

City Of Birmingham
Regular Meeting Of The Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee
Monday, November 20, 2023
Conference Rooms 202 & 203
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee held on November 20, 2023. The meeting was convened at 6:00 p.m.

1) Roll Call

Present: Harvey Bell, Lois DeBacker, Lara Edwards, Debra Horner, Joe Mercurio, Jess Newman, Dani Torcolacci

Absent: Rachna Gulati, Danielle Todd

Staff: City Planner Blizinski; Planning Director Dupuis, Assistant City Manager Fairbairn, Planning Department Intern Summer Aldred

2) Review of the Agenda

3) Approval of the AHESC Minutes of August 21, 2023

Motion by Ms. Horner

Seconded by Ms. DeBacker to approve the minutes of the regular Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting of August 21, 2023.

Motion carried, 7-0

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Bell, DeBacker, Edwards, Horner, Mercurio, Newman, Torcolacci

Nays: None

4) Study Session

A. Public Engagement Summary Review

PD Dupuis introduced the item and Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

The following comments were made during AHESC discussion:

- The first public engagement session was robust;
- Before the next session, it would be helpful to make sure the AHESC has clearer objectives and definitions, including of the term 'sustainability';
- It sounded like there was a lot of support for sustainability expressed at the municipal roundtables;
- It would be helpful to receive input from larger, natural groups in the community like businesses, NEXT, Scouts, and schools;
- The schools may even specifically have environmental clubs that could be engaged;
- More respondents to the survey were interested in creating, meeting, or exceeding local or state sustainability metrics than were uninterested. This provides the AHESC with a

mandate for its work, and demonstrated the Birmingham community's interest in becoming a regional leader in sustainability;

- The summary and document was very helpful;
- Storm water was raised as a consistent concern;
- It could be helpful to create a presentation with the most likely-to-be-beneficial solutions, and to solicit feedback on those solutions during the next round of public engagement;
- It will be important in future presentations to emphasize the importance of approaches that reduce the community's greenhouse gas emissions;
- Once the goals are determined, the AHESC will have more clarity on its recommended action items;
- Repurposing one of the golf courses might be a sustainability action the City could take;
- Survey respondents demonstrated a lot of enthusiasm for maintaining or increasing the number of street trees and the tree canopy, for different kinds of residential landscape options, and for sustainability education;
- Survey respondents expressed less enthusiasm for the framing device of a 'climate emergency';
- Some respondents opined that sustainability is a political issue for the City to be involved in. Moving forward, the AHESC should keep in mind how it would depoliticize the topic of sustainability;
- A sustainability plan and a climate action plan are different things. It will be important to be aggressive on both the greenhouse gas mitigation side and on the climate adaptation side;
- Greenhouse gas mitigation would include topics like energy efficiency, water efficiency, and renewables;
- Alternatively, the sustainability and climate action plans could interrelated parts of a larger plan;
- It could be helpful to get community input on the criteria to be used to measure the AHESC's recommendations; and,
- For safety reasons, it was likely that the Fire Department would be one of the last departments that would be converted to electric vehicles.

B. Draft Vision and Objectives

CP Blizinski and PD Dupuis introduced the item and Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

The AHESC discussed potential themes of, and edits to, the vision and objectives. It was noted that Staff would return with an updated vision and objectives based on the AHESC's recommended revisions.

Public Comment

A member of the public supported the AHESC looking to other local municipalities for insight into Birmingham's own sustainability process.

5) Open to the Public for Items Not on the Agenda

6) Miscellaneous Communications

Staff provided a brief update on the GHG Inventory.

In reply to AHESC inquiry, Staff said the City Engineer would attend the next meeting to explain how stormwater is billed.

7) Draft Agenda

8) Adjournment

No further business being evident, the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.



Leah Blizinski, City Planner

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist