

**CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE**

**CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

February 13, 2018

MEETING CONVENED: 7:00 p.m. Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: George Irvine, Kismet Hazelwood, John Horner, Jason Kramer, Ajay Prasad, Bob McDowell, Kass Sheedy, Sheila Smith, John Wessells

STAFF: Sarah Campanelli, Secretary

Mr. Irvine called the meeting to order.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 9, 2018

MOTION BY MR. WESSELLS, SECOND BY MR. PRASAD: THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 9, 2018 MEETING BE APPROVED AS RECEIVED.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kelley Dinsmore, Stormwater Program Coordinator, introduced herself. Ms. Dinsmore advised that she was moving into the Environmental Coordinator position and would be attending CAC meetings periodically in Tim Filasky's place.

3. GREEN ENERGY FUND LIGHTING PROJECT – CREEK ROAD TRAIL CONNECTOR

Ms. Dinsmore stated that Mr. Filasky had informed her that there was no progress on funding for this project. Mr. Irvine said the CAC would revisit this recommendation when there was funding information.

4. A BETTER NEWARK AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Ms. Smith confirmed that A Better Newark Award nomination had been received. She felt that the Newark Post article was different than she had expected. She would be discussing this with Josh Shannon for future nominations. Ms. Smith noted that a new nomination form had been posted on the website, which had been used for this nomination. Ms. Smith felt that this new form needed the checklist on the old pamphlet regarding environmental upgrades, etc. Ms. Campanelli explained that the form had been changed to come into compliance with the City website's application SignNow. This enabled people to submit forms directly to the City Secretary email address rather than mailing. The new form also featured the correct letterhead and correct contact information, which was incorrect on the previous pamphlet. Ms. Campanelli updated that she was working with website designer Kyle Glazier to rework the new nomination form to have the same checklists as the previous pamphlet but to be in the correct format.

Ms. Smith was concerned that the nomination was for a garden that had been in existence for a long time. Ms. Smith did not know if there were any new updates to the property. Mr. Irvine thought that more information was needed before the CAC should review this nomination. He suggested that Ms. Smith reach out to the nominating person to find out more information. Mr. Irvine thought it was a good idea to be able to go back and find A Better Newark Awards in the future. Ms. Smith pointed out the CAC also did not know who had been nominated in the past. She felt that a log of awards would be helpful in knowing whether a property had been nominated more than once. Mr. Irvine asked if Ms. Smith knew how the nominating person had found out about the Better Newark Award. Ms. Smith was not sure. Mr. Irvine added that this would be a good addition to the nomination form. Ms. Sheedy requested that when an award was approved, the award nomination form be appended to the minutes for the meeting at which it was approved.

Ms. Smith noted that use of fertilizers was not included on the nomination form. She thought this may be an additional aspect to consider. She suggested it be put under water conservation. Ms. Dinsmore suggested that a question could be added as to whether the applicant had ever tested the soil. Ms. Sheedy noted she had never had her soil tested but never used anything that was not organic. Ms. Smith said she would contact the nominating person and find out more information about the property being nominated.

5. 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Irvine stated that he had sent the compiled report to all CAC members. There were minor corrections made to the report. Mr. Irvine noted that Mr. Hornor, Mr. Irvine and Mr. McDowell's terms expired in March 2018. All members expressed interest in continuing to serve on the CAC. Mr. Irvine pointed out future goals of the CAC and asked if there was anything further to be added. Ms. Sheedy suggested adding a line supporting or contributing to the Sustainable Newark Partnership.

Ms. Smith reported that she had attended the Sustainability Planning Steering Committee meeting. She recalled that Dr. Chajes had said that they would be submitting a plan to become the organization hired by the City to write the sustainability plan for the City of Newark. She also suggested integrating recommendations made by the State of Delaware Ecological Extinction Taskforce into the sustainability plans.

MOTION BY MS. SHEEDY, SECOND BY MR. MCDOWELL: THAT THE ANNUAL REPORT BE APPROVED WITH EDITS AND CHANGES AS DISCUSSED.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. 2017 COMMUNITY DAY FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION

Mr. Irvine felt that the feedback had been great from Community Day. The categories included more gardens, park and trees, more recycling, transportation, encouraging solar and wind projects, better building designs, better pedestrian designs, advertise sustainability, more educational events, public water fountain/water bottle filling stations, more social programs such as Community Day, more police and no taxes. The main focus was on people wanting more gardens, parks and trees. Ms. Smith shared that the sustainability committee had done a survey on Community Day and found that the top 3 categories were clean transportation, renewable energy use and sustainable economic development. Mr. McDowell pointed out that their survey was a multiple choice rather than the more open-ended CAC survey. Mr. Irvine asked Ms. Smith to share the CAC's survey with that committee.

7. REVIEW OF PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT REPORTS

Ms. Smith asked what members should be looking for when reading these reports. Ms. Smith wondered whether the City needed more apartments. Mr. Irvine felt this concern was a legitimate one for the CAC to consider. Mr. Irvine noted that they had discussed historic conservation before. He did not feel that the CAC had that authority. It fell under Planning. Mr. Irvine did not think anyone had picked up the mantle of historic conservation within the City's Boards and Commissions. He did not think anyone cared about it. He felt that old buildings were being torn down to make new buildings. Mr. Irvine noted that the CAC was due to make a quarterly report to Council and he thought they should raise this issue. It was decided the report should be given to Council on April 9, 2018. Ms. Smith asked if the annual report would be included. Mr. Irvine said this would be a different report but they could let Council know about the annual report. He felt they should bring up that historic preservation was outside the CAC's purview but the CAC felt it was a gap that the City would suffer from.

8. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Wessells said that he received a letter from the Parks and Recreation Department stating that in May there would be an article about the 50th anniversary of the department in Delaware Today. Mr. Wessells noted that this letter was generated from the list of people that were at Community Day and asked whether the CAC wanted to advertise in Delaware Today. Mr. Irvine was not sure this was a good use of CAC funds. Mr. Prasad pointed out that the magazine was not targeted to the Newark area but was statewide. Mr. Irvine wondered if there was anything the CAC could do to congratulate the Parks and Recreation Department on their 50th anniversary.

Ms. Sheedy asked if anyone had looked over the draft agreement she had written. Mr. Irvine said he hoped to hear back from Dr. Chajes and Dr. Byrne in March with specific financial figures. Mr. Irvine thought the draft partnership agreement was good. It talked about the idea and the steps to get there. Mr. Irvine noted that they needed to run this by someone in the City before they shared it with Dr. Chajes and Dr. Byrne.

Mr. Kramer reported that there was not a unified list of charging stations for electric cars in Delaware. The US Department of Energy had a list of 31 in the state. Another community app showed over 50 but this was submitted by consumers. He thought this may include charging stations that were restricted to certain patrons. Mr. Kramer explained that the stations were spread across the state. Many of them followed I-95, then flowed down Route 1 to southern Delaware. Ms. Sheedy noted that she had found many that were associated with car dealerships. She wondered how publicly accessible these were. Mr. Kramer stated he had not been able to discover that. Mr. Kramer had not approached the DMV yet. Mr. Irvine stated that the grant Mr. Markham had told them about was due in June. Mr. Kramer said he would have that information ready for next month. Mr. Irvine recalled that the Downtown Newark Partnership was being reconstituted with new leadership. He could imagine a joint proposal from the City, the DNP and possibly some developers to put charging stations in multiple locations such as City parking lots.

Mr. Irvine suggested that he and Mr. McDowell reach out to the Mayor and Acting City Manager about the reforestation recommendation. Mr. Irvine pointed out that the response to the Community Day survey reflected that trees were important to citizens. He recalled that the CAC had made this recommendation over a year ago. He felt this was not a priority to Council. Mr. McDowell noted that the recommendation did not cost anything, it was simply an acknowledgment from Council. Mr. Irvine suggested stating that this recommendation had considerable merits. Mr. McDowell said he would include the data from Community Day.

9. APRIL MEETING SCHEDULING CONFLICT AND POTENTIAL CHANGE ON DATE AND/OR LOCATION

The April CAC meeting conflicted with the City Council election. After some discussion, there was general consensus to have the April meeting on Tuesday, April 10, 2018 in the City Manager's Conference Room.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting is March 13, 2018.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Sarah Campanelli
Secretary

/sjc