

## **SUSTAINABLE LA CROSSE COMMISSION**

Thursday, August 23, 2012

City Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room,  
400 La Crosse St.

4:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Marilyn Pedretti, Dan Bagniewski, Sharon Hampson, Wayne Olson, R. Jean Salk, Sara Sullivan, Dick Swantz, Diane Wulf

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Rob Tyser

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Nick Nichols, Amy Peterson, Nathan Patros, Keith Carlson, Dale Hexom, Glen Jenkins, Jessica Olson, Karl Green, Erica Black, Beth Piggish.

### **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Pedretti called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Glen Jenkins of Coulee Partners for Sustainability noticed the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Harvest Dinner scheduled for Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012; Sustainable cooking courses offered at the People's Food Co-op; Northwest Earth Institute will be held July 18, 2013; Wisconsin Association for Environmental Educators will hold a conference at UW-L "Creating a Community of Leaders"

### **APPROVE MINUTES OF JUNE 26, 2012**

**MOTION** by Hampson/Wulf to approve the minutes of June 26, 2012. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **STAFF REPORTS / INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**

- Peterson announced that the EPA Green Infrastructure Grant was submitted and selected as a recipient, awarding roughly \$100,000 in order to identify which green infrastructure projects will best help control flooding within the central part of the City.
- Peterson gave notice that the Climate Change Initiative drafted a brochure, to aid in their outreach campaign, and offered that it be available online at the Sustainable La Crosse Commission website and other various events throughout the La Crosse County area.
- Peterson announced that City of Dubuque, IA and the Sustainable City Network will be hosting the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Growing Sustainable Communities conference on October 3, 2012. **Motion** by Hampson/Sullivan recommending that Nick Nichols attend. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- Nichols announced that Western Technical College hosted the Sustainable Cities Regional Collaboration on June 7, 2012.
- Nichols announced his participation in a radio interview on WPR 88.9, alongside Peterson and Salk, outlining the Committee's work on recently published indicators report. A request was also made to have Mr. Green determine the number of internet hits that the report has received after being published online.
- Nichols provided information surrounding the County's interest in using recycled rubber tires for future asphalt projects. La Crosse County is looking into testing the new product as it is found to work well in cold climates. Also, the County is looking into providing tours of the gas to energy program located at the County landfill.

## **SUSTAINABLE EFFORTS IN THE TRANSIT DEPARTMENT – KEITH CARLSON**

- Keith Carlson reviewed the La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility's (MTU) 2011 Annual Report. Highlights include:
  - Ridership is the highest it has been in 29 years, totaling 1,255,407 riders.
  - A new Hybrid bus was put into service, improving fuel economy by 30% and reducing emissions by 90% when compared to their old diesel busses.
  - Acquired two Hybrid Toyota Prius sedans for support vehicles.
  - Replaced HVAC and lighting in the bus garage. The reduction of energy consumption, from this retrofit, will pay for itself in 1.5 years.
  - The green roof on top of the Grand River Station helps reduce stormwater run-off and lessens the impact to the City's existing stormwater infrastructure.
  - MTU was recently awarded a \$1.2 million "State of Good Repair" grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) which will be spent replacing three old diesel busses with new hybrid busses. This new technology will reduce emissions by 90%. These busses will be added to the fleet in 2013.
  - A new bus shelter was installed at a busy stop located on Mormon Coulee near Wal-Mart aimed to protect riders and their belongings during inclement weather conditions. The shelter also features solar powered lighting.
  - MTU is investigating the feasibility of incorporating compressed natural gas (CNG) into future bus replacements in 2013 and 2014.

## **GREEN TIER LEGACY COMMUNITY**

- Peterson outlined the intent of the Green Tier Legacy Community program. The program allows communities to be recognized as a leader within the State in terms of achieving exceptional environmental performance; and as a source for sharing benchmarks for improving economy, the environment, and quality of life. Green Tier Legacy Communities also have the benefit of having:
  - Direct access to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) expertise and technical assistance
  - Potential to receive discretionary funding and preference in awarding state grants
  - Creates a forum to be recognized for achievements in sustainable development
  - Advances position amongst competitive communities
  - Provides collaboration and information networking with experienced municipalities
  - Further information can be found at <http://greentiercommunities.org/>

**Motion** by Swantz/Sullivan to apply for Green Tier Legacy Community program. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## **SUSTAINABLE BUILDING POLICY**

- Patros outlined the City's Green Building Policy and the framework to achieve such goals. The intent of the policy is to reduce the City's operational costs, improve work productivity, and remain cognizant of reducing the ecological footprint. The four strategies include:
  1. Incorporating sustainable building practices to all City building projects, highlights include:
    - Achieving LEED Silver standards for new buildings and major renovations over 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup>.

- Minor renovations under 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, and equipment upgrades, and projects funded through the housing rehabilitation program shall meet LEED guidelines for the applicable renovation project.
  - Install green roof or long lasting roofs in new and existing buildings
  - Keep 100% stormwater onsite for new and existing building
- 2. The City shall finance projects at a level suitable to meet the policy requirements.
  - Use of sustainable building practices shall be accomplished within traditional project budgets or through incentives.
  - The City shall pursue federal, state and local incentives to facilitate the implementation of the Sustainable Building Policy for its own buildings.
- 3. Life cycle tracking shall be conducted on all new projects to achieve the highest, most cost effective performance possible over the life of the development.
- 4. All departments are responsible for incorporating the Sustainable Building Policy into capital improvements, purchasing practices and in training staff.
  - All contracts shall incorporate the Sustainable Building Policy goals and requirements, and require the receiving contractor to have knowledge and ability to apply of LEED standards.
  - Appropriate City project managers, maintenance and operations staff shall be given opportunities for sustainable building training.
  - The Sustainable La Crosse Commission shall provide and/or identify sustainable building training opportunities with assistance from the La Crosse County Sustainability Coordinator.

**Motion** by Jean Salk/Bagniewski to approve the City's Green Building Policy resolution. **Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **CITY'S REFUSE AND RECYCLING ORDINANCE CONCERNING SCAVENGING**

- Peterson reviewed the scavenging ordinance aimed to reduce litter along the City's boulevards and alleys. Discussion ensued; Hampson felt that unwanted materials on right-of-way