

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

April 19, 2006 - Meeting Minutes

4:30 p.m. - City Hall – 2nd Floor – Community Room

Members Present: Bill Hughes, Tom Hohm, Bill Steinmann, and Ted Lupina

Approved Absence: Jim Jeakle

Staff: Carolyn Rutland

Others: Casey Gershon (membership applicant), Steve Harlow (membership applicant), Brian Dubrish (student), and Commissioner David Anderson

APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF: **March 15, 2006:** Draft minutes were corrected as follows: Delete “Comments by Commissioners: None.” The minutes were approved as corrected.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Change “COMMENTS BY ECC MEMEBERS” to “MEMBERS.” After COMMENTS BY ECC MEMBERS, add “Interviews of Membership Applicants.” Under SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS, add “Tree Committee (Lupina).” The agenda was approved as amended.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Contact for Kalamazoo River Clean-Up – Pat Fenn, Kalamazoo River Watershed Council, 978-4606. The Kalamazoo County Environmental Health Advisory Council has sent a letter (dated March 7, 2006) and resolution to the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners pertaining to methamphetamine contamination in Kalamazoo County. The State of Michigan is having Pollution Prevention Week September 18-24, 2006. Contact for sustainable business practices at Michigan Department of Environmental Quality – Audrey Wierenga, 269-567-3509 (wierenga@michigan.gov). Several articles in the April 17, 2006 City Life was noted: “City closing in on plan for Woods Lake,” “Earth Day events set to nurture the environment and “Earth Day Schedule.” Marc Hatton (City staff) will visit the June 21 meeting to present information about sustainable building and Leadership in Engineering and Environmental Design. Dick Skalski (City staff) will visit the May 17th meeting to present an update on the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. Becky Patterson has resigned from the ECC.

COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS: David Anderson remarked that he was pleased with the ECC response to his suggestions about sustainable building policies for the City of Kalamazoo. He has met with City Manager Ken Collard about ways to advance these ideas. One possibility is through the City administration and Manager’s office. Another is through political advocacy, which Commissioner Anderson is willing to do.

COMMENTS BY ECC MEMBERS: None

COMMENTS BY OTHERS: None

INTERVIEWS OF APPLICANTS: Membership applicants Casey Gershon and Steve Harlow were introduced. Copies of their applications were distributed. It was moved and seconded that both applicants be recommended to the City Commission for membership on the Environmental Concerns Committee. The motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: Environmental Building Standards – The status of the draft letter to the City Commission was discussed. Several edits from Commissioner Anderson were accepted by consensus. It was moved and seconded that the letter be finalized and sent to the City Manager’s office. The motion carried.

Alternative Fuels/Biodiesel – ECC members were urged to submit questions to Carolyn Rutland (rutlandc@kalamazoocty.org) about the City fleet vehicles (non-Metro Transportation) for the fleet manager, Craig Norrod. The ECC is interested in the status of replacement of the Metro bus that burned recently on West Main. Someone from the WMU biodiesel research team will be invited to make a presentation at the May 17th meeting.

OLD BUSINESS (continued): Non-motorized Transportation – Commissioner Anderson remarked that there would be a “Ride Your Bike to Work Day” in May. It was moved and seconded that the ECC support Ride Your Bike to Work Day and that such support be cited in any pertinent City Commission resolution. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS: A stormwater pretreatment unit has been installed at the City’s Metro garage to prevent undesirable discharge to surface water at VerSluis Park. The possibility of contamination in soils excavated during the installation has been resolved.

The City’s Environmental Services Division has been assisting the Department of Public Safety with environmental questions regarding possible locations of a new training center. Examples include the presence of regulated wetlands and prior use of a property. One suggested site has a large area of wetlands. Another suggested site is the east side of Nazareth Road north of East Michigan. Commissioner Anderson commented that it would be important to ensure that a training center would be the best use of this City-owned property, especially in light of the Kalamazoo Promise.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS: Planning Commission – Tom Hohm reported that the March denial of a special use permit for Ruggers Up and Under was overturned at the Planning Commission’s April meeting. The New Life Fellowship Church received a special use permit for its permanent use of a former Kalamazoo Public School elementary school building.

PRAB – Bill Hughes reported that consideration of City-owned lots in the Winchell Neighborhood is still in the City Attorney’s Office; no recommendation has been made to the City Commission. Hughes informed PRAB of the ECC’s support of these lots remaining in public use.

Woods Lake – The City (Parks and Recreation Department), the Oakwood Neighborhood Association, Friends of Woods Lake (FOWL), and Larry Harris & Associates are cooperating on preparation of a Master Plan for the Woods Lake parks. Discussions are open for public comments and are held at the Oakwood Neighborhood Association office on Laird.

Tree Committee – Ted Lupina reported that two removals were approved due to City sewer installation on Belard Street and replaced 2-for-1 in-kind. The Tree Committee also discussed the likely presence of the emerald ash-borer beetle in Milham Park, pending final identification confirmation by the State Entomologist. There are no state mitigation funds.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Transcribed and respectfully submitted,



Environmental Services Accounts Coordinator/Secretary
Department of Public Services
Environmental Services Division
Harrison Street Facility