

**The City of Newark
Conservation Advisory
Commission
Annual Report for 2012**

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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 Amy Tetlow - Term expires 3/13/14

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).

Newark Anti Idling Campaign Grant

The Newark Anti Idling Campaign, managed and executed by the Newark Conservation Advisory Commission in partnership with the City of Newark, continued in 2012 with most of the deliverables on the grant accomplished this year. Though the grant closes March 2013, the campaign will continue at least through 2013.

At the outset of the grant, a limited, random survey of the different categories of publics was conducted in Newark. Though the sampling and methodology was not significant, the results supported what is observable at parking lots, shopping centers and driveways throughout the city at most any time. The CAC sought to increase the number of people who are aware of the anti-idling ordinance and reduce the number of people idling their personal vehicles. A follow-up survey will be conducted after all signs have been installed and the major outreach efforts have been completed.

Phase I below is a listing of the output associated with this grant and Phase II lists the plans for continued activity following closeout of the grant with the materials that were produced.

Phase I:

- A kick-off event, with all of the planning accomplished in 2012, was held at Newark High School in early January 2013 with speakers, placement of the first signs and distribution of materials to student drivers and attendees. Approximately 70 people attended the event and it was covered by the following media:
 - News Journal, Reporter Melissa Nan Burke, Photographer Jennifer Corbett
 - Newark Post, Rose McNeill
 - WDEL 1150 AM, Mellany Armstrong
 - WHYY, Shawn O'Malley
 - WPVI TV Channel 6 Action News, Robert Freeman
 - Delaware First Media/WDDE 91.1 FM, Benjamin Szmidt

Speakers included DNREC Secretary O'Mara, EPA Region III Administrator Shawn Garvin, Christina School District Superintendent Dr. Freeman Williams, Newark Mayor Vance Funk, Newark Conservation Advisory Commission Chair Tom Fruehstorfer and President/CEO Deb Brown of the American Lung Association of the Mid-Atlantic. Audience included State Rep. Edward Osienski, members of the Clean Air Council and the Air Quality Partnership, city and school officials, DNREC staff and 30 to 40 students. An anti-idling video was produced and posted on YouTube.

- A three fold brochure was designed and 1000 copies have been produced and are being distributed.
- Five table-top displays were designed and produced. They are currently displayed at schools, the Newark library and Newark City buildings.

- 750 No Idling posters were designed and produced. They are being distributed by CAC members.
- No Idling signs were designed and 329 were manufactured. The signs have been posted at city parks and two of the schools in town.
- 12 No Idling Banners have been produced.
- Print advertising ran in the Newark Post and UD Review for 8 weeks. An additional 8 weeks of advertising is scheduled for Fall 2013 when students return to campus.

Phase II:

- The video will be embedded on the City of Newark website and distributed to media outlets.
- The brochure will be used at Newark community events where the CAC traditionally tables; it will be available along with the exhibit; schools will be given copies for distribution to parents at the start of the school year; and they will be distributed on the UD campus.
- A rotation schedule for the displays is being developed at public places throughout the city.
- As part of a proposed involvement with University of Delaware, the displays and brochures will be placed on campus.
- The posters are being distributed to public places around town, such as grocery stores, coffee shops, offices, and other businesses and will continue to be posted throughout the year.
- A plan for posting the No-Idling signs is underway. As soon as contacts and permissions are obtained, signs will be posted at city parking lots, along roads where idling is frequently observed, and at shopping center parking lots.
- The banners, which were produced late in the grant cycle, will be posted at key locations in the city where idling is likely to occur and at locations that have a high visibility by the driving public.
- As noted above, No-Idling ads will run in the UD Review in the Fall for 8 weeks when students return to campus.
- A follow-up survey will be conducted with findings reported to the Office of Energy and Climate.

Backyard Habitat Community

In 2012 the City of Newark was officially registered in the Community Habitat program with the National Wildlife Federation. The next step is to continue to accrue points to become a Certified Community Habitat. As of September the City was progressing toward the necessary points to obtain certification but was still short 35-40 backyard habitats to get City certification.

The Backyard Habitat Community Initiative was publicized at the CAC Newark Community Day booth.

Green Energy

The CAC met with Mr. Uyttebroek (City Finance Director) to discuss City green energy purchases as per City Resolution 05-H. Mr. Uyttebroek indicated he would purchase the REC's as deemed necessary. Before those REC's were purchased though, Stu Markham, Councilman, District 5 was asked the CAC to consider working with him on a project with the City to build a solar installation in the City. The funding (\$150,000) would be the annual amount designated to purchase REC's.

The CAC agreed that a City Solar Park would be a good alternative to purchasing REC's and indicated their approval. At the December CAC meeting Stu Markham provided an update on the progress toward a Solar Park in McKee's Park located off Cleveland Avenue. He reported Council approved at the December 10, 2102 meeting a process to proceed where DEMEC will put out an RFP for a solar project. DEMEC had issued the RFP and proposals are due in January 22, 20123. A conference will be held on January 20, 2013 with further information on the DEMEC website. The current DEMEC proposal provides DEMEC funding the solar park and the City will reimburse DEMEC. Once the total cost is reimbursed it will be turned over to the City as the Community Solar Project. The hope is to own it in two years. In addition, he reported there were incentives to use local labor and local panels. The expected output will be 250 megawatts a year.

Green Transportation

It was decided that due to a decline in transit use from 4% in the year 2000 to 1.8% in 2006-2008, that it might be time to consider a new model for transit for the City.

It was decided to address the following:

- efficiency, ease of use and meet the needs of current and potential riders
- reduce the carbon footprint
- integrate transit providers
- Identify financial resources and incorporate transit as an integral part of city planning.

The CAC decided to attempt to work with City representatives, WILMAPCO planners, representatives of labor, transit providers, business and rider interests, including human service agencies, and those with educational and commuter interests to address improvements to the current public transportation infrastructure. As a result members of the CAC were part of Transit Subcommittee discussing public transportation in Newark including bike paths. Efforts are continuing to improve the integration of public transportation opportunities in the City.

Recycle and Litter Campaign

Mr. Emerson reported the City put approximately 20 recycling containers in City parks. By May it was observed that the new recycling cans in the parks were being utilized by park visitors. It was also observed that the new blue recycling cans on Main Street were being better utilized than the previous poorly marked containers. It was also reported that all City residential properties had been provided with recycling containers.

Mr. Emerson also reported the Spring Clean-up was scheduled for Saturday, April 14 from 9-11 am. He asked the Commission members to attend this worthwhile event.

Better Newark Award

In January the CAC voted to award the Better Newark Award to 98 Dallas Avenue, owned by Dr. & Mrs. Wallace McCurdy. The home includes a 3 kW solar PV installation, a dual-panel solar hot water collector, an electric car, electric lawn mower, and backyard composting. Dr. McCurdy is a member of the American Chestnut Society, and has planted seven American chestnut trees in his backyard. Dr. McCurdy is one of the foremost renewable energy and conservation activists in the City of Newark.

In July the CAC voted to award the Better Newark Award to 90 Dallas Avenue, owned by Ms. Sheila Smith. The property has numerous native plantings, a rain barrel, and energy-efficient windows.