

**CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE**

**CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

May 13, 2008

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Dentel Presiding, Steven Beard, Robert Bennett, Wayne Casanova, Ann Morrison, Ajay Prasad, Kass Sheedy, Fred Stiegler.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Thomas Fruehstorfer

STAFF PRESENT: Charlie Emerson, Parks & Recreation Director

Guest Present: Councilman Ezra Temko

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING HELD ON APRIL 8, 2008

Mr. Prasad requested item 8(c) be reworded as follows: Mr. Prasad reported the University of Delaware spent six months developing a strategic plan with President Harker. The goal is to study the possibility of the University becoming carbon neutral.

Mr. Stiegler requested the second paragraph of item 5 be reworded as follows: The possibility of the CAC purchasing reusable bags was discussed but was found to be cost-prohibitive.

MOTION BY MR. PRASAD, SECONDED BY MR. STIEGLER: THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 8, 2008 MEETING BE APPROVED AS AMENDED.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. VOTE: 8 to 0.

AYE: Beard, Bennett, Casanova, Dentel, Morrison, Prasad, Sheedy, Stiegler

NAY: 0

ABSENT: Thomas Fruehstorfer

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments forthcoming.

3. PROGRESS ON GREEN BUILDING INITIATIVES

Mr. Temko informed the CAC that every time there was a construction proposal presented to Council, each developer was asked if they would be willing to complete a LEED checklist. Mr. Temko reported that all developers agreed to comply.

Mr. Dentel reported on the April 9, 2008 meeting with Mr. Sciulli and Ms. Feeney Roser, regarding the LEED checklist. At this time, an initial trial period to complete the LEED checklist was recommended. The completed checklists will be reviewed to determine what was currently being claimed prior to implementing specific requirements. Mr. Sciulli suggested a three-month trial period, which was already underway. Presently, when builders apply for a building permit, the LEED checklist was included in the packet they receive. At the end of the three-month trial period, the checklists will be reviewed and used to determine a baseline number that will be required. At the conclusion of this meeting, it was agreed to have a 90-day, voluntary period. Furthermore, the CAC will assist Mr. Sciulli in reviewing the completed LEED checklists. Upon completion of this review, a number deemed to be obtainable will be recommended to City Council.

After Mr. Dentel concluded his report, the number of applications estimated to be received was questioned. That number could not be determined at this time. In addition, Mr. Dentel reported that Mr. Sciulli would go back retroactively to the larger projects and request developers complete the LEED checklist. It was suggested that Mr. Sciulli attend the July 8, 2008 CAC meeting to give an update regarding the trial period of developers completing the LEED checklist.

4. 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Dentel announced that he was in the process of completing the Green Building portion of the 2007 Annual Report.

5. PLASTIC BAG RECYCLING

Mr. Dentel reported that Target had an article in Newsweek Magazine that included a detachable, preaddressed, and prepaid envelope. As instructed in the article, when a Target plastic bag was inserted in the envelope and mailed, a reusable Target shopping bag will be mailed to the recipient.

Ms. Sheedy stated Happy Harry's and K-Mart do not sell reusable bags.

MOTION BY MS. SHEEDY, SECONDED BY MR. STIEGLER: THAT PATHMARK, ACME, NEWARK NATURAL FOODS AND SUPER FRESH RECEIVE A BETTER NEWARK AWARD FOR SELLING REUSABLE GROCERY BAGS.

(Note: CAC did not vote on motion. Therefore it failed.)

Ms. Sheedy suggested that Dana Johnston, the City's Community Affairs officer, arrange a photo shoot with the store managers from each of the four grocery stores to have their picture taken while holding their store's reusable grocery bag.

Mr. Temko requested the status of CAC purchasing reusable grocery bags with the City of Newark's logo. It was found to be cost-prohibitive. Mr. Stiegler asked if CAC could work in conjunction with the City as far as economics are concerned on purchasing reusable bags. Mr. Dentel responded that the CAC could ask the City to purchase a number of the bags and then CAC could sell them at cost during Community Day.

Ms. Sheedy suggested sending a recommendation to Council to prepare an ordinance that would coincide with a New Castle County ordinance banning all plastic grocery bags. At this time, New Castle County does not have such an ordinance. Mr. Temko commented that it might be more politically and culturally feasible if the ban targeted large supermarkets, as opposed to targeting small, local business owners.

Ms. Sheedy suggested designing a poster for Community Day listing statistics on plastic bag usage. Mr. Temko suggested an online poll via the City of Newark's website, surveying the opinion of Newark residents regarding a plastic bag ban.

Mr. Casanova reiterated that the CAC's mission for Community Day is to raise awareness and encourage the use of reusable grocery bags.

