

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

City Commission Room  
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee held on April 29, 2024. The meeting was convened at 6:00 p.m.

**1) Roll Call**

**Present:** Harvey Bell, Lois DeBacker (left 8:05 p.m.), Lara Edwards, Rachna Gulati, Debra Horner, Joe Mercurio, Jess Newman, Danielle Todd, Dani Torcolacci; Student Representatives Josie Carroll, Will Clemans

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** City Planner Blizinski; Planning Director Dupuis

**2) Review of the Agenda**

**3) Approval of the AHESC Minutes of March 7, 2024**

**Motion by Mr. Bell**

**Seconded by Ms. Edwards to approve the minutes of the regular Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting of March 7, 2024.**

**Motion carried, 9-0**

**VOICE VOTE**

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

Nays: None

**4) Study Session**

**A. GHGI Report**

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

During AHESC discussion, AHESC member comments were as follows:

- It was surprising that City emissions represented less than 2% of overall emissions. It suggests that the focus should be on encouraging residents and businesses to reduce their emissions.
- It would be helpful to note that the communitywide solid waste data did not include information from apartment buildings or businesses. It would also be helpful to note that the compost data largely included yard waste and little else.
- If there are only two industrial uses emitting the noted amount of greenhouse gasses, it might be appropriate to see if the City could discuss those emissions levels with those users.

- The AHESC will need to consider how to address the reduction of solid waste with businesses given that the GHGI does not provide data on that item.
- It would be helpful to compare some of this data to other Michigan communities in order to clarify any unique challenges Birmingham might be facing.
- It will be important to strategically make use of the data.

## **B. SCAP Draft Goals**

PD Dupuis presented the item. Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

During AHESC discussion, AHESC member comments were as follows:

- The county's goal for reducing total landfilled solid waste may be 45% rather than 25%. The City's goal should be brought into alignment with the county's goal.
- Studies show that education alone does not change behavior, and so communicating that sustainability is 'cool' and providing occasional incentives will be beneficial.
- Reducing the barriers to sustainability is a priority. The inclusion of ordinance changes in the SCAP goals will assist in that process.
- Since the GHGI indicates the need to reduce residential energy consumption, that should be more clearly integrated into the SCAP goals.
- The tone should be set that achieving the plan will require shared ownership from the municipal, residential, and commercial sectors.
- The water and stormwater actions should prioritize mitigating residential flooding.
- Depending on potential upcoming state legislative actions, it might be appropriate to heavily promote community solar in the future.
- Resident education should emphasize that water and stormwater management can result in reductions of residents' stormwater bills.
- It would be beneficial to clarify:
  - The sources of the data and how figures were calculated,
  - High-, medium-, and low-impact goals,
  - How accomplishment of the goals will be measured,
  - The climate benefits of increasing native and naturalized areas, and,
  - The specific carbon reduction goals for the municipal, residential, and commercial sectors.
- Goals could be added regarding:
  - Increasing certain habitats' quality, like the area in Martha Baldwin Park,
  - Incentivising or requiring homes being sold to receive and list their Home Energy Rating System (HERS) score,
  - Adopting greener building codes,
  - Collaborating on sustainability goals with other local partners,
  - Increasing recycling in the community,
  - Maximizing participation in energy efficiency and conservation incentive programs,
  - Working with or encouraging the school system to adopt sustainable practices,
  - Encouraging the use of heat pumps,
  - A marketing campaign to publicize sustainable changes in the community in order to generate interest, enthusiasm, and further adoption, and,
  - Changing modes of transportation in order to decrease emissions.

- Creating community spirit and competitions around these efforts in order to promote engagement would be useful.
- The image on the emissions page should be something indicating lowered emissions, instead of a classic car.
- It would be useful to see whether a backflow valve incentive program still exists and could be included in the actions.

### **C. Survey Draft**

PD Dupuis presented the item. Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

The AHESC discussed updates to the draft survey. At the AHESC's request, Ms. Horner volunteered to work with staff regarding changes to the survey wording.

The following topics were briefly discussed:

- Including the draft goals within the introduction to the survey,
- Ways of further involving the business community, and,
- Ways of determining how cost considerations might factor into survey respondents' answers.

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

### **6) Miscellaneous Communications**

#### **A. Updated Project Schedule**

### **7) Draft Agenda**

### **8) Adjournment**

No further business being evident, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.



Leah Blizinski, City Planner



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist