. Yayac they would be interested in participating in the event. Plans will be finalized at the April 8th CAC meeting.

(b) Ezra Temko and Lois Hoffman, representatives of the Sierra Club Newark Committee, discussed the Cool Cities program. Cool Cities looked at different advocacy tools and steps to address climate change on an individual city level. One of the major initiatives was for cities to sign on to the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, thereby committing to reduce carbon emissions 7% below 1990 levels by the year 2012. Over 800 local governments have participated to date, including Wilmington, DE.

Ms. Hoffman and Mr. Temko sought guidance and support from the CAC for the best method to bring this program to the attention of Council.

According to Mr. Fruehstorfer, the CAC previously discussed Cool Cities and tried to determine whether it was aimed at reducing emissions solely for the City or targeted emission reduction for the City and its residents. Mr. Temko said it was directed towards the entire City's emissions, although most communities usually start the program by looking at internal use.

Mr. Dentel said the best way to present the program to Council would be to outline target areas for the City to work on with specific details provided including an established time frame, the costs involved, the energy savings, and other advantages that might be realized. Mr. Beard suggested an effective tool might be to plan a workshop and invite a representative from a town that had signed the agreement, enacted changes, and realized savings or improvements.

Ms. Sheedy questioned whether outside funding was available for municipalities who participated in this program and felt it would be better to pursue this program after the next City Manager was identified.

Mr. Dentel stated the CAC might be interested in supporting the program after completing the green building initiative. Based on the feedback received from the CAC, Mr. Temko and Ms. Hoffman acknowledged there was a lot more work to be done on their part, and they would keep the Committee updated on their progress. Mr. Beard agreed to serve as the CAC liaison to the group.

3. PROGRESS ON GREEN BUILDING INITIATIVES

Mr. Dentel reported the LEED ordinance was unanimously passed at the February 25th City Council meeting. Mayor Funk questioned when the final step of the CAC's LEED program would be implemented which was to have a LEED score sheet completed for all new construction. According to Mr. Dentel, Mayor Funk hoped to see this project finalized within 90 days. Mr. Dentel advised Council the final stumbling block was to determine whether to incorporate this requirement under the building permit process or under the site plan approval process. Mr. Dentel planned further discussions with Messrs. Lopata and Sciulli to resolve this issue.

4. 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Dentel encouraged CAC members to complete their portion of the report as soon as possible and e-mail this information to the Committee and to Ms. Van Veen. Ms. Sheedy volunteered to complete the section on Community Cleanup.

5. PLASTIC BAG RECYCLING

At the local Acme supermarket, Mr. Bennett was referred to a corporate contact. He sent an e-mail suggesting one store aisle be made available for customers using either plastic or cloth bags, but has received no response to his e-mail. Mr. Fruehstorfer spoke to representatives at several other retail stores who advised him eliminating plastic bags would have a major negative impact on their business. Although Mr. Fruehstorfer strongly supports reducing plastic bag usage, he felt a strong arm policy would hurt local retail stores more than it would help the environment. Ms. Sheedy thought people were accustomed to shopping at a particular store and would not switch to another based on plastic bags being banned or taxed. Mr. Dentel urged the Committee to think more creatively of greener options. (For example, CAC could suggest Council pass a ban on plastic bags to become effective the day the County passed a ban. The City could then encourage the County to follow their lead.) Mr. Temko suggested retailers offer reusable bags for purchase at the register before beginning to pack items in plastic bags. Mr. Bennett thought the idea might work after a number of people have set an example using cloth or reusable bags. The possibility of the CAC promoting reusable bags at events such as Newark Nite and Community Day was discussed. This idea will be further explored at the April CAC meeting.

6. REVIEW OF PLANNING DEPT. REPORTS RE POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

There were no comments forthcoming.

7. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

(a) Mr. Fruehstorfer indicated his concern about soil contamination on golf courses had been discussed at the February City Council meeting prior to the Council's vote on Country Club Estates.

(b) Mr. Emerson advised that Sharon Bruen of the Parks & Recreation Department (366-7060) needed area captains from the CAC (a co-sponsor of the event) for the Community Clean Up on Saturday, April 19th from 9-11:00 a.m.

(c) Mr. Dentel stated he had served as CAC Chairman for almost ten years, and indicated it was time for the Committee to consider electing a new Chairman. Mr. Dentel planned to stay on as Chair until the LEED score sheet issue has been resolved, and would continue as a member of the Committee after stepping down from the Chair.

(d) Mr. Stiegler reminded members of the Delaware Great Green Expo at the Chase Center on Wilmington's Riverfront on March 29th.

8. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:55 PM.

Alice Van Veen
Secretary

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