

SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC) MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, September 22, 2015

Attending: Joe Coffey, Jillian Kasow, Scott Kellogg, Shadi Khadivi, Kate Lawrence, Randy Milano, Sandy Misiewicz, Lori Quillen, Peter Sheehan, Ewa Sobczynska, Chris Spencer, Bill Trudeau, Jennifer Viggiani, and Frank Zeoli

Absent: Peter Fleischer

1. Call to order and roll call, introduction of new member, Jennifer Viggiani.
 - a. Kate Lawrence noted SAC members have bios on the MOES website, and requested Jennifer send one for posting.
2. Adoption of June 25, 2015 meeting minutes
 - a. Minutes were adopted with the caveat that they be amended to omit holdover content from the April 2015 meeting.
 - b. A motion was made to adopt the June 25, 2015 meeting minutes. Motion was made by Frank Zeoli and seconded by Ewa Sobczynska. The motion carried.
3. No public comments
4. No communications to the SAC
5. Pete Sheehan briefly discussed a new EPA/USDA program targeting food waste
 - a. An EPA press release from September 16, 2015 was passed out as a point of information for the SAC.
 - b. USDA and EPA call for a 50-percent reduction in food waste by 2030.
 - c. Hailed as the nation's first food waste reduction program, targeting loss prevention, donation, and composting – “food for people, not landfills.”
 - d. Frank Zeoli will do some research and report back at the next SAC meeting.
 - e. Scott Kellogg mentioned there are a number of initiatives at the city and county level; will keep an eye on things to see if there is any grant money for assistance.
 - f. Sandy Misiewicz suggested cataloging potential grant opportunities by subcommittee, a suggestion supported by Frank Zeoli.
6. New Business – 60 minutes
 - a. Vote: SAC Chair, Vice Chair, Secretaries.
 - 1) Joe Coffey recognized the effectiveness of the existing structure and recommend keeping current members in place if willing to serve.
 - 2) Shadi Khadivi stepped down as co-secretary.
 - 3) Jillian Kasow was re-nominated chair. Motion was made by Ewa Sobczynska and seconded by Frank Zeoli. The motion carried.
 - 4) Pete Sheehan was re-nominated as vice-chair. Motion was made by Jillian Kasow and seconded by Lori Quillen. The motion carried.
 - 5) Lori Quillen was re-nominated as co-secretary. Motion was made by Jillian Kasow and seconded by Pete Sheehan. The motion carried.

- 6) Ewa Sobczynska was nominated co-secretary, filling Shadi Khadivi's open seat. Motion was made by Jillian Kasow and seconded by Joe Coffey. The motion carried.
- b. Joe Coffey established a Water Subcommittee, to facilitate conversation about efforts to address climate change and extreme weather impacts to the city.
- 1) Summarized a Water Board project using goats from Heather Ridge Farm to manage overgrowth on steep slopes at Loudonville Reservoir, which houses 212 million gallons of drinking water. Initiated by forester Amy Walsh, goats are a sustainable alternative to machinery (Covered by AP, pick up by the [Wall St Journal](#), [Times Union](#), [All Over Albany](#), [News10/ABC](#), and [WNYT](#), among others).
 - 2) Discussed pressure to open the Alcove Reservoir up to fishing. The reservoir is the city's primary source of water and one of the most pristine surface water supplies in the Northeast. It sits in a watershed free of most human impacts. At present, contamination risk exceeds benefits of recreational fishing. Mayor is in agreement.
 - 3) Stressed the need for more studies on how climate change and sea level rise threaten low-lying parts of the city via water inundation and high-volume storm events.
 - 4) A Water Subcommittee could highlight sustainable Water Board projects, explore threats from Hudson River sea level rise and climate-driven extreme weather, and assess possible water quality threats at Alcove Reservoir.
 - 5) Process to establish Water Subcommittee. Motion was made by Jillian Kasow and seconded by Sandy Misiewicz. The motion carried. Lori nominates Joe Coffey as chair, Pete Sheehan seconds.
 - 6) Ewa Sobczynska inquired if our reservoirs have been assessed for potential climate change impacts. Joe Coffey noted the last safe yield estimates were done in the 1930s. Shadi Khadivi asked what it takes to get a study going. Joe Coffey mentioned existing staff resources and partnerships with USGS and NOAA. Jennifer Viggiani stated her interest in watershed-level indicators of water quality and discussed a Nature Conservancy collaboration looking at forest inventories.
 - 7) Joe Coffey requests that Kate Lawrence send out an email soliciting engagement on the Water Subcommittee.
 - 8) Jillian Kasow reminded the SAC the subcommittee meetings should be distributed to the entire SAC email list.
- c. Outreach for Annual Report
- 1) Jillian Kasow inquired about the SAC's plan to communicate the annual report and our goals for the next year or two. Mentioned the absence of a press release from the city regarding the report.
 - 2) Kate Lawrence suggested that the SAC might draft a press release.
 - 3) Lori Quillen suggested that we issue a press release after setting several dates when SAC representatives can attend Neighborhood

Association Meetings and provide brief presentations on the report (so there is a community-engagement angle).

