



## Green Practices Commission

6801 Delmar Boulevard, University City, Missouri 63130, Phone: (314) 862-6767, Fax: (314) 863-9146

### **MEETING MINUTES (APPROVED)**

#### **GREEN PRACTICES COMMISSION**

Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 5:30 pm

Heman Park Community Center (975 Pennsylvania Ave)

1. **Call to Order:** 5:31pm

2. **Roll Call:**

Attendees Present: John Solodar (Chairman), Mathew Emden, Connie Mueller, Tim Schmalz, Suzanne Schoomer, Mary Kennedy (Staff Liaison)

Attendees Excused: Stacy Clay (Council Liaison)

3. **Opening Round:** Commissioner Schmalz shared that he is still working on arranging a time for the sustainability program leader from Brittany Woods Middle School to attend and present at a Green Practices Commission meeting.

4. **Approval of Minutes:** There were no minutes for the Commission to review.

5. **Special Presentation:** Franklin Rosario (Ripple Glass Recycling Company)

Mr. Rosario gave a presentation on Ripple Glass Recycling Company and their efforts to bring glass recycling bins to the St. Louis area. The company was founded in Kansas City in 2009 and they have become the largest glass-only recycling company in the country. They are currently expanding into other metro areas. They put large purple bins around the area and when the bins are full, they transport the material to their facility near downtown St. Louis, and then it's transported to Pevely, MO to be made into glass bottles. They have a significantly higher recovery rate than glass that's recycled in single-stream systems. They are currently trying to find partners to host the bins—either on private property or on city-owned properties. Their most used bins in Kansas City are in grocery store parking lots. So far in the St. Louis area, they have agreements with Webster Groves, Maplewood, and possibly Manchester.

The commissioners asked if having glass-only private recycling would affect the City financially, since it currently handles recycling. Mr. Rosario also mentioned that they have a standard agreement for municipalities if the City decided to host a recycling bin on their property. Ms. Kennedy said she would look into the financial impact and get feedback from the City Manager.

6. **Citizen Participation:** None

7. **New Business:**

a. ROARS Column: Ms. Kennedy proposed an idea to the Commissioners of having an ongoing Green Practices column in ROARS. The Commission could prepare articles in advance and the staff liaison could act as the editor. The Commission agreed to brainstorming future topics to discuss at the November meeting.

b. New Commissioner nominated to GPC: The commissioners welcomed their newest



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Commissioner, Suzanne Schoomer, and briefly introduced themselves. There was also mention that an additional commissioner will be nominated and sworn in soon.

### 8. Old Business:

- a. Electronics Recycling and Document Shredding Event: Ms. Kennedy reported on how the September 16 recycling and shredding event went. It was a success, in terms of turnout and amount of material recycled, but mentioned there were several learned lessons that they will bring forward to improve future events. Those include possibly having the electronics and shredding at two different locations, having at least two events next year, and being sure to avoid important religious holidays, community events, and school breaks. The commissioners agreed that they'd like to proceed with planning another event next year in the spring.
- b. Sustainability action items chart: Commissioner Schmalz gave a brief overview of the results so far from the survey that was sent to the commissioners to rank/prioritize the action items. There were still a few commissioners that haven't taken it and will need to by the November meeting. The intent would be to provide City Council and staff with sustainability-related projects, policies, and/or programs the City should pursue organized by budget, impact, timeframe, and staff capacity.
- c. Grow Solar Power Hour: Ms. Kennedy did not have an update but wanted to keep this item on the agenda under old business to keep it on everyone's radar.
- d. Tiny Forests: Commissioner Mueller shared that she hasn't done much additional research but wondered if creating a tiny forest on public property or private property would be better. She suggested focusing on flood-prone areas, such as the area between the River Des Peres and the Heman Park Pool. Ms. Kennedy mentioned that for City-owned properties, she'd need to do more research on what agreements would be necessary for long-term maintenance, liability, etc. She suggested the Hafner Court apartments site, for which the City has received federal funding for flood buyouts, as a possible site to consider, but again, more research and discussion with City leadership, the City's forester and the Urban Forestry Commission is needed. Commissioner Schmalz also mentioned that the US Forest Service is currently encouraging urban re-forestry, and that there may be grants available. Missouri Department of Conservation could also have resources available.

### 9. Council Liaison Update: None

### 10. Closing Round:

Commissioner Schmalz mentioned that he's heard interest in having rentable community garden plots in U City.

### 11. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.