

CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION

City Council Chambers

Wednesday, June 29, 2011

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Marya Ryan, Jean Ascoli Gary Cziko, Kirstin Replogle, Todd Rusk, Stephen Wald

Commissioners Absent: John Marlin [*excused*]

Staff Present: Bart Hagston, Kate Brickman, Jeff Engstrom

Additional Present: Cynthia Hoyle, Drew Bargmann

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Declaration of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Kate Brickman called the roll and a quorum was present.

Changes to the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda submitted.

Review of Minutes from Previous Meeting

A motion was made by Ms. Replogle, second by Ms. Ascoli, to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2011 meeting. Motion carried.

Public Input

There was no public input.

Communications

Jean Ascoli announced that she would be stepping down from SAC as of July 1. Various members of the Commission expressed their gratitude to Ms. Ascoli for her service.

Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (MTD) Presentation

Cynthia Hoyle and Drew Bargmann gave a presentation discussing impact modeling from the MTD miPLAN. miPLAN's purpose is to find out what mobility options Champaign, Urbana & Savoy want as a community, both now and in the future, and then craft a plan to bring those options to fruition. Ultimately, miPLAN will result in suggestions that best implement the changes desired, and to boost economic development while offering mobility changes that fit the needs of the community. Also discussed were various other “green” projects and initiatives undertaken by MTD.

Monthly Staff Report

Bart Hagston provided the June Staff Report that gave updates on the following items:

- Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant projects;
- Electronics Recycling events;
- Consideration of a Commercial Recycling Ordinance by City Council;
- Involvement in the Prairie State Local Government Sustainability Network;
- Boneyard Creek design;
- Rain Gardens in the City right of way; and
- Possibility of providing infrastructure for electric vehicle charging.

Discussion and questions ensued.

Mr. Hagston also distributed a recent amendment to the City's Open Meetings ordinance regarding guidance on public comment which has impacts on City Boards and Commissions.

Continuing Business

Climate Action Plan

Mr Hagston detailed many of the actions that have taken place to date in the process of developing a Climate Action Plan (CAP). A greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory was completed and a goal of reducing emissions 25% by 2020 was established, using 2007 as the baseline year.

At a SAC work session in December 2010, it was suggested that we reexamine the forecasted emissions growth rates, in hopes that newer growth predictions would lower the expected growth in GHG emissions between the 2007 baseline year and the targeted planning year of 2020. Mr. Hagston received updated information from the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission which was analyzed and used to revise the emissions growth data. However, this exercise resulted in an even greater predicted increase in emissions than previously forecast. Using this updated information, total emissions are expected to increase from 509,006 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO_{2e}) in 2007 to 626,661 MTCO_{2e} in 2020.

Recently, ICLEI's Climate and Air Pollution Planning Assistant (CAPPA) software tool has been utilized to explore various GHG reduction measures and their potential reduction impact. A list of potential measures which would meet the established reduction goal was distributed to the Commission. This draft list was provided as a starting point for further discussion about potential reduction measures. Mr. Hagston explained that the CAPPA tool has various measures which users can input localized data and assumptions. The tool then determines the potential emissions reductions from each proposed measure.

Mr. Hagston stated that it became apparent during employment of this tool that certain measures have the potential for a much greater impact on emissions reductions than others. When the expected degree of implementation for some measures was changed within CAPPA, the results for some measures changed dramatically, while others did not differ much at all.

Various potential measures were reviewed and discussed by the Commission. Factors that might influence the implementation of various measures were discussed, including cost and financial incentives and disincentives, government programs and mandates, and political and technical feasibility.

Mr. Hagston stated it will clearly be a challenge to meet the Commission's stated reduction goal. Such an effort will require efforts across all sectors of the community. New collaborations and partnerships will be necessary. On the positive side, Mr. Hagston stated that the plan could also be viewed as a catalyst for jobs and economic growth and those may be factors which we choose to focus upon.

Mr. Hagston indicated that he has much of the language of the CAP down, but some work will have to wait until the individual emissions reduction measures are decided upon.

A discussion was held regarding gathering additional public input on the plan. Some ideas for soliciting more input were offered, including public meetings at various locations. The importance of public buy-in was noted by many.

Also discussed was the idea that much of the public's willingness to undertake reduction measures will depend upon cost. The lower the cost, compared to other alternatives, the more likely people are to participate. However, unknown future costs for traditional and renewable energy, as well as development of new technologies, make it difficult to predict costs very far into the planning horizon.

To increase the public's ability to decipher the CAP and commit to some reduction measures, Ms. Replogle suggested that the plan be divided into sectors, with possible actions being listed for each sector. Residents could be asked to volunteer information on which actions they would be willing to commit to for each sector.

Ms. Ryan proposed that the Commission aim for getting the draft finished in the next couple of weeks before a work session on August 13th.

New Business

Summer Meeting Schedule

Ms. Ryan announced the cancellation of the regular July and August meetings. However, SAC will be meeting for a CAP work session on the morning of Saturday, August 13th.

Announcements

Mr. Cziko announced a free Bicycle Skills Clinic will be held at Lincoln Square Village tomorrow evening, June 30 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. This meeting was recorded.