- 4) Ewa Sobczynska volunteered to put together a PowerPoint presentation capturing the essence of the report.
 - 5) The Outreach Subcommittee will take the lead on drafting the press release and scheduling the Neighborhood Association meetings.
 - 6) Jillian Kasow suggested having a draft of the PowerPoint for the October 20 meeting.
 - 7) Shadi Khadivi noted that the PowerPoint content could be used to update the MOES website.
 - 8) Frank Zeoli is sending Lori Quillen a list of Albany Neighborhood Associations; there are roughly 26.
 - 9) Pete Sheehan mentioned that as we reach milestones and goals we should issue press releases to alert the community.
- d. Prioritization Strategy
- 1) Kate Lawrence explained that VHB was willing to do a follow-up at our next meeting. To facilitate prioritization, SAC members have been assigned homework regarding how they can move *personally* forward one of the ideas outlined in the annual report.
 - 2) Jillian Kasow mentioned the meeting should get the SAC in the position needed to vote and adopt a prioritized list in December.
 - 3) Shadi Khadivi noted a struggle in creating the priority list was that people came to the table with so many ideas, some not inline with goals, others not realistic for implementing in a reasonable timeframe.
 - 4) Pete Sheehan asked if subcommittee chairs should meet with their committees to determine what needs the support of the entire SAC vs. individual subcommittees – breaking down 7-8 goals and bringing two projects forward to VHB.
 - 5) Kate Lawrence stated that they should be one in the same – priorities of subcommittees should be priorities of SAC.
 - 6) Shadi Khadivi mentioned the possibility of a CLG grant for one of the projects on the Built Environment list, noting some of the projects might be implemented by grant money that pays consultants in the local community to carry out the work for the city.
 - 7) Joe Coffey inquired if VHB was looking to get convergence on priorities by the SAC and asked what criteria were for moving them forward.
 - 8) Ewa Sobczynska suggested using time with VHB to facilitate SAC convergence on priorities.
 - 9) Kate Lawrence encouraged SAC members to look at the annual report before the meeting.
- e. Committee Updates
- 1) Kate Lawrence initiated a discussion of subcommittee chair terms. Should they be voted on yearly? Or when current chairs vacate?
 - 2) Sandy Misiewicz volunteered to fill Jen Ceponis's vacancy as chair the Transportation Subcommittee. Bill nominated, Randy seconded.

- 3) Energy Subcommittee Report
 - a) Pete Sheehan discussed energy savings related to the Albany Housing Partnership grant. Mentioned an organization called Grid Alternatives that donate panels via grantors and funders. Certification training in the community results in a workforce development angle.
 - b) Subcommittee members are reaching out to National Grid to come in and talk again about LED street lighting.
 - c) Sandy Misiewicz mentioned that RPI's Lighting Program looked at the length of Central Avenue (LED) and that she could get feedback to the subcommittee.
- 4) Urban Agriculture Subcommittee Report
 - a) Scott Kellogg reported that the summer had been busy. Hired a gardening coordinator to facilitate getting produce to South End farmers market.
- 5) Built Environment and Land Use Subcommittee Report
 - a) Shadi Khadivi noted the group's objective is to make sure we finish a project successfully. Now that there is a Water Subcommittee it would be good to collaborate as some of the initiatives deal with run off from hard surface.
 - b) Scheduled to meet in 3 weeks. Will send a note out to the entire SAC.
- 6) Transportation Subcommittee Report
 - a) Sandy Misiewicz highlighted that a challenge is trying to find something tangible that is reasonable for the SAC to be engaged in. The three most active initiatives are the 787 Hudson Waterfront, Albany Complete Streets, and the Albany Multiuse Pathway.
 - b) Nearly ½ of the recommendations or strategies in the annual report are from the Transportation Subcommittee.
 - c) Shadi Khadivi inquired about the 787 Plan and the possibility for rethinking land use/zoning and reducing exits and ramps. Sandy Misiewicz noted in the current climate there is a commitment to drivers and preserving/maintaining infrastructure.
- 7) Outreach Subcommittee Report
 - a) Lori Quillen reminded the group to please send a note to the entire SAC when subcommittees meet.
 - b) Ewa Sobczynska is looking for shared calendar.
 - c) Since the last meeting, the SAC has moved forward with a Madison Theater collaboration. Subcommittee members have nominated relevant documentary films and will attend community screenings to engage with the public.
 - d) Scheduled screenings include: Plant this Movie (October 27, Scott Kellogg), Urbanized (November 24, Shadi Khadivi), and

Chasing Ice (Dec 15, Pete Sheehan). Events will be done in partnership with Green Drinks of Albany.

7. Discussion of next meeting on October 20, 2015
 - a. The majority of the meeting will be a prioritization exercise with VHB.
 - b. Frank Zeoli will discuss the EPA and USDA waste program.
 - c. Kate Lawrence will let the new Energy Manager Kevin Luteran (starting Oct 12) know about future SAC meetings.
8. Adjournment

Lori Quillen, October 18, 2015