

The City of Newark  
Conservation Advisory  
Commission  
City of Newark,  
Delaware

# The City of Newark Conservation Advisory Commission Annual Report for 2010

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## Overview

This report summarizes the activities of the City of Newark's Conservation Advisory Commission. The background is repeated each year for reference.

## Background

Ordinance 77-56 created the CAC in November 1977,

"to advise in the development, management, and protection of its natural resources with appropriate consideration of Newark's human and economic resources. The Commission shall concern itself with conservation in its broadest sense and may, among its activities: (a) Recommend to City Council a program for ecologically suitable utilization of all wet lands, valley streams, and flood plains and other land areas, the condition and use of which will affect the environmental quality of life in the City of Newark; (b) Shall file an annual report; (c) Maintain informal liaison with the Planning Commission, the Parks and Recreation Department, the City Manager, and the City Council, and cooperate with other public and private bodies organized for similar purposes; (d) In addition to the foregoing, carry out any other duties, tasks, or responsibilities, consistent with the objectives of this Commission assigned to it by resolution of City Council."

Ordinance 77-56 gave examples of programs that may be considered by the Commission, such as street tree replacement; improved recycling; beautification plans for volunteer groups; guidelines for multiple use of open space and public areas; community gardens; energy conservation; and review of Zoning Code amendments to encourage conservation, and also stated that "the above list shall not, however, limit the program which the Commission may undertake or be requested to undertake."

## CAC Membership

The CAC has 9 members when all positions are filled.

Mayor's Appointment: Steven K. Dentel (Chair) - Term expires 3/13/12

Mayor's Appointment: Thomas Fruehstorfer - Term expires 3/13/11

Mayor's Appointment: Katherine Sheedy - Term expires 3/13/13

District 1 Ajay Prasad - Term expires 3/13/13

District 2 Steven Beard - Term expires 3/13/11

District 3 Bob McDowell - Term expires 3/13/12

District 4 Ann Morrison - Term expires 3/13/11

District 5 Fred Stigler (replaced by Cara Lampton 9/13/10) - Term expires 3/13/12

District 6 Carol Anders Riggs - Term expires 3/13/13

Parks Director Charlie Emerson

An updated CAC roster is maintained on the City's web site at:

[www.cityofnewarkde.us/DocumentView.asp?DID=620](http://www.cityofnewarkde.us/DocumentView.asp?DID=620) (pdf format).

## **Cool Cities**

After Mayor Funk expressed interest in the Sierra Club Cool Cities program, the CAC recommended the Mayor sign on to the Cool Cities program with City Council endorsement. It was agreed that City staff should be responsible for management. It is expected that the City manager should assign responsibility for different aspects of the program. The city was already addressing many of the programs action items although there is always room for improvement. Adoption of the program will clearly define the city's path forward in energy sustainability, environmental stewardship and climate protection policies and programs. The CAC offered to assist with this effort as required.

## **Better Newark Award**

In March the CAC voted to award the Better Newark Award to 1004 Lakeside Drive, owned by James and Patricia Glanden. The home includes numerous conservation efforts including solar panels, geothermal heat and hot water and various other improvements have been made to the residence.

## **Electricity and Green Energy**

During the January meeting, after discussions in previous meetings about the fact that Newark had not made green energy purchases as indicated in City Council Resolution 05-H in 2008 or 2009, the CAC passed a motion to recommend to the city to purchase \$100,000 worth of green energy as currently defined.

In March 2010 the CAC began discussion of the possibility of Newark installing solar panels and supported a proposal of having an outside firm install solar panels for the city. The CAC did want to make sure the Green Energy fund would still be going towards conservation and maintaining funds for residents for their own green energy projects.

As the year progressed the CAC followed closely the progress of the city solar panel installation investigations.

The eventual response to the CAC request for the purchase of green energy was that the Council decided to hold these funds as a potential payment for part of the anticipated solar panel installation project.

Also, during the December CAC meeting it was reported that sales of renewable energy in the Voluntary Program had dropped in the current year. Each year previously had shown increases. The CAC decided to ask city staff how the program was advertised and how they might be able to raise program awareness. The CAC also decided to ask DEMEC to attend a meeting to readdress the Green Energy Program.

## **Earth Hour**

In January The CAC recommended that the City of Newark participate in Earth Hour and turn out the lights for one hour on 27 March 2010.

