

**The City of Newark
Conservation Advisory
Commission
Annual Report for 2011**

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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 - Term expires 3/13/12

Mayor's Appointment: Thomas Fruehstorfer (Chair) - Term expires 3/13/14

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

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

District 2 Nadine Bangerter - Term expires 3/15/14

District 3 Bob McDowell – Term expires 3/15/12

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

District 5 Cara Lampton - Term expires 3/15/15

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

Parks Director (ex officio) Charlie Emerson

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

www.cityofnewarkde.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/620 (pdf format).

Green Transportation

During 2011, the Newark Transportation Plan was rolled out to the community at public and city council meetings by WILMAPCO, including a CAC meeting on April 12, 2011. The Plan looks at citywide pedestrian/bicycle improvements, upgrading bus stop information, maximizing Newark's transit hub, and consolidating UniCity/Trolley routes. As a first step to increasing alternative transportation, a brochure of all alternative transportation options was recommended by CAC and included in the Newark Transportation Plan. WILMAPCO was scheduled to begin the brochure in Fall 2011. However, due to budgetary restraints WILMAPCO was unable to begin the brochure.

The Newark Transportation Plan provides steps for going forward but does not provide specific solutions or funding. Starting in January 2012, CAC will reach out to the City of Newark Planning and Development department, WILMAPCO, DART, and the University of Delaware to understand how to help initiate action on the Newark Transportation Plan.

Better Newark Award

In February 2011 the CAC granted the Better Newark Award to Newark High School in recognition of a project conducted by the student members of the Newark High School Nature Society to design and implement a natural habitat and various other environmental and aesthetic improvements on the school property.

Electricity and Green Energy

In February the CAC had a guest visitor, Patrick McCullar (President and CEO of DEMEC), attend our meeting to discuss the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards for the City. The meeting was heavily attended by members of the public. Mr. McCullar explained DEMEC's efforts to expand their supply of energy from renewable sources and answered questions from the public.

The CAC also endorsed a proposed plan for Newark to investigate building its own solar power plant and agreed to utilize Resolution 05-H funds for the proposed construction. Bids were received for the project but unfortunately it was not economically feasible and the project did not proceed.

Due to the City not going forward with solar energy panel project, the CAC decided to readdress the Green Energy Purchase recommendation by requesting the City allocate \$100,000 to RECS to retroactively satisfy Resolution 05-H for 2010 which had not been addressed and another \$100,000 for 2011. The CAC also recommended that the City allocate another \$100,000 to purchase RECS in 2012. City Council decided not to allocate any funds retroactively for 2010 or 2011, but did decide to allocate \$150,000 for purchase of RECS in 2012.

Recycling

The CAC reviewed recycling efforts in Newark and suggested to the Public Works Department that another letter be sent to residents encouraging them to participate in the recycling program. By the end of 2011 all homes in Newark were provided with a recycling container as required by new Delaware laws and efforts were being made to prepare commercial housing complexes with recycling collection containers.

Community Habitat

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. In 2011 the CAC made some advances in getting the City of Newark certified as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat Community including registration with the National Wildlife Federation. The CAC began community outreach of the program including a presentation at Newark Community Day.

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 the 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.

The grant was awarded to Newark in 2011 and the CAC began efforts to develop brochures and a video to help publicize the Newark Anti Idling ordinance.