



SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

Meeting Minutes: Thursday, October 4, 2018

Attending: Ewa Sobczynska (Secretary), Peter Sheehan (Acting Chair), Randy Milano, Lauren Alpert, Scott Kellogg, Laurie Wheelock, Andre Lake, Daniel Kirk-Davidoff, Tina Lieberman, Angelica Kang, Andre Lake (arrived late)

Absent: Frank Zeoli, Bill Trudeau, Sandy Misiewicz, Chris Spencer, Allison Bradley, Joe Coffey, Jill Kasow

1. Regular Business

- Pete Sheehan called the meeting to order. It was noted that the meeting did not have a quorum of voting SAC members so the election of new SAC officers and voting on the August 2nd minutes was delayed till later in the meeting once an additional SAC member was present.
- Public comment period (about 5 members of public were present):
 - Michele Rogan from Affordable Housing Partnership gave a short update on the Eco District project and grant. It took about 2 years for the project to be signed and they are currently drafting RFPs for solar companies to bid on.
 - Dylan Zhang – he was present at the June meeting and was curious about an update on CCA. Tina Lieberman shared that the CCA committee presented to the City officials and Kathy Fahey (Common Council member) introduced a legislation that is non-binding for the City to investigate CCA. Council member Fahey asked if SAC could write a letter supporting such a legislation. Richard Berkley, Executive Director at Public Utility Law Project of New York, will come to the next SAC meeting (he was unable to come to October 4 meeting). Tina suggested that any interested member of the public can contact her for more info and also suggested to contact your Common Council member in support of the CCA legislation. Daniel Kirk-Davidoff inquired whether other regional cities could join in after Albany (Tina: yes).

2. New business

- Climate Smart Communities, Tara Donadio, Clean Energy Communities Coordinator, Capital District Regional Planning Commission. Ms. Donadio presented the background on the [Climate Smart Communities](#) program (Albany is Bronze certified in 2014, see 2014 report [here](#), with links to the key actions/commitments) and shared that the City of Albany is up for re-certification in 2019. The application is due by July 5th, 2019, but there are a number of actions that would need to be completed in



advance in order to for the City to meet this deadline. One of the key items is to undertake GHG inventory which was last completed in 2010 with a DEC grant. It is now over 5 years old so it's not eligible. The City would also need to re-establish the coordinator for the Climate Smart Communities – it's now a required action; it would also need to confirm a consultative body, like the SAC (for ex. by providing minutes of meetings). Tina asked about the benefits of re-certification. Ms. Donadio indicated that Albany is only one of the 20 communities to complete the certification in NY state, so it's worth continuing. In addition, there are specific Climate Smart Communities grants that the City is eligible for, because of certification (and gets priority for). These grants are good for planning activities. Ewa inquired whether Albany has applied for those in the past – Ms. Donadio will double check on that. She indicated Albany could apply for a one of these grants to undertake a new GHG inventory. For the 2019 certification, the City would need to lists initiatives that were either completed or can be completed by July 2019. The SAC members discussed that they would like to support the City in updating the application so that Albany can be re-certified. It was agreed that during the next meeting (December), Lauren will bring the required documentation (online) and Ms. Donadio will join as well. The SAC members can support the application process.

3. Commissioner updates

- No updates from DGS/Engineering (Randy Milano) since last meeting.
- Lauren Alpert asked the SAC member to participate (as volunteers) and advertise the “bike count” exercise that takes place bi-annually and is coming up the week of October 15th (also through Facebook page). Ewa inquired whether MOES has put together any data and/or graphic in regards to the last few bike counts. Lauren indicated that there's a new volunteer at the Department that will help MOES put this together and that she would share the graphics when they're available. Lauren will send follow up e-mail on this. Lauren also shared the upcoming event on October 9 which is for Lincoln Park Master plan (she'll share flier for that).
- Tina inquired about the \$90 annual assessment fee for garbage that was proposed in Mayor's budget for 2019 (for all residents). Tina suggested that in the future, and per the plan that was presented by the Mayor in 2017, the City should consider pay-as-you-throw, which can serve as an incentive for residents to recycle more (including composting); the flat fee is not an incentive. Lauren inquired whether Tina was aware of any other municipalities of the same size as Albany that do pay as you throw; Tina indicated that Ithaca and some cities in Massachusetts do that and that she would look into that further. Lauren suggested the Committee starts looking at it.

