MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Manstrom, Chair; Lauri Holmes; Gail Walter; Aaron Wright

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Matt Fletcher, Alex Maldonado, Phil Dietrich, David Kroening

STAFF: Malissa Drzick, Staff Liaison; Sara Jo Shipley, Redevelopment Manager; Amy Thomas, Recording Secretary

GUESTS: David Anderson, City Commissioner; Mary Griffith, ECC applicant; Deirdre Courtney, WMU PhD graduate student and member of the Portage Environmental Board; Pascal Valbrune, Miguel Díaz, Augusto Dominguez, WMU students present as observers.

1. ROLL CALL.
   - A quorum of members was present and the meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (March 21, 2018).
   - Mr. Wright advised that the FFE funds cannot be used to address the Eastside/Northside nuisance odor. That information should be added to the March Minutes.
   - Ms. Holmes, supported by Mr. Wright, moved approval of the March 21st Minutes as amended. With a voice vote the motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.
   - There were no changes to the agenda.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS.
   - Mr. Maldonado and Ms. Button will no longer be present at the ECC meetings but will have associate memberships. The ECC now has seven members; four members will be required for quorum.
   - Ms. Walter advised that the four Peregrine Falcon chicks will be banded tomorrow around 7 a.m. They are 22 days old.
   - Ms. Drzick stated that Public Services week starts on May 21st. On May 22nd and 24th there will be tours at the City of Kalamazoo Water Reclamation Plan (Waste Water Plant) on Harrison Street. The Water Department will be providing tours and presentations at the Stockbridge facility on May 21st and 23rd from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Both facilities are open to the public. Commissioner Anderson suggested that announcements regarding this event should be submitted to Neal Conway in the City Manager’s Office as a press release.
   - Commissioner Anderson referred to an article in the Wall Street Journal about the declining market in China for recycling that is produced in the United Stated. Cans and paper have the most value. Single-stream recycling tends to cause contaminated recycling because it’s dirty and then it gets transferred to the waste stream. The City of Kalamazoo has a solid waste millage increase to pay for the single-stream recycling. There is an effort to figure out how to use recycled plastics.
   - Commissioner Anderson mentioned that 85 percent of lots in the City do not meet size requirements for redevelopment. Many of them had houses in the past but no longer meet the current standards. There will be zoning work to change that and make them buildable again. Changes to the building code might be required to address expectations for building houses that don’t use as much energy.

5. COMMENTS BY OTHERS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS.
   - None

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.
   **City of Kalamazoo Climate Action Plan – Sara Jo Shipley (COK) Presentation.**
   - The City of Kalamazoo is scheduled to implement the Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2019. The ECC is a partner in that process. Deirdra Courtney was present to discuss the Plan. She teaches environmental studies and anthropology at WMU. Her professor, Denise Keele, suggested that Ms. Courtney attend the ECC meeting.
   - Sara Jo Shipley, Brownfield Redevelopment Project Manager, is in charge of developing the CAP. The Climate Action Plan written by WMU students was not an action-oriented plan and didn’t align with the goals of the City’s Plan. She
has a work plan, which is a basic outline of how she hopes to move forward with the CAP. She is hoping to have it finished by October of this year.

- Ms. Shiplei inquired how the ECC wants to be involved with executing the plan. There will be a larger sustainability plan but that is regional, not just for the City. The City needs a smaller scale plan with goals to get started on with the possibility of a larger plan in the future.
- There is a Climate Action Plan and a Sustainability Plan. The intention is to include the County in the sustainability plan. Mr. Wright inquired what the additional components would be in the sustainability plan. Ms. Shiplei advised that social equity and the economy would be examples of new sectors that could be included.
- The goal of the CAP is to determine what the City can do to affect climate action and then engage partners within the City to meet the goals of the plan.
- Ms. Courtney inquired about the rationale for having a climate action plan vs. a sustainability plan or a resiliency plan, particularly as it relates to economics. Ms. Shiplei advised that the CAP is focused more on the environment. The intention is to coordinate the goals of the plan with available funding.
- As an example regarding resilience, the climate is supposed to get hotter and wetter. Will people be using more air conditioning as a result of that change? This is an adaption issue that will need to be considered. The primary focus would be reducing our carbon footprint and introducing renewable energy and waste reduction.
- Ms. Shiplei referred to ICLEI (International Congress on Local Environmental Issues), which is an international organization focused on municipalities and climate change. Ann Arbor and Cincinnati both have good examples of Climate Action Plans. The Green Umbrella, which is separate from the sustainability office, encompasses private, non-profits and government from the entire region.
- The City of Kalamazoo is working to renew their membership with the ICLEI. They have a program that people can use to add data to calculate their green house gas emissions. Ms. Shiplei advised that the calculations will not be exact but will rely on averages and best known cases.
- Mr. Wright inquired if the CAP will address literature which indicates that climate change is not a real issue. Mr. Manstrom stated that City staff will follow the charge in the Master Plan, which requires the creation of a Climate Action Plan. Ms. Courtney commented that having a resiliency plan would address natural disasters, such as flooding. That is a good way to get naysayers on board with the CAP since flooding can be indicative of climate change.
- Ms. Shiplei will write a report and distribute it to the subcommittees. She would like to know if anyone is interested in being involved in those subcommittees. Each sub-committee will appoint a chairperson. They will have a mission and vision statement, they will create goals on objectives and have a potential scenario plan for adaptation. They will also make recommendations and have metrics for tracking the data.
- In five years we want to say we met the goal, surpassed the goal, or did not meet the goal. We need to be realistic on what we can track.
- There will likely be five or six subcommittees. The categories have not been finalized yet but some of the topics will probably be energy usage, natural features protection and water ways, non-motorized transportation, trails, etc. The metrics, tracking and source of the data will be important. It is also important to set realistic goals that align with what the City can actually do.
- The subcommittees will help write the chapters in the CAP. Ms. Shiplei will distribute the draft CAP to City departments to request input. Comments will be integrated into the draft and then presented to the subcommittees for further input.
- There should be community outreach during the creation of the CAP; the City Planner is helping coordinate the outreach. Neighborhood groups, Green Drinks, clubs on WMU campus, etc. might provide input. There will be a sustainability fair/climate action fair to show who will be involved with the CAP and how it will be tracked, etc. Then Ms. Shiplei will write the plan.
- She would like to have a booklet with details about the CAP to distribute to boards and commissions to help guide their decisions. There will probably be a biannual review of the plan.
- Subcommittee members can live and/or work in the City as long as they are interested in the topics and have some expertise or knowledge.
- Ms. Holmes suggested having descriptions of the subcommittees to give to people we are asking to serve, along with the meeting dates, times, etc. Ms. Shiplei plans to write some basis reports to help reduce the amount of time the subcommittees have to meet.
Ms. Courtney mentioned that the City of Kalamazoo Capital Improvement Plan might already have identified goals that could be incorporated into the CAP. For example, parks personnel might already be dealing with environment issues and they might provide support on a subcommittee.

Mr. Manstrom advised that there is a Climate Focus Group at WMU. Ms. Shipley stated that there has not been an issue so far with finding people to serve on subcommittees.

Ms. Shipley wants to use as many numbers/dollars as possible to show priorities in the work plan. There will be a focus on projects that will have the biggest pay-off and she will let people know why these projects will make a difference. She will plan on providing an update to the ECC in about three months.

**Natural Features Protection Overlay.**

- Mr. Manstrom has been serving on the Natural Features Protection Overlay Committee. The overlay might not be finalized in time to address development of the Vermeuilen property. There is a separate group called the Asylum Lake Policy and Management Council that is working with the City to make sure that development doesn’t have negative effects on the Asylum Lake Preserve. The overlay will also help govern development of other areas in the City. Commissioner Anderson advised that the overlay will be an additional site plan requirement.

- Christina Anderson, City Planner, wants to have the overlay completed this year. The developer for the Vermeuilen property has not yet submitted definite plans to the City but he has suggested that a car wash will be part of the plan.

- Mr. Wright inquired where the property line is for the Preserve property. Ms. Holmes stated that there is a fence about half way up the hill to mark the property line. Run-off from the development on the Vermeuilen site onto the Preserve property is a concern. The Oak trees on the two properties are also a concern but they might be used as a natural barrier between the development and the Preserve.

- Mr. Manstrom stated that the Vermeuilen property is 17 acres; the car wash will cover 4 of those acres. The Vermeuilen property is currently zoned residential but it is designated as commercial zoning in the future land use plan.

- Natural features in the city will be identified and there will be a plan for protecting them during development. Further updates will be provided as information becomes available.

**East Side Persistent Odor Updates.**

- Mr. Wright referred to communication between City staff and the Vice President of Graphic Packaging. Ms. Drzick stated that Graphic Packaging is willing to look into their process that contributes to the odor.

- City staff contacted the DEQ air quality representative who provided documentation for review. Unless there is a major health risk, or there are more complaints, there is nothing the DEQ can implement.

- Graphic Packaging has been cited eight times for Rule 901 violations. It is unclear if they have provided a written response to the last violation.

- Commissioner Anderson sent an e-mail to James Baker, Director of Public Services, and he assigned Jim Cornell to follow up with the odor issue. They are trying to work on it collaboratively but more specifics or a timeline have not been provided yet.

- Ms. Drzick was not aware of any other violations. City staff are using the only leverage they have to get this issue resolved. Commissioner Anderson mentioned that the aroma from Graphic Packaging is part of their paper and/or cardboard recycling process.

- Mr. Wright suggested that public pressure might influence a positive change. Ms. Drzick emphasized the need for an amicable resolution while keeping public concerns in mind.

**Committee Membership.**

- Mr. Manstrom stated that the ECC is down to seven active members; four members will be required for quorum. Matt Miller is an ECC applicant and a student at the Citadel. He is not scheduled to graduate until 2019 in South Carolina. Mr. Manstrom suggested to Mr. Miller that if he is in Kalamazoo during the summer and able to attend meetings, the ECC might be able to offer him an associate membership. He has not responded to that offer.

- Mary Griffith was present to discuss her application to the ECC. She is a WMU student studying environmental sustainability. She recently switched from studying biology to geology. She is interested in environmental issues and would like to be involved with the ECC.

- Ms. Griffith was involved with a peer education group in high school. They studied environmental justice, toxins and personal body products.
Ms. Griffith stated that she is normally done with classes and work by 3 p.m. and should be available to attend the ECC meetings. Also, she lives near city hall where the meetings are held. She works at a call center and has experience with de-escalating conversations.

She has three more years at WMU and plans to study hydrogeology. She is hoping to work as a surveyor to monitor ground water quality. Ground water and water in general are her main interests. She would like to make Kalamazoo a more sustainable community.

**Ms. Holmes, supported by Mr. Wright, moved to recommend to the City Commission the approval of Mary Griffith to serve on the Environmental Concerns Committee. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.**

Commissioner Anderson stated that the applications are usually approved at the second City Commission meeting of the month.

Ms. Holmes left the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

**2017 Annual Report.**

Mr. Manstrom advised that he is working on the 2017 ECC Annual Report.

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

**Subcommittee Reports and Assignments.**

- Mr. Wright is assigned to the Parks and Recreation Board as observer but he has not attended a meeting recently.
- Mr. Manstrom is assigned to report on the Planning Commission meetings.
- Mr. Manstrom and Ms. Holmes are serving on the Asylum Lake Policy and Management Council.
- Mr. Dietrich serves on the Tree Committee.
- Ms. Walter spoke with Kay Chase about the Kalamazoo Environmental Council. Ms. Chase has been the Audubon representative to the KEC for several years. The KEC is not as active as it used to be. They organize the legislative breakfast in the spring but they don’t meet on a regular basis.
- Mr. Manstrom suggested removing the KEC from the ECC agenda unless they become active again. Ms. Walter will ask Ms. Chase to send her an e-mail if the KEC schedules a meeting.
- Ms. Walter stated that the KEC can endorse issues but not candidates. They invite area legislators to the nature center for the legislative breakfast. KEC members and audience members ask the state and county legislators questions pertaining to environmental issues. As an example, the legislators might be asked to provide an update about the Flint water crisis.
- With regard to Kalamazoo River Issues/Allied waste clean up, Ms. Drzick contacted Jamie who is working on the Canoe the Kzoo Campaign; details are on the Watershed Council’s website. Ms. Drzick will look into getting an update regarding the Allied site. Mr. Manstrom mentioned that one of the buildings on the former Allied Paper site has been redeveloped.
- Ashley at the Kalamazoo Nature Center was involved with the Climate Change Coalition but she has been promoted. She has advised her staff to focus on the Climate Action Plan.
- Mr. Manstrom requested that Ms. Griffith let him know which committee she would like to be involved with.

**WMU Bird Friendly Buildings Initiative.**

- Ms. Walter contacted WMU staff and made them aware of the number of birds killed by buildings, particularly during migration. People have provided her with pictures of dead birds they have found on campus.
- Ms. Walter met with Dr. Keele and she is enthused about the bird-friendly building initiative. Dr. Keele would like to plan a forum for fall when students have returned; Ms. Walter would provide presentations about the initiative. Dr. Keele would like to engage students on this issue and get resolutions from the students to present to the administration regarding commitments to bird-friendly building designs at the university. Ms. Walter is gathering a list of other campuses with bird-friendly initiatives.
- Ms. Walter received an e-mail from a university architect asking her to present to their group. She needs volunteers to generate consistent data. She will be meeting with Steve Keto’s group that takes care of the WMU grounds. Mr. Manstrom will make contact with Kalamazoo College students regarding this topic.
- iNaturalist is a free on-line application. You can take pictures of birds, bugs, leaves, etc., and the website can help with identification. Ms. Walter set up a project called Kalamazoo bird collisions that logs the time, date and location of the information, which is usually provided via Smart Phone. Ms. Walter will receive the data and use it to help mitigate issues with buildings where bird collisions are reported.
8. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: The subcommittee reports were postponed to a future meeting.
Kalamazoo River Issues (KRCC, KRWC, Allied, etc.)
Kalamazoo Environmental Council
Planning Commission
Tree Committee
Asylum Lake Policy & Management Council
Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Wellhead Protection Program Committee
Climate Change Coalition

9. ADJOURNMENT:
- The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Thomas, Recording Secretary