

SUSTAINABLE LA CROSSE COMMISSION

Friday, January 29, 2010

Board Room B, La Crosse Center, 300 Harborview Plaza, La Crosse

1:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Marilyn Pedretti, Dan Bagniewski, Mike Giese, Jai Johnson, Brad Konkel, Wayne Olson, Jean Salk, Eric Schmidt, Rob Tyser

MEMBERS EXCUSED: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Nick Nichols, Tim Kabat, Karl Green, Steve O'Malley, Margaret Norden, Erica Black, Linda Schams, Jan Willik, John Parshall, Lance Fischer, Jerry Severson, Bryan Jostad, Jim Becker, Maureen Freedland, Doug Mormann, Brian Fukuda

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Marilyn Pedretti called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. The committee and guests gave self-introductions.

HISTORY OF LA CROSSE'S COUNTY/CITY EFFORTS

Karl Green reviewed the City's and County's efforts to achieve a sustainability plan and commission, as follows:

July 2007	Joint Oversight Committee on Sustainability (JOCS) was formed.
September 2007	Request for Proposal was awarded to Foth Engineers.
November 2007	JOCS decided not to proceed with a consultant.
December 2007	JOCS conducted a retreat to gain ideas.
April 2008	80 local government officials and community stakeholders attended the annual Collaboration Conference.
July 2008	Planning retreat was expanded to include department heads.
August 2008	JOCS began writing a strategic plan.
January 2009	Strategic plan was completed.
February 2009	La Crosse County Board approved the Strategic Plan.
March 2009	City of La Crosse Common Council approved the City's version of the Strategic Plan.
July 2009	La Crosse County Board created the Sustainable La Crosse Commission.
October 2009	Sustainable La Crosse Commission held its first meeting with elected officials.
November 2009	Applications were sought for community members.
December 2009	Full membership was announced.

REVIEW PROGRESS REPORT ON LA CROSSE COUNTY SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

Nick Nichols presented a summary by department of identified actions that were achieved, ongoing, and remaining. He identified the following areas that would need Commission attention:

- Consider adopting LEED standards for all new buildings and remodeling efforts;
- Encourage state policies for green purchasing;
- Work with all municipalities to establish a construction and demolition ordinance that would significantly increase recycling of these waste materials, and dispose of remaining construction and demolition waste at the County facility;
- Work with other non profits in our region to offset our energy use by installing wind turbines;
- Work with municipalities to pass ordinances banning burn barrels;
- Explore a program that will assist County staff in the purchase of housing that is within a certain distance from the facility in which they work, using a one-time grant or low-interest loan program;
- Develop a program that will assist County staff in the purchase of alternative vehicles, using a one-time grant or low interest loan program;
- Work to attract more living wage jobs to the County.

REVIEW PROGRESS REPORT ON CITY OF LA CROSSE SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

Tim Kabat presented the City's sustainability efforts, broken down by goal. The following were identified as needing Commission direction:

- Develop an energy conservation policy for all City facilities and implement it through promotion, education, employee training, and action;
- Utilize recycled single materials from the County's shingle recycling program;
- Develop a City eco-driving/smart-driving policy which could include mandatory car pooling, teleconferencing and telecommuting whenever possible, and reducing vehicle idle times;
- Encourage employees to live within City limits;
- Consider requiring the use of the La Crosse Municipal Airport for any City sponsored air travel such as attendance at meetings and conferences;
- Consider adopting an environmentally-preferred purchasing policy;
- Develop a policy for landscaping at City facilities to go chemical-free, and reduce watering and mowing;
- Develop Street Department policies to minimize use of winter salt and sand;
- Establish a baseline of waste generated;
- Implement a program to reduce, reuse, recycle for all facilities;
- Establish a baseline amount of paper usage and cost for each department;
- Establish water conservation policies and adopt a well field protection ordinance;
- Establish a comprehensive storm water management program for water quality and quantity;
- Develop a cross-departmental "green team";
- Work to increase food grown within the City;
- Develop an informational program to keep the public informed of sustainability practices;
- Periodically host an open house to review City's Strategic Plan for Sustainability.

Kabat also reviewed City goals that were in progress/ongoing.

REVIEW CITY OF ONALASKA SUSTAINABILITY ACTIVITIES

Mike Giese spoke about Onalaska's sustainability highlights, and future goals and projects. He spoke especially about the economic necessity that drives changes, and how the budget crisis brought about many changes at City Hall. He also emphasized Onalaska's membership in the EPA Water Sense program for water conservation practices. Other practices include a lighting audit of City-owned facilities, minimum MPG for fleet vehicles, computer shut-offs, comprehensive recycling at City buildings, and a tree planting initiative. They have established a "green team" that is facilitated by their Assistant Planner. Future goals include a locally grown food initiative with a farmers market in the downtown area, energy efficient lighting retrofit at City Hall, and expanded bike, walk, and bus facilities and services.

ROLE OF SUSTAINABLE LA CROSSE COMMISSION IN COMPLETING 2010 ACTION ITEMS

Using the goals identified in the presentations, Karl Green facilitated an exercise to identify three priorities for the City and four for the County. The following were chosen:

County

- Consider adopting LEED standards for all new buildings and remodeling efforts (since no new construction or remodeling projects are planned at present, a fourth item was also selected);
- Work with municipalities to pass ordinances banning burn barrels;
- Work with all municipalities to establish a construction and demolition ordinance that would significantly increase recycling of these waste materials, and dispose of remaining construction and demolition waste at the County facility;
- Work with other non profits in our region to offset our energy use by installing wind turbines.

City

- Develop an energy conservation policy for all City facilities and implement it through promotion, education, employee training, and action.
- Implement a program to reduce, reuse, recycle for all facilities
- Periodically host a public open house to present and review the City's Strategic Plan for Sustainability.

Further discussion included topics such as a potential storm water utility fee and commercial design standards for storm water systems, the shingle recycling program, and State policies on purchasing fuel efficient vehicles.

SETTING OF MEETING TIME & DATES

The Commission determined they would meet every month initially, and selected the fourth Thursday at 4:00 p.m. as a regular meeting time.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Johnson/Konkel to adjourn. **Motion carried unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Approved, February 25, 2010, Margaret Norden, Recorder