4. Committee updates

- Zero Waste follow-up: Tina provided the SAC members a summary of the Zero Waste Jazz event that took place in early September. There was a follow-up meeting with DGS to review the lessons learned from the event on October 3rd. One of the



proposals was to have more drop-off sites and education around composting and food waste disposal. Community Gardens were one suggested drop-off location but they are volunteer run so they would need to be available to monitor drop off. Tina mention a DEC grant that the City could apply for (80-20) that would cover staffing costs for that; Albany schools can also apply for these grants. Jazz festival work very well as a zero-waste event. However, there's a limit what can be done because of the number of volunteers that need to be involved. Tina would like to continue consulting with other organization and neighborhood associations to make sure their events are zero-waste. Tina's group came up with a flier for the event: Are you a wishful recycler. There's also a forum coming up for restaurant owners (Schenectady food waste coordinator is organizing) on food waste.

- As a follow up to the SAC discussion in August, Tina suggested that a new SAC Sub-committee be created, called Zero Waste Education Sub-committee. Tina made a motion to create the sub-committee. All present voting members seconded and approved the motion to create a new Sub-Committee.
- Outreach: Ewa Sobczynska updated the SAC members on the newly re-activated Outreach Subcommittee. The SC had meetings in June and September. The focus over the next few months will be to continue and expand outreach to Neighborhood Associations (NA) to discuss what sustainability is, what the City is doing in this regard and what SAC is (and opportunities to get involved). Andre inquired who the NA audience us and how we can also reach out to renters. Homeowners, if property is rented, don't always pass on information. Ewa acknowledged this is a concern although the audience of NAs is diverse and include renters. There are other venues such as tenants' groups, PTAs/schools, cafes, etc. Tina inquired whether we could also help to spread the word on renewable energy options for the residents, including through Solarize Albany. There was a discussion about whether particular suppliers can also be endorsed and it was determined that SAC should not endorse or promote private (for-profit) suppliers.
- Energy: Pete Sheehan provided a short update on the EcoVillage project that is just taking off. In terms of LED streetlights process, the Subcommittee is also following up on this with the City. The Subcommittee is also interested in working with IDA to require any developers that get IDA funding to do more energy efficiency activities (and make it a requirement). Lauren indicated that it's already included in the Zoning Code and Pete suggested that developers should be encouraged to go beyond the Code. The Subcommittee is also following up on the meeting with the Albany City School Superintendent in regards to teaching sustainability curriculum and SAC/Energy Subcommittee members involvement.
- SAC bi-annual report: Ewa Sobczynska thanked the Sub-committee chairs for sending the SC reports (Transport, Energy, Outreach and Urban agriculture). She is currently working on the draft report that she will serve with the Chair and Vice Chair shortly. The Chair and Vice Chair will work on updating the Appendix 3 and 4 of the report.



- Ewa Sobczynska suggested that any upcoming Sub-committee meeting is sent out to all SAC member in cc as a Google Calendar invitation so that all SAC members are aware of the upcoming meetings. She is happy to consult any SC chairs on capacity building.

5. Elect new Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretaries/August minutes

- Ewa Sobczynska introduced the process for election of the new SAC officers. Jill Kasow has stepped down as a Chair and Ewa Sobczynska stepped down as a Secretary. All positions are therefore open. Daniel motioned to nominate Pete as the new Chair – all 8 voting members voted yes. Pete motioned to nominate Tina for Vice-Chair - all 8 voting members voted yes. Ewa motioned to nominate Daniel for the Secretary - all 8 voting members voted yes.
- Randy motioned to adopt the August minutes (edited for clarity and factual information during the meeting). Daniel seconded, all 8 voting members voted yes.

6. Action Items/ Discussion of next meeting on December 6

- Tina suggested the SAC drafts a letter in support of the CCA legislation. There was a discussion whether this can be achieved in-between SAC meetings and the Counsel suggested this should be prepared and discussed for the December SAC meeting. Tina will prepare this letter and share in advance of December meeting and the letter will be discussed and voted up in December.
- December meeting agenda items: Richard Berkley on CCA; Lauren Alpert with Climate Smart Communities

7. Adjournment

Minutes prepared by Ewa Sobczynska

October 18, 2018