



SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Attending: Joe Coffey, Scott Kellogg, Ewa Sobczynska (Secretary), Kevin Luteran, Jill Kasow (Chair), Bill Trudeau, Sandy Misiewicz, Chris Spencer, Allison Bradley (recently appointed), Laurie Wheelock (recently appointed), Randy Milano, Lauren Alpert, David Galin

Absent: Jennifer Viggiani (resigned), Lori Quillen (resigned), Frank Zeoli, Peter Sheehan (Co-Chair)

Observer: Said Ibrahim

1. Regular Business

- Jill Kasow welcomed to 2 new members (Mayor's appointees) Allison Bradley and Laurie Wheelock. They provided short introductions to the SAC. There are currently 3 Common Council vacancies that need to be filled.
- Jill Kasow moved to adopt meeting minutes from December 12, 2016; these were approved with a small edit. February 28, 2017 and August 24, 2017 meetings did not have quorum but meeting notes are available on the SAC Dropbox folder. Jill Kasow also moved to adopt the 2015-16 Annual report. The SAC members all voted in favor. Jill Kasow thanked Joe Coffey and the Water Board for sponsoring the SAC flier that was included in the water bill in the June-July 2017 period.
- There were no members of public present and therefore no public comment period. Ewa Sobczynska brought up the issue of access to the general SAC e-mail address by the Secretaries (as one way of receiving notices from general public). Lauren Alpert agreed to follow up with relevant Albany City IT personnel to ensure access.
- MOE&S activities:
 - Kevin Luteran highlighted the recent/ongoing work, including:
 - a) purchasing the City street lights and ongoing negotiations with National Grid through tariff filing. The objective is to eventually convert all of the Albany City street lights to LED.
 - b) currently converting the following locations to LED lights: DGS building, landfill and South Station. After that all municipal buildings will be converted.
 - c) \$1.4m grant was awarded from NYPA to install control systems in several City buildings (these are currently in the design stage). The City is also exploring purchasing electric vehicles and moving to electric fleet. The grant covers installation of 9 public charging stations, so that there's the infrastructure in place for the future.
 - D) sub-meteres installation is ongoing in several City buildings – to get real time data on energy usage.
 - Lauren Alpert highlighted: a) the recent \$200,000 CFA grants for additional improvements for the South End bike link; and b) Sheep from



Tivoli Preserve have gone back to the Normans Kill Preserve and the City is doing educational projects there.

2. New Business

- Appointment of new Co-Secretary: Jill Kasow proposed to appoint a new Co-Secretary but suggested that this, and other SAC positions, get filled once the additional Common Council appointees join the SAC. Ewa Sobczynska requested support on alternate SAC meeting and Laurie Wheelock volunteered to take minutes. –
- Overview of Mayor's sustainability goals (C. Spencer, D. Galin): David Galin outlined the Mayor's proposal for the SAC to refocus its attention around the following areas:
 - Provide feedback on projects that are ongoing or already under implementation
 - Working and brainstorming with the Department Heads represented at the SAC to provide “down the road”/ “outside of the box” perspective, looking down 10-20 years ahead to cut the City's emissions, within the goals and plans that were already developed (like Albany 2030, etc.). He also encouraged the SAC members to look for “outside of the box” ideas in areas where the City is not yet engaged.
 - He highlighted the following goals that the Mayor has signed on to and is committed to furthering:
 1. Committing the City to 100% clean, renewable energy for all by 2035 ([Sierra Club pledge](#)).
 2. Committing the City to the Paris Climate Accord and adopting its climate agreement goals (<http://climatemayors.org/>).
 3. Reduce energy usage in municipal buildings by 20% by 2020
 4. Reduce carbon emission from wastewater and water treatment, by 2030
 5. Divert 60% of waste from Rapp Road landfill by 2030
 - David suggested that the SAC members put forward ideas we can propose to the departments to build upon.
 - Chris Spencer added that what would be particularly helpful is to build on the goals and objectives proposed by the Albany 2030 plan and see how can these be implemented and/or operationalized and whether additional funding can be mobilized. In particular, SAC can help the city in longer term planning and to look to what others are doing and bring best practices and lessons learned to employ and learn from in the City of Albany.
- There was a vivid discussion following David's presentation.



