

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES

February 8, 2022

MEETING CONVENED: 7:03 p.m. GoToMeeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Sheila Smith, Vice Chair Helga Huntley, Beth Chajes, Andrew O'Donnell, John Mateyko, Mary Clare Matsumoto

STAFF: Jeff Martindale, Chief Purchasing & Personnel Officer
Jayme Gravel, Chief Communications Officer
Nichol Scheld, Administrative Professional I

Ms. Smith called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 11, 2022:

MOTION BY MS. CHAJES, SECONDED BY MR. O'DONNELL: TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 11, 2022 MINUTES.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE 6 TO 0.

AYE: HUNTLEY, CHAJES, O'DONNELL, SMITH, MATEYKO, MATSUMOTO.
NAY: 0.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kristie Arlotta introduced herself as a senior at UD, majoring in Environmental Science, where she was also an honors student. Ms. Arlotta informed that she worked for Leanne Moore with The Newark Partnership's Sustainability Initiative and was asked to attend the CAC meetings to keep TNP up to date or field any questions from members.

Ms. Smith stated that the CAC met with Dr. Rich and Ms. Moore in January 2021 and decided to:

- Facilitate a community-based coordinated council representing the CAC, UD, and the community institutions and residents
- Address the importance of sustainability around energy and transportation
- Monitor emissions

Ms. Smith explained that one of the CAC's goals was to develop an energy dashboard and the Commission hoped to utilize a UD contact to assist. Ms. Arlotta believed that the dashboard had been initiated earlier in the year and she investigated Bloom, Gore, Chemours, and UD but was still waiting on the City. She continued that TNP hoped to have all of the data inputted by the spring and reiterated that all of the coding for the dashboard was completed. Ms. Smith asked if City emissions would be included. Ms. Arlotta confirmed

and added that she believed TNP employed an outside programmer through the Sustainability Initiative from a grant from a major local company. Ms. Smith asked if Michelle Bennett had been involved and Ms. Arlotta did not believe it had been on Ms. Bennett's plan before she left and noted that the most recent UD GHG emissions report was from 2018-2019; UD was behind but was working to catch up.

Ms. Smith added that other initiatives were the preservation of open space, clean water/clean air, riparian buffers, anti-idling, and tree planting. She asked that TNP participate at any opportunity.

3. VOTE FOR CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Ms. Smith explained that she initially put herself forward to be chair with the intent that she would serve as chair for one year. She asked if anyone else wanted to serve in her place and asked for nominations for co-chair.

Ms. Matsumoto informed that she would not be volunteering for another term and her three years would end in March. She notified Mr. McDermott and shared that she enjoyed her service but asked that she not be nominated for either position. Ms. Smith remarked at the broad base of skills on the Commission and complimented Ms. Matsumoto for her detail regarding planning and monitoring important initiatives. Ms. Matsumoto thanked Ms. Smith for the compliments and offered to assist during any planting events. Ms. Smith revealed that the City would be sponsoring a Master Naturalist Program and suggested that Ms. Matsumoto investigate.

MOTION BY DR. HUNTLEY, SECONDED BY MR. O'DONNELL: TO NOMINATE SHEILA SMITH TO SERVE AS CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE 6 TO 0.

AYE: HUNTLEY, CHAJES, O'DONNELL, SMITH, MATEYKO, MATSUMOTO.

NAY: 0.

MOTION BY MS. MATSUMOTO, SECONDED BY MS. SMITH: TO APPOINT DR. HUNTLEY TO SERVE AS VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE 6 TO 0.

AYE: HUNTLEY, CHAJES, O'DONNELL, SMITH, MATEYKO, MATSUMOTO.

NAY: 0.

4. ANNUAL REPORT/CAC GOALS

Ms. Smith informed that she had been unable to devote much time to the Annual Report in recent weeks, but she sent all of the members the goals. Ms. Scheld displayed the goals for the Commission to edit as they worked. Dr. Huntley pointed that some of the goals were similar and suggested that they be combined. She realized that the Commission had ten more meetings for the year and if the Commission included everything that was a good idea, it was likely that the goals would not be accomplished within the year. She wanted to concentrate on goals that the CAC wanted to specifically achieve for the year. She preferred staying away from specific recommendations as goals because unless the Commission was prepared to make the recommendation that day, then the members should discuss whether the

recommendation was the one to be put forward. She wanted to raise the goals at the discussion of next steps rather than specific recommendations. Ms. Smith agreed that it should be limited and suggested that members take the lead on topics that appealed to them. She reiterated that some of the goals overlapped and reminded members to steer away from planning.

Ms. Scheld displayed the compiled list of member goals:

- Continue the CAC's Outreach & Education efforts via social media posts on the city's Facebook page, presence at Newark's Community Day, and monthly articles in the Newark Post (on-going goal)
- Track and regularly evaluate the City's progress toward achieving its Sustainability Plan goals for Newark.
- Continue to support efforts to grow the city's tree canopy through the Newark Reforestation Day for fall 2022 as well as annual Arbor Day Foundation tree planting events, and tree giveaway programs for residents (on-going goal)
- Recommend to City Council that it give customers the choice to only purchase 100% renewable electricity and that all new customers be automatically enrolled in the program, with an option to opt out.
- Assist city staff with increasing and tracking Newark restaurants' voluntary compliance with the city's new straw reduction resolution.
- Promote the Newark Sustainability Award, recognizing businesses, organizations, and residents for their efforts to
- Educate the public about the importance of riparian buffer zones (hold over goal from 2020)
- Promote the use of electric cars by the City of Newark and by residents to reduce carbon emissions and increase revenue for the City via increased electricity sales.
- Promote open space in Newark (hold over goal from 2020)
- Continue to train more of its members on FOIA by coordinating with the City Secretary's Office, following the recommendation of the 2016 Boards and Commissions Review.
- Get City Council to form the Newark Energy Transition committee, so that we can get serious about transitioning to carbon-free energy.
- Use the forthcoming GHG inventory to formulate intermediate goals toward net-zero to propose to City Council.
- Discuss next steps for the renewable energy program.
- Continue outreach efforts, including Newark Post columns and tabling at public events as possible.
- Support the City's efforts to maintain and grow its urban forest.
- Support the City's efforts to electrify its fleet.
- Investigate possible actions to improve conditions for biodiversity within the city's boundaries
- Track the city's progress toward meeting the goals of the Sustainability Plan.
- Develop a welcome packet for new CAC members.
- Explore incentive programs and/or changes to ordinances or building codes to promote electrification of major appliances and building systems for new and existing buildings.
- Continue to develop collaborations with The Newark Partnership on environmental initiatives.
- Support the development of solar energy within the city by organizing a Newark-based solar tour as part of the statewide Delaware Solar Tour event in October.

- Research and recommend to new mayor, council, and staff any effective city coalitions or organizations that provide resources and recognition for municipal sustainability goals, including those we may already be members of (Tree Cities, Climate Mayors) or new and additional organizations we may want to join (Mayors & Municipal Leaders for Electrification, Ready for 100).
- **Support a City-wide Real Zero GHG Planning Standard.** Recommend that the Mayor and City Council (hereafter MCC) adopt the science-based standard to reduce total GHG emissions by about 6% per year, and by 25% by 2025 (per the DE State Climate Action Plan) and 45% by 2030 and ~99% (and preferably trend negative) by 2040-2050, *or as required* by the IPCC updated science, scheduled to be reported 28 March 2022. Total GHG emissions shall include the embodied GHG of all services and goods consumed in Newark. This quantified timeline will support orderly and efficient investing, planning, and building, and support innovation, reduce stranded assets and carbon lock-in of unacceptable investments in all sectors.
- **Safe Heat-Health Newark. Recommend to the MCC to establish a City of Newark Heat-Health task force** to achieve climate preparedness at three scales: 1) reduce heat at the urban scale, 2) reduce cooling needs in buildings, and 3) and serve cooling needs in buildings efficiently. Safe Heat-Health Newark shall address the predicted 9-degree F rise in Delaware summer temperature from climate change by 2010 as a matter of public health. This is a health, safety, and welfare priority, and prudent to help preserve investment value. For confident reliability these are largely restorations of natural systems not human technology.

Logic: This Safe Heat-Health Task Force shall work to create multiple variables and options to achieve sustainable cooling in the City of Newark with efficiency and timeliness to protect public safety while providing an orderly and predictable planning so as to provide avoidance of stranded assets and carbon lock-in of obsolete climate assumptions, strategies, and technologies. The work of this task force is fundamental to preventing human mortality and morbidity; as a public health pathway for the changed climate of Newark it may be chaired by, and include several, medical professionals.

Ample shade, vegetation and minimal paved surfaces make for public safety and resiliency, cool residents, and provide energy savings, healthy clean air, infiltration of rain and flood waters, increased soil water storage capacity, restoration of the site's original stock of carbon (*local* carbon re-sequestration), habitat, natural beauty and less runoff, less erosion. In addition to trees and other vegetative solutions (*e.g.*, trellises), shade can come from fabric, metal, or wood canopies or awnings, solar PV canopies, vertical panels, large sculptures, and buildings themselves. These measures provide enhancement of pedestrian use, especially in high heat; reduction of air-conditioner waste heat and AC energy consumption-related GHG emissions; dramatically reduce the cost of stormwater management; support native habitat and systems of nature.

