

CITY OF MONONA
Sustainability Committee
Thursday, October 13, 2022
Meeting Minutes – FINAL

1. Call to Order

6:30 PM – Meeting called to order by Alder Teresa Radermacher.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Alder Teresa Radermacher, Alder Patrick DePula, Sue Vogt, Sarah Smith, Dan Costello, Ashley Gries, and Ken Walz

Absent: None

Others Present: Assistant Planner Thor Jeppson, Mayor Mary O'Connor, and Kristin Gunther

3. Approval of Minutes from the July 14, 2022 Sustainability Committee Meeting

A motion by Mr. Walz, seconded by Mr. Costello, for approval of the minutes of July 14, 2022 carried with no corrections.

4. Appearances

None

5. Unfinished Business

None

6. New Business

a. New Staff Introduction

Assistant Planner Thor Jeppson introduced himself as the new staff lead to the Committee. Kristin Gunther, who's appointment to the Committee is on the agenda for approval at the October 17th City Council meeting, introduced herself to the other Committee members.

b. Sustainability discussion with Mayor O'Connor

Alder Radermacher and Mayor O'Connor introduced the item by giving an overview of the Committee's history and the process of creating the Sustainability Plan. They shared this historical context in order to help frame a larger discussion on the scope and expectations of the Committee. They highlighted that City Council adopted the Plan in 2015, but that the Committee has found difficulty in implementing the Plan. As a result, the Committee has focused on community-facing projects rather than implementation of the Plan.

Mayor O'Connor stated that it would be helpful to work through the Plan with various City Departments, get an update on recent City projects, and identify which recommendations

have been achieved through these projects. She encouraged the Committee to identify City programs that relate to the Plan's goals. She also visions the Committee getting more involved with the City's ongoing items, but acknowledged this would work require working with other City committees which are restricted by operating budgets and the capital improvement budget, and that the Committee must be realistic about what can be accomplished. Mayor O'Connor also sees community engagement and climate resiliency as important roles of the Committee.

Alder Radermacher added that the Committee has performed a lot of work and outreach, but could improve its reporting to City Council.

The Committee discussed where to focus future efforts. Dan wondered whether efforts should focus inwards or outwards, and mentioned that inward-facing efforts have been more difficult in the past because of the lack of a formal communication structure with other committees. He noted that with limited resources the Committee should connect with other organizations for outreach. Sue said a big impact could be made by focusing on the community. She suggested leveraging ordinance revisions and City programs to spread awareness of sustainability issues.

Alder Radermacher added that buy in from other City committees was key for Sustainability Plan implementation. She recommended working through the existing structure of Alders, committees, and staff and mirroring the implementation of the DEI plan to introduce a new way of thinking and acting for all City committees. Dan added that other committees play a large role in implementing sustainability goals, and that the Committee should be a resource to them. Alder Radermacher noted that all other committees have a standing sustainability agenda item which could be leveraged. Ashley suggested members of the Committee act as liaisons to other committees.

Ken suggested that the Committee go through the Plan and identify goals that need to be accomplished, which committees which are responsible, and identify remaining items that the Committee can champion. He suggested one priority for the Committee could be to identify a large project and work to find funding and galvanize support. He also added that focus be directed towards the City's "25 by 25" renewable energy goal, noting that the City was currently at 19.9% renewable energy and that the Committee should be planning projects to meet that goal. He added the need for a new goal after 2025.

Sarah Smith joined at 7:01pm.

Sarah asked if resolutions can be referred to Sustainability Committee for approval, even unofficially, or if the Committee can refer things to City Council. She added that the Plan should be updated with climate resiliency goals and that the Committee should identify

how County or State programs interact with City Code. Alder DePula suggested they develop a sustainability scoring item that can be used for decision making.

Alder Radermacher summarized the discussion and suggested the Committee identify one member to dedicate time to work through the Plan and note responsible committees for goals, and two members dedicate time to implement fall and winter sustainability projects.

c. Adopt-a-Stormdrain and other upcoming projects

The Committee discussed potential leaf management and Adopt-a-Stormdrain outreach strategies. Dan suggested that the Committee create a campaign and template recruitment pitch, using the email list of current adoptees, to encourage recruitment. He suggested an incentive for those who can recruit the most adoptees. Ashley asked if there was a way to identify high-risk stormdrains. Sue suggested by using topography.

Mayor O'Connor stated that they need to rely on more than current enrollees. After discussion, the Committee agreed to put flyers at the library (Sue), put flyers on pizza boxes (Alder DePula), create PSAs to air on WVMO (Alder DePula and Ashley), work to create a post on Peach Jar (Alder Radermacher), work with Brad Bruun to create new Facebook posts and email messages (Alder Radermacher), work with the Green Team at Monona Grove High School (Alder Radermacher), work with Boy Scouts troops (Alder DePula), and create a newsletter announcement (Alder Radermacher).

Ken added that he would work through the Sustainability Plan and put together a list of actionable items for the Sustainability Committee and other committees.

d. 2023 Budget proposal discussion

Mayor O'Connor said that the City will add another \$1000 to the budget and asked Alder Radermacher if there was a plan for it. She indicated that there is not. Mayor O'Connor added that the budget could be used to reimburse members for yard signs they printed.

7. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Discussion Items – Projects, Programs, Policies, or Budget Considerations for Council Advisement

Alder Radermacher is participating in the Black History for a New Day course through the Justified Anger program at Nehemiah Center. Sue requested additional information.

8. Important Updates from Committee Members or Items to Consider for Future Agendas

None.

9. Actionable Items

None.

10. Adjournment

A motion by Mr. Walz, seconded by Ms. Gries, to adjourn carried (8:10PM).

Submitted by,

Thor Jeppson, Assistant Planner