- Joe Coffey highlighted the [Nature Conservancy carbon project](#) as an example of a long term project that the Water Board is undertaking. However, he would welcome other ideas from SAC members in regards to these types of long-term opportunities and strategies. He requested SAC's input into the 1-page core value and mission statement which the Board is currently formulating for 2018. He would be interested in learning more about best practices elsewhere. This could be particularly interesting for their new program the City has recently got some funding for to replace water service led pipes (in particular how to develop the program and assist the low-income families). Another area for the Water Board is to determine the baseline of its operations' carbon footprint and then a reasonable goal/objective for reduction based on the baseline. He also highlighted how interconnected strategies, such as complete streets and related re-pavement projects, can, long-term mitigate residential flooding (quality of life issue) and CSO (combined sewer overflow). He would like to get more input in this area in terms of sustainable practices and see how the Water Board can take it forward (concrete examples, case studies, etc.). For example, in terms of paving projects, permeable pavement is currently not an option in Albany. He indicated that while the Water Board has been successful in applying for grants (CFA, etc.), he would be interested to see if there's another universe of money that the Water Board should be looking at. Joe Coffey also highlighted a small-scale innovation project, in the design phase with the Radix Center, to utilize \$5,000 (instead of a penalty from DEC for not reporting the CSO incidence last year) for construction of a floating island (anaerobic reduction through roots of plants) that would be deployed in Hudson river near the CSOs. If successful, the island could be deployed in other areas of the city (scaled up or down, for areas like Washington Park/Buckingham Pond).
- Bill Trudeau highlighted one area – automated vehicles – where the City hasn't undertaken much planning but need to be prepared for that.
- Chris Spencer highlighted that the Departments might be particularly interested in long-term suggestions (5-10 years down the road) and examples of what are other cities doing in similar areas and sectors, especially best practices. For example, how can we encourage “walkable city” that will ultimate lead to reduction in carbon emissions – what can be other long term goals for the City and how they link to sustainability.
- Randy Milano was interested in learning more about how the City can measure what it is already improving (for example, measuring the City's “pedestrian-friendly” infrastructure). He also pointed out that for larger grants, the departments need to prepare and present longer-term sustainability goals, long-term planning and visioning (in terms of infrastructure development/repair). He was interested in learning about the success and failures of other cities in this regard. He also suggested that the SAC looks into what we'll be doing with the Rapp landfill, what other municipalities have done in this regards. He suggested



that the City could be looking into solar farm there (when the landfill is closed) to further generate value and income. He was also interested in seeing how we can continue enhancing the City's energy efficiency over the next 3-5 years (after the NYPA funding).

- Sandy Misiewicz inquired how we should link these new proposals with the other strategies and plans that the Departments already have in place (for example in transportation sector) and how this work would relate to the original recommendations put forward in the SAC's First Annual Report. She asked whether there are ongoing discussion and coordination between departments on longer-term strategies and objectives. She underlined that there are already a lot of best practices in the transport sector (for example in Lake George on permeable pavement) as well as potential funding sources.
 - Ewa Sobczynska suggested that the City should also consider "mapping" out of the proposed long-term goals and objectives (commitments the City already made) and see how the current projects fit into that and what else is missing. Currently, there's no indicator to tell us what success is looking like and how to measure progress towards achievement of these long-term goals. In addition, a transportation goal is missing (transportation sector being the highest emitter in NY State in general, in terms of GHG emissions). On the other hand, SAC members could also participate in the review of grants that the City departments put forward, to offer external view and outside perspective.
 - Lauren Alpert discouraged SAC from trying to review/create an inventory of ongoing projects but rather focus on long-term proposals.
 - Jill Kasow asked how we should organize SAC meetings moving forward to respond to this new proposal from the Mayor's office. She suggested that the Department heads proposed 2, 3 issues the SAC can focus on with the objective for the SAC to make recommendations for programs and/or ideas that are not currently being considered but that could contribute to Mayor's goals and Departments individual objectives.
3. Action Items/ Discussion of next meeting on Thursday, February 1
- Given the discussion, it was proposed that the Department heads, building on the proposal put forward during the meeting, send a list of 3-5 areas they would like SAC's input into, that can be shared ahead of the February 1st meeting so that other SAC members can put forward some proposals and/or undertake some initial research.
 - Joe Coffey requested SAC's input into the Water Board 1-pager.
4. Adjournment