



Green Practices Commission

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Meeting Minutes – University City Green Practices Commission

February 11, 2016

Location: Heman Park Community Center
Attendees Present: Dianne Benjamin, Scott Eidson, Bob Elgin, Tim Michels, Jeff Mishkin, Lois Sechrist, Steve Kraft (Council Liaison), Jenny Wendt (Staff Liaison)

Absent Excused: Richard Juang
Guests: Sara Ryan, Marketing Coordinator, St. Louis Composting
Bob Henkel, Program Director, St. Louis Earth Day

1. Meeting called to Order, Roll Call at 6:02 p.m.
2. Opening Round
 - a) Jeff attended a USGBC energy benchmarking event at Sheet Metal Workers Local 36
 - b) Lois indicated that she was working with Jenny and Emily Andrews with the US Green Building Council, Missouri Gateway Chapter to hire an intern to update the Greenhouse Gas Inventory.
 - c) Bob attended a Sierra Club meeting on January 27th concerning the St. Louis County energy code.
3. Approval of Minutes
 - a) January 14, 2016 Meeting Minutes were approved with no amendments.
4. Special Presentations
 - a) Sara Ryan, St. Louis Composting Marketing Coordinator, presented the operations at St. Louis Composting. She made the following main points:
 - i. There are 6 facilities. The Belleville, Illinois location is the largest. 85% of the material is yard waste. Food scraps are buried in yard waste like a taco; it takes 180 days for the food waste to decompose. The compost is tested every month by the US Composting Council. Compost must have very low contamination.
 - ii. Winslow's Home and the Moonrise Hotel are two nearby businesses who use St. Louis Composting's services.
 - iii. Total Organics Recycling collects food scraps from approximately 200 local businesses and institutions and transports the waste to St. Louis Composting. An example of pricing: 2 carts collected twice per week is approximately \$120. NOTE: residents and businesses can drop off yard waste directly at St. Louis Composting.
 - iv. St. Louis Composting has helped several municipalities write grants for composting services. The City of Kirkwood received a grant for a pilot project for 10 households to receive composting services. Maplewood has received grant funds in the past for commercial composting services.
 - b) Bob Henkel, St. Louis Earth Day Program Director, spoke about composting and the Green Dining Alliance (GDA).
 - i. GDA can speak to individual restaurants about composting and promote composting through social media. It is important to stress that composting is closed loop – it keeps all economics local. GDA promotes the restaurants in Healthy Planet and Sauce magazine, a website with restaurant listings and

- resources, a blog, newsletter, and social media.
- ii. Composting services can be used by farmer's markets as well as for special events.
- iii. GDA is about 4 years old and includes approximately 89 restaurants. In order to become part of the GDA, (at a minimum) restaurants need to have no smoking, no Styrofoam, and a recycling program. Composting, energy efficient appliances and projects, and other sustainability actions increase the score of the restaurants.
- iv. GDA is promoting the program in the U City Loop and hopes to make the Loop a Green Dining District. Four Loop restaurants – Snarf's, Meshuggah, Salt and Smoke, and Three Kings have joined the program. GDA has significant leads with other U City restaurants as well.
- v. U City is working with GDA to connect that program with the Commercial Recycling Grant.
- vi. Restaurants in the program work with GDA as an educational program and marketing tool. The City of Maplewood has leveraged this for local publicity.

5. New Business

- a) Ameren is upgrading cobra fixtures with LED lamps. 25,000 lights in the St. Louis metro area will be upgraded per year for the next 5 years. Ameren will start with replacing the lights that go out. This change is supposed to reduce the overall street lighting bill by 10%. U City can request up to 25 lights per year to be upgraded to LED in addition to the outage replacements. The Green Practices Commission would like to investigate U City installing its own lights. This discussion will be put on the March or April meeting agenda. Sinan Alpaslan and an electrician will be invited to the discussion.
- b) Delmar and Olive pedestrian lighting upgrades: Applications for Economic Development funds were submitted to retrofit the pedestrian lights to LED. Decisions will be announced in April.
- c) March 10 meeting visitors: Debra Pottinger and Kathleen Beebe will speak about the Ameren PurePower program; Tom Dunn will speak about a future waste to energy plant that is anticipated to be built in the area.

6. Old Business

- a) Goal Setting Meeting overview and selection:
 - i. The Commission reviewed the goal lists from the goal setting meeting. Each member selected which topics they felt were priority.
 - ii. At the March meeting the Commission will assign goals for each subcommittee.
 - iii. The Commission may reconfigure the seven subcommittees, which would require revising the bylaws.
- b) Compact of Mayors reporting process:
 - i. The City will be required to complete a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory.
 - ii. The Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) is one of the avenues for reporting the inventory and determining an action plan.
 - iii. A Greenhouse Gas inventory also needs to be performed for the St. Louis High Performance Building Initiative 25x20 Benchmarking Pledge ([link](#))
 - iv. Jenny will work with Emily Andrews of the U.S. Green Building Council – Missouri Gateway Chapter to hire an intern to perform the inventory.
- c) 25x20 Benchmarking Jam – February 25:
 - i. Jenny will attend an energy benchmarking session at the Missouri Botanical Gardens.
 - ii. Tim assessed the annual energy use of each City owned building; it was determined the following buildings will be included in the energy benchmarking:
 - 1045 North and South – Firehouse #2
 - 863 Westgate – Firehouse #1
 - 7210 Olive – Centennial Commons

- 6801 Delmar – City Hall
- d) State Loan Update
- i. Bids for the City Hall HVAC upgrades are due February 16th.
7. Reports
- a) Mandatory Recycling Ordinance – Scott presented a slideshow about various cities and states that have adopted mandatory commercial recycling ordinances. California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont are a few states which have mandatory ordinances. There are many paths and options to making recycling mandatory: selecting regulated materials, determining how it is monitored, penalties for non-compliance, etc. The following are some questions that we need to determine answers to:
- i. What would be the next steps?
 - ii. Is the City of St. Louis considering this?
 - iii. Are any other cities considering this?
 - iv. Is U City prevented from doing this? (Like the plastic bag ban-ban)
- b) Waste/Resource Conservation
- i. Bob provided an update from Sierra Club meeting concerning and updating the International Energy Code.
 - ii. Meetings between St. Louis County and the Home Builders Association have not occurred because the HBA wants to avoid protests by the Midwest Energy Efficient Alliance.
- c) Energy
- i. Tim provided calculations of installing solar panels to reduce energy consumption on the fire stations, Centennial Commons/Pool Complex, City Hall, and the Library.
 - ii. The proposed solar panels work within Ameren limitations and adhere to the Energy Ordinance.
 - iii. The Commission will review the proposal at the next meeting. If endorsed by the Commission, the next step is to take this to the City Manager and City Council.
- d) Council Liaison
- i. Mr. Kraft asked about the quality of University City's drinking water.
 - ii. Jenny replied with assurance that the testing and regulations regarding drinking water in the St. Louis area keeps the drinking water in check.
8. Closing Round
- a) Jenny and Lois will attempt to meet with Andrea to discuss adding sustainability to the City's Comprehensive Plan update.
9. Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm