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.
   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

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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

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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
      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