After extensive discussion, the list was edited and concentrated with the intent to hold further discussions at the March meeting:

1. Continue outreach efforts, including Newark Post columns and tabling at public events as possible.

2. Continue to develop collaborations with The Newark Partnership and the University of Delaware on environmental and educational initiatives.
 3. Track and regularly evaluate the City's progress toward achieving its Sustainability Plan goals for Newark
 4. Continue to support the efforts to grow the City's tree canopy
 5. Explore nature-based solutions to address Newark's vulnerability to urban heating and flooding
 6. Promote the use of electric cars by the City of Newark and by residents to reduce carbon emissions
 7. Promote open space in Newark (on-going goal)
 8. Develop and maintain a welcome packet for new CAC members, including FOIA compliance and training opportunities
 9. Investigate possible actions to improve conditions for biodiversity within the City's boundaries
 10. Urge City Council to form the Newark Energy Transition committee, so that we can get serious about transitioning to carbon-free energy
 11. Use the forthcoming GHG inventory to formulate intermediate goals toward net-zero to propose to City Council
 12. Establish next steps for the renewable energy program
 13. Support the development of solar energy within the city by organizing a Newark-based solar tour as part of the statewide Delaware Solar Tour event in October – to be led by Ms. Chajes
 14. Explore opportunities for Newark to participate in sustainability-related city coalitions e.g., Mayors & Municipal Leaders for Electrification, Ready for 100, RASCL (Resilient And Sustainable Communities League)
- *Explore incentive programs and/or changes to ordinances or building codes to promote electrification of major appliances and building systems for new and existing buildings (REVISIT IN 2023)*
 - *Increase and track Newark restaurants' voluntary compliance with The Newark Partnership on the City's new straw reduction resolution (ON HOLD FOR 2022)*
 - *Promote the Newark Sustainability Award, recognizing businesses, organizations, and residents for their efforts (ON HOLD FOR 2022)*

5. GHG EMISSIONS DRAFT REPORT REVIEW

Ms. Smith emailed Dave Athey and learned that a first draft was submitted to City Manager, Tom Coleman, who returned the draft with comments and suggestions. Mr. Athey informed that the consultants were still trying to determine how to measure the City's Delmarva gas customers and would report once again in a few weeks.

6. CITY PLANNING AND CLIMATE CONSIDERATIONS – JOHN MATEYKO

Ms. Smith noted that many of Mr. Mateyko's suggested goals were part of city planning and climate considerations. She would ask Mr. Coleman to review Mr. Mateyko's suggestions to avoid doubling efforts.

7. MONTHLY CONSERVATION ARTICLE WITH THE NEWARK POST

Mr. Mateyko asked for the submission deadline and Ms. Smith replied that articles were due on the last Friday of the month. Mr. Mateyko asked for the word count and Ms. Chajes replied that members had gone up to 750 words but believed the Post preferred shorter articles. She tended to go over 500 words each time. Dr. Huntley corrected that the word count was 300 to 500 words and pointed that shorter articles appealed to more readers.

- February – Stormwater Management – Helga Huntley
- March - WasteWell/Food Recycling – John Mateyko
- April - Eastern Box Turtle Habitat Conservation – Jean Hedrich

8. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORTS

9. OLD/NEW BUSINESS – TREE GIVEAWAY UPDATE

Ms. Smith revealed that Mr. Zaleski ordered the trees:

- 20 - Acer rubrum- Red Maple (tree)
- 20 - Fagus grandiflora- American Beech (tree)
- 20 - Amelanchier canadensis- Shadblow or Serviceberry (shrub)
- 20 - Aronia arbutifolia- Red Chokeberry (shrub)
- 15 - Hamamelis virginiana- Common Witchhazel (large shrub/small tree)
- 20 - Quercus alba- White Oak (tree)
- 20 - Cornus Florida- American Dogwood (tree)
- 20 - Carya glabra- Pignut (tree)

She noted that staff spent roughly \$8,000 on the trees from the \$10,000 contributed by the Commission and she believed the rest of the money would be spent on planting stakes, wire, and mulch. She added that the plantings were 5 gallon.

10. NEXT MEETING – MARCH 8, 2022

MOTION BY MR. MATEYKO, SECONDED DR. HUNTLEY: TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 pm.

Nichol Scheld
Administrative Professional I

/ns