Earth hour is a movement that started in one city in 2007 and by 2009 included hundreds of millions of people in over 4,000 cities in 88 countries. The movement generally involves agreeing to turn out the lights for one hour (8:30-9:30 PM) on 27 March 2010.

Last year Dover, DE participated in Earth Hour. Also last year the movement included the Empire State Building, Brooklyn Bridge, Broadway Theater Marquees, the Las Vegas Strip, United Nations Headquarters, Golden Gate Bridge, Seattle's Space Needle, Church of Latter-Day Saints Temple in Salt Lake City, Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Sears Tower, National Cathedral in Washington D.C., Great Pyramids of Giza, Acropolis and Parthenon in Athens, St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, Big Ben and Houses of Parliament in London, Elyse Palace and Eiffel Tower in Paris, Beijing's Birds Nest and Water Cube, Symphony of Lights in Hong Kong, Sydney's Opera House, and Christ the Redeemer Statue in Rio de Janeiro.

A motion was made requesting the City participate in Earth Hour and the City of Newark did agree to participate in Earth Hour on March 27, 2010.

## **Carbon Inventory**

A carbon inventory was completed for the City of Newark with data from operations in 2009. The inventory found that about 30% of Newark's carbon footprint is from city buildings, 30% is from street lights, and 40% is from the city vehicle fleet. Hopefully Newark's carbon footprint can be reevaluated in future years to identify any trends and help identify what the city might be able to do to most efficiently reduce its carbon footprint.

## **Green Building Initiatives**

In 2009 the CAC had spent significant effort in developing a proposal for more green and sustainable building requirements in Newark. The CAC proposal was not approved, but Roy Lopata developed an alternative plan in January, 2010. Essentially, it appropriated select LEED criteria for use in the City's own program, simplifying the measures and targeting those that would affect the most significant and practical energy savings.

In March the CAC agreed to endorse Mr. Lopata's January 7, 2010 recommendation entitled "Building Code Amendments: Establishing a Newark LEED Energy Conservation Program." The CAC had concerns that the proposed criteria will not "ramp" up over time, but ultimately agreed that further recommendation could be made in the future if warranted.

After further discussions at several CAC meetings about exemptions for buildings under 20,000 square feet with which the CAC expressed some issues. This LEED Ordinance was eventually approved at the November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 Council meeting.

## **Recycling**

The CAC reviewed Newark recycling participation data (5,300 homes out of 6,400 homes in Newark) and agreed that the current program participation should be increased. In March it was recommended by the CAC that the City reopen the enrollment period for sign-up of recycling for residents instituting a deadline. The CAC suggested that if residents choose to not sign up for the program then maybe they should be assessed a fee.

## **Community Habitat**

In 2010 the CAC began investigating the possibility of getting the City of Newark certified as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat Community. A certified Backyard Wildlife Habitat basically includes food, shelter, and water for wildlife as well as careful and limited use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides. A certified Backyard Wildlife habitat Community would include a certain number of certified residences as well as some public spaces and would include community outreach and education about wildlife habitat issues. A representative from the Delaware Nature Society for Backyard Habitats began communicating with several CAC members about the requirements for the program. It was determined that the City was already meeting many of the program requirements and the CAC decided to work to get Newark certified as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat community.

## **Anti-Idling Outreach**

In 2009, acting on a recommendation of the CAC, City Council passed an ordinance that, with certain exceptions, prohibits engine idling in the City. This ordinance applies to both passenger and commercial vehicles. In 2010, CAC members began to look for sources of funding to publicize the ordinance and to increase public awareness. In September 2010, the CAC completed an application to the Delaware Energy Office for a Greenhouse Gas Emissions reduction grant. The application requested funding for the following:

- Signage to be placed in strategic areas to make the public aware that engine idling was prohibited,
- Production and distribution of video and audio messages to inform the public of the prohibition and to publicize the negative effects of engine idling on greenhouse gas production and air quality.

## **Green Transportation**

The Conservation Advisory Commission began discussions in June 2010 about ways for the City of Newark to promote, inform and provide incentives for alternative transportation, including walking, biking, buses and rail. The CAC is hoping to bring together the University of Delaware, WILMAPCO, and the City of Newark to help create a more unified and cohesive alternative transportation system.