

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

June 21, 2006 - Meeting Minutes

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

- Members Present:** Ted Lupina, Bill Steinmann, Tom Hohm, James Jeakle, Steven Harlow, Bill Hughes, Casey Gershon, Travis Meier and Colleen Pritchard
- Approved Absence:** Bev DeVries
- Staff:** Mark Hatton (Community Planning & Development) and Carolyn Rutland (Staff Liaison)
- Others:** David Anderson (City Commission Liaison), Aaron Apperlee and Scott Paul (both from Citizens for Global Solutions), Tristan Brown (WMU Bronco Biodiesel), Colleen Prichard (Applicant for ECC Membership), and Sardar M Rahmanoghli, Rahima Jami, Janiba Husseinai, Mhmed Daup Zazi, Amin-uddin Muzafary, Ahmach Shah Ramazan, and Dr. Burhanuddah Shinwari (all elected members of the General Assembly of Afghanistan)

INTRODUCTIONS: All guests and ECC members introduced themselves and stated their jobs and/or government responsibilities. The ECC members explained their individual interest in the ECC.

APPROVAL OF May 17, 2006 Meeting Minutes: A motion was made to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded and approved.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: A motion was made to approve the agenda; the motion was seconded and approved.

COMMENTS BY OTHERS: Tristan Brown gave a brief update on the Bronco Biodiesel project. Since their meeting with Bill Schomisch on June 9, 2006, the team has had a meeting with Metro's head mechanic/garage manager. All are in favor of Metro buses using B5 (5% biodiesel blend). A proposal is being prepared for City Commission approval for use of a facility at the Water Reclamation Plant and for the City using the fuels. A letter of endorsement would be helpful. Mr. Brown will continue to send updates on the project to the ECC. There was a request for information about the nature of biodiesels; typically biodiesels are produced from oils not fit for human consumption.

Marc Hatton presented information about environmentally sustainable building practices and the Davis Creek Business Park project. He provided a handout about LEED and explained that it is a tool developed to gauge or measure how “green” a building or building site is. It is basically a checklist. Mr. Hatton also presented the development standards for the Davis Creek project, which have been derived from LEED. He stressed the importance of “walking before running,” explaining that these standards are not intended to be comprehensive for the entire City or Kalamazoo. The business park will be business friendly and environmentally friendly. It is located on East Cork Street, at the site of the former Lakeside Refinery. This was a grossly contaminated site (Superfund) that the state and federal regulatory agencies have spent over \$12M cleaning up. Environmental issues remain that the MDEQ will continue to address. The Davis Creek project involves the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, the MDEQ, and the City administration and staff. The sites in the business park will not be parceled ahead of time; they will be divided and sold as needed by clients. Developers at the park will agree to use the City’s standards. The City’s standards have two sections, requirements and options. Open space is required to be a minimum 40% of every lot. Impervious surfaces will be discontinuous with vegetated strips. Stormwater management is the most important feature of the business park, because infiltration can not be allowed to push contaminated groundwater to Davis Creek. Vegetation swales will guide stormwater to basins and wetlands before it is discharged to Davis Creek. Parking lots will be subdivided into “rooms” with specific requirements. Parking lots must have 25% tree cover within 15 years to reduce the heat index of the lot. Landscaping will require native trees and shrubs and low maintenance grass; the City has recommended lists of these. A maximum of 5% of open space may be grass. There are requirements for irrigation and lighting; energy use requirements comply with the Michigan Energy Code. Options in the Davis Creek Business Park development standards include rain gardens, alternate transportation, etc. In response to questions, Mr. Hatton stated that the standards attempt to strike a balance among Michigan market conditions, tax levels, and attracting business; they are a reasonable place to start. The City has a \$725K grant (half the infrastructure costs) from the Department of Commerce. The stormwater management basins are part of the infrastructure. Tax increment financing is one of the incentives for businesses to locate in the park. The City has a \$200K EPA grant that includes funds for sustainable development planning for the park to help developers offset their increased planning costs. The Kalamazoo area has the local design capacity to encourage use of the standards. Commissioner Anderson commented that standards like these are standard in facilities management and that the City needs a mechanism for suggesting use of these standards in any development or building project. The Davis Creek Business Park Development Standards will eventually be on the City’s website.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Interview of applicant – A motion was made to recommend Travis G. Brown to the City Commission for ECC membership. The motion was seconded and approved.
2. Urban Environmental Accords – Steve Harlow explained that US nonparticipation in the Kyoto Accords was discussed in November 2005 at the UN meeting on climate change. At the meeting, US mayors indicated a strong interest in environmental sustainability. The Urban Environmental Accords are a result of that discussion. Fifteen to 20 US cities have adopted the accords; over 100 cities worldwide have adopted them, including Kabul, Afghanistan. The Urban Environmental Accords are intended to be non-binding and aspirational (not technical). Citizens for Global Solutions would like to see Kalamazoo adopt the UEA; adoption would support many of the topics discussed above. Adoption would help Kalamazoo be a model for other cities. The City of Kalamazoo has

some of the information, but not all, regarding where we are in terms of the goals of the UEA. Citizens for Global Solutions can continue providing educational support, for example, online resources. Tristan Brown commented that other organizations in Kalamazoo (e.g., The Nature Center, Wild Ones) are already working on the goals or already meeting them. Bronco Biodiesel is an example of a project that addresses at least two of the goals. The City's recycling program and wellhead protection program are others. A group at Kalamazoo College is working to get the college to meet LEED certification standards. He is preparing a PowerPoint presentation of what is actually being accomplished in Kalamazoo. The ECC agreed to consider a proposal of exactly what it is being asked to do in supporting the UEA. This would be a powerful tool for helping focus on appropriate issues and steps. The ECC will reconsider the proposal at its July meeting.

3. A City of Kalamazoo citizen has expressed concern about the location of the new Intermodal Transportation center, specifically air pollution from the bus exhaust and noise pollution from the vehicle back-up beeping. The ECC notes these concerns and will continue its efforts to improve exhaust quality, recognizing that Metro must meet a federal January 1, 2007 deadline which will have a positive impact on exhaust quality.
4. Pet Waste Ordinance – A City of Kalamazoo citizen has asked the ECC to re-address this issue. A copy of the previous draft ordinance prepared by the ECC will be found and distributed.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: All reports were postponed to the July meeting

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Transcribed and respectfully submitted,



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