

City Of Birmingham
Regular Meeting Of The Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee
July 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 July 29, 2024. The meeting convened at 6:00 p.m.

1) Roll Call

Present: Harvey Bell, Lois DeBacker, Lara Edwards, Rachna Gulati (arrived 6:14 p.m., left 7:50 p.m.), Joe Mercurio (arrived 6:05 p.m.), Jess Newman, Danielle Todd

Absent: Debra Horner, Dani Torcolacci; Student Representatives Josie Carroll, Will Clemans

Staff: Planning Intern Aldred, Planning Director Dupuis, Assistant City Manager Fairbairn

2) Review of the Agenda

3) Approval of the AHESC Minutes of June 17, 2024

Motion by Mr. Bell

Seconded by Ms. Todd to approve the minutes of the regular Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting of June 17, 2024.

Motion carried, 5-0

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Bell, DeBacker, Edwards, Newman, Todd

Nays: None

4) Study Session

A. SCAP Final Draft

Staff presented the item and answered informational questions from the AHESC.

AHESC members raised the following topics during discussion:

- It may be appropriate the represent local foods in the Birmingham Green branding.
- The emissions charts and graphs should be updated to better align with other charts and graphs in the Plan.
- All goals should have metrics to demonstrate whether progress is being made.
- There should be some measurements to determine whether the Plan's goals vis-a-vis stormwater are being achieved. The best way of doing this would likely be tracking the stormwater retention capacity of each new project in the City.
- Residences are the overwhelming contributor to greenhouse gasses in the City. The introduction to the Plan must have an increased emphasis on how residences and

commercial buildings can contribute to the City's sustainability. A graph demonstrating municipal, residential, and commercial contributions to greenhouse gasses could help clarify the topic.

- The Plan should clarify how much each goal would have an impact on improving overall sustainability, and it would be helpful if at least some of the goals had a priority ranking.
- Robust action should address resident electric and natural gas and wider framing around the role of residents.
- Future development of a very robust community engagement strategy should be recommended as part of the Plan. Schools, community groups, and houses of worship should be mentioned as opportunities for community engagement around sustainability.
- The financial section should clarify what portions of this Plan would be taxpayer-funded. This section should also clarify that certain actions on the parts of residents would result in financial savings.
- Next steps should be the last section, rather than the financial section.
- The actions section should specify potential financial benefits and equity opportunities in addition to the sustainability benefits.
- A resilience center, support for the sustainability efforts of those on fixed incomes, support for aging in place, and support for public transit are some ways the Plan can help improve sustainability-related equity and financial justice concerns. It should be noted that improvements in Birmingham would have equity and financial justice benefits for neighboring communities as well.
- Stormwater improvements would have positive impacts on downstream communities, which would be an equity improvement.
- One of the best ways to reduce residential greenhouse gas emissions would be to replace windows and fix leaks. Those on reduced or fixed incomes would be the least able to afford these upgrades outright. Finding financing for those upgrades would be a sustainability-related equity and financial justice improvement.
- Everything in the Plan pertains to quality of life so it may not require a single section.
- The Committee discussed options for locating quality of life and community engagement aspects within the Plan.
- Re-adding a benefits column to the specific actions was discussed as a possibility.
- There was discussion regarding whether the transportation emissions reduction goal was aggressive enough. It was noted that Birmingham would be permitted to exceed that goal, and that Birmingham can lend its support to regional efforts to also reduce transportation-related emissions.
- Increasing community walkability, supporting and attracting more remote work, increasing mixed use development, and encouraging carpooling are some options for reducing the number of miles driven within the City. These and other initiatives should be explored.
- Incentivizing the use of electric vehicles by offering charging stations could also be worth exploring.
- Replacing internal combustion engine school buses with electric ones and considering a citywide policy on idling could be beneficial. Adding an air quality monitor outside of schools could help discourage idling during school pick ups.
- Designing a citywide plan for using the rights-of-way for trees, native plantings, bioswales, rain gardens, and other sustainable options should be a priority. This would help the City achieve its goals of increasing native and naturalized areas and capturing stormwater. If

particular areas are more protective of their present trees, those could be lower-priority areas within the broader strategy.

- The City could replicate Ferndale’s program of allowing residents to report their private, voluntarily naturalized landscapes so the City can track its aggregate successes in naturalizing landscapes.
- Mandating commercial and multifamily recycling could be worth exploring. Residential and commercial composting options should also be explored. It would be most worthwhile to collect all compostable items if a compost program is implemented.
- It would be most important to consider where rainwater retention would have the biggest benefit.

Motion by Ms. Edwards

Seconded by Mr. Bell to distribute for public comment the draft — inclusive of the AHESC comments from the meeting of July 29, 2024 — of the Birmingham Green Healthy Climate Plan, by August 9, 2024.

Motion carried, 5-0

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Bell, DeBacker, Edwards, Newman, Todd

Nays: None

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

6) Miscellaneous Communications

A. Survey #2 Results

B. Updated Project Schedule

7) Draft Agenda

8) Adjournment

No further business being evident, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.



Leah Blizinski, City Planner



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist