

**City Of Birmingham**  
**Regular Meeting Of The Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee**  
**January 29, 2024**

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 January 29, 2024. The meeting was convened at 6:00 p.m.

**1) Roll Call**

**Present:** Harvey Bell, Lois DeBacker (arrived 6:23 p.m.), Rachna Gulati (arrived 6:02 p.m.), Debra Horner, Joe Mercurio, Jess Newman, Danielle Todd, Dani Torcolacci

**Absent:** Lara Edwards

**Staff:** City Planner Blizinski; Planning Department Intern Summer Aldred, Planning Director Dupuis, Assistant City Manager Fairbairn, Assistant Foreman of Parks and Forestry McNab

**2) Review of the Agenda**

**3) Approval of the AHESC Minutes of November 20, 2023**

**Motion by Mr. Mercurio**

**Seconded by Mr. Bell to approve the minutes of the regular Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting of November 20, 2023.**

**Motion carried, 7-0**

**VOICE VOTE**

Yeas: Bell, Horner, Mercurio, Newman, Torcolacci, Todd, Gulati

Nays: None

**4) Study Session**

**A. Draft Vision and Objectives**

CP Blizinski presented the item. Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

Among AHESC members, there was discussion regarding:

- Changing land use to promote increased density and walkability, which has significant effects on promoting sustainability;
- Promoting land uses that enable sustainability should be stated explicitly as an objective;
- How beginning by prioritizing action around sustainable flood mitigation practices would demonstrate the value of this process to residents;
- Making it clear that lawns are a concern that aspects of the plan would address;
- The use of the word 'green' in the title, to be further considered at the next meeting;

- Removing the word 'excellency' from the vision statement, and finding another way to express the fact that City standards would not be compromised in the process of adopting greener practices;
- Emphasizing how these objectives would improve health would likely generate greater consensus and likely mitigate potential political polarization;
- Either avoiding ranking the objectives, or leading with objectives likely to generate greater consensus; and,
- How best to communicate the benefits of undertaking this process, and how to communicate that this process would help reduce the likelihood of future losses such as flooded basements.

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

**6) Miscellaneous Communications**

**A. GHGI Update**

CP Blizinski explained the update.

**B. Long Range Planning – Citywide Sustainability Efforts**

PD Dupuis summarized the communication. Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

AHESC member comments were:

- Staff should consider publicizing City sustainability improvements to the public more regularly;
- Birmingham could benefit from the work of Great Lakes Renewable Energy Association, an organization aiming to expand community solar power;
- Reframing some of the City's work as sustainability-related would be helpful;
- The intern that will be focusing on stormwater should focus their recommendations on the neighborhoods experiencing the most flooding; and,
- It will be important to focus on the sustainability interventions within the City's control.

**C. Draft Memo to City Boards**

CP Blizinski summarized the communication. Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

AHESC member comments were:

- The working vision statement and objectives could be provided to other boards as a draft;
- The compostable cards with the seeds are popular and should be used again;
- It would be useful to have data on water and flooding in the City; and,
- The solutions and adaptations have to be data-driven as well.

**7) Draft Agenda**

**8) Adjournment**

No further business being evident, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.



Leah Blizinski, City Planner



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

APPROVED