6. CONSIDERATION OF ANTI-IDLING ORDINANCE

An anti-idling ordinance was discussed. The City of Wilmington has an anti-idling ordinance for vehicles that idle longer than 5 minutes, but this ordinance only applies to diesel-powered vehicles. Mr. Dentel believes the City of Newark should adopt an ordinance that was broader than just diesel-powered vehicles. Mr. Dentel suggested proposing to Council that they adopt an ordinance similar to the City of Ithaca. The City of Ithaca's ordinance includes exemptions for motor vehicles forced to remain motionless because of traffic conditions, and vehicles that have to maintain a specific temperature for passenger comfort. Additional exemptions would include fire, police and public utility trucks when performing emergency services.

7. A BETTER NEWARK AWARD

Anne Morrison was awarded A Better Newark Award for installing a Geo-thermal system in her Newark home at 134 Sunset Road.

MOTION BY MR. PRASAD AND SECONDED BY MS. SHEEDY: TO AWARD ANN MORRISON A BETTER NEWARK AWARD.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. VOTE 7 to 0

Aye: Beard, Bennett, Casanova, Dentel, Prasad, Sheedy, Stiegler

Nay: 0

Abstained: Morrison

Absent: Fruehstorfer

8. BIKE SHARING

Councilman Stu Markham recommended that the CAC consider Clear Channel Outdoors' bike sharing program. This program was a self-service public bike rental program that brings alternative transportation, uses the latest technologies and was structured to enhance the City's public transportation.

Ms. Morrison stated that before considering a bike-sharing program, the CAC should consider making the City more bike friendly. Mr. Casanova was concerned that a bike-sharing program would be a seasonal attraction. Mr. Casanova remarked that the majority of users might be off-campus students. In addition, he was concerned that there are not enough bike accessible attractions or sufficient population to make this feasible.

Mr. Prasad stated the bike-sharing program might attract more tourists as opposed to residents. Tourists would be able to drive into the City, obtain a bike from one of the stations, and ride around the town. It was believed that Newark residents would be more inclined to have their own bikes.

Mr. Emerson recommended the bike stations be placed in secure locations in an effort to avoid vandalism. Mr. Dentel suggested a starting point could be locating the bike stations at the Hall Trail and the Pomeroy Trail, and only allowing the bikes on these paths.

Mr. Temko disclosed that the City now has the ability to conduct polls or questionnaires through the City's website. The CAC thought it might be a good idea to conduct a survey on the website asking residents and students whether or not they would use a bike system similar to Clear Channel's.

Ms. Morrison stated all bikes that are left behind by students are collected at the end of the semester, and the University of Delaware sells them for a low cost. Mr. Dentel suggested the University donate a percentage of the abandoned bikes to the City of Newark. Afterwards, these bikes could be spray-painted yellow and used for a trial bike-sharing program.

9. CARBON INVENTORY FOR NEWARK

Mr. Lopata asked the CAC to investigate "The Climate Registry." "The Climate Registry" would allow the City of Newark to utilize readily available formulas to convert emissions from City-owned buildings and vehicles to CO₂ emissions.

Mr. Dentel reported that the University of Delaware's graduating class wanted a

carbon footprint study preformed. The University had identified a specific center on campus that will conduct the study.

Mr. Dentel stated he knew a student who conducted a carbon footprint study for New Castle County. This study was very preliminary and used specific software believed to be different software than what the state utilizes. There are several academic programs on campus that might be interested in conducting this study for the city. Mr. Dentel explained that this would be the low budget opportunity for the City to obtain a carbon footprint study. Mr. Dentel inquired as to whether the City would have any objections pertaining to this type of study. This topic will be discussed further at the next meeting.

10. REVIEW OF PLANNING DEPT. REPORTS REGARDING POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

There were no comments forthcoming.

11. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

(a) The Watershed Management Committee of the White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River has offered to do a consistency review for the City of Newark.

(b) Mr. Dentel advised that he submitted a proposal to Paul Bauernschmidt regarding the Curtis Papermill site. Mr. Bauernschmidt was preparing an analysis regarding future development at the Curtis Papermill site. Suggestions include a skateboarding park, a nature center, an amphitheater and various types of outdoor art. Mr. Dentel would like the future development of this site to be environmentally friendly.

(c) Mr. Dentel mentioned that Dr. Harker, President of the University of Delaware, made a speech at the Newark Forum. Dr. Harker stated that the University of Delaware would reduce the amount of green lawns around campus, with the exception of the Central Green. Dr. Harker announced that the U of D would be increasing the University's environmental initiative.

12. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:40 PM.

Courtney Mangini
Secretary

/cm