Environment and sustainability commission
Minutes
Aug. 7, 2019
Community Room, City Hall

Members present: Chair Clair Lukens, Abdi Ali, Nicole Ciulla, Stefan Collinet-Adler, Zoe Frank, Ryan Griffin, Larry Kraft, Jim Leuthner, Bridget Rathsack

Excused absence: Shaina Ashare, Katie Christiansen, Susan Bloyer

Staff present: Meg McMonigal, ESC liaison; Lauren Michaels, intern; Brian Hoffman, Director of building and energy

Guests: Katie Jones, Center for Energy and Environment (CEE); Jaren Schmelz

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. by Chair Lukens.

2. The minutes of the July 2019, meeting were approved with changes. (Ms. Ciulla and Mr. Leuthner abstained).

3. Discussion on Efficient Building Program – Brian Hoffman and Katie Jones

   Hoffman stated what staff is trying to do is take a step towards the CAP and this seems like an opportune time to tie it all together, including adding a web site. He added talking to businesses will include incentives, loans, and other programs that encourage businesses to become climate champions.

   Building and Energy Director Hoffman stated the ESC can help make this happen by providing input and by having ESC members involved with staff in the meetings with businesses and sharing updates with council. He stated this will be an overview of the program and where the city wants to go with this.

   Commissioner Kraft noted that Commissioner Frank might attend with staff and talk about the Roots and Shoots program and how the CAP developed.

   Jones added building owners can be connected to utility programs as well. Commissioner Griffin noted it would be helpful to have businesses start signing up for renewable energy also.

   Hoffman stated he is looking into solar for The Rec Center roof. Commissioner Kraft suggested having a solar garden company attend an ESC meeting as well. He will talk with the company about setting up a meeting with city staff.
4. City council report – Chair Lukens stated the report will highlight items the ESC is supportive of and concerns along with recommendations to the council. Lukens stated the written report format can be adapted each quarter, and noted she liked the organization of the report.

Lukens noted the new structure of the administrative positions related to environment and sustainability. The manager will be selected first, and then the manager will select the coordinator and associate roles.

*Commissioner Rathsack made a motion to send the report to council for the August 26th Study Session, Commissioner Griffin seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

5. Event recap and work group updates

- Solar Power Hours – Aug. 13 and 20 – City Council Chambers - 6:30 p.m.

- Living Streets Policy – Commissioner Griffin stated Deb Heiser, Engineering Director, sent him the report for feedback. He added the report will be sent to council this month for review as well. He stated it was first presented to council in March 2017 and was lacking in several areas. Staff has since been working on a revision of the policy, and the ESC will discuss the changes.

Commissioner Collinet-Adler noted comments made by folks who do not bike or walk, possibly due to physical disabilities, and that use door to door cars. For these folks, he stated, Living Streets can be threatening.

Griffin noted the policy will be inclusive of those with disabilities and children but noted this should be more explicit in the policy. He added a detailed plan needs to follow this policy, or a plan of when measure would be implemented.

Kraft stated this could be tied into the transportation goals of the climate action plan as well. He added planting trees is also something that could be added into the policy, along with native grasses, and rain gardens.

ESC Liaison McMonigal encouraged the ESC members to read the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, which includes walking, biking and transportation information. It also includes information on the city’s planting program and tree replacement policy.
Griffin and Collinet-Adler stated in summary, the policy should include information on vulnerable users, children, quantifiable goals, stormwater, and additional language on native plants and trees, and rain gardens.

Commissioner Griffin made a motion stating he will respond to Ms. Heiser that the ESC supports the purpose and direction of the Living Streets Policy, seconded by Commissioner Collinet-Adler, and it passed unanimously.

Additional Event reports -
- Solar Power Hours in council chambers from 6 – 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 13 and 20. Commissioner Ali gave an update on the program, and 9 – 10 people attended.
- Additionally, the RFP for the Solar United Neighbors program was submitted and once the installer is selected, will work for installation to be able to get federal tax credit.
- National Night Out – members of the ESC attended their respective meetings. Commissioner Rathsack stated she talked about composting to the group.
- Intern Michaels stated on Aug. 22 a community link resource fair event will be held at the ROC, for lower income residents. She will be at a table and encouraged others from the ESC to attend and work at the event.
- Griffin said the community bike ride, which had been rescheduled because of rain, was held, however it rained again that day and there was a communication glitch on Facebook, so there was not much participation in the event.

6. September agenda topics
   - Lotus rethinking
   - Benchmarking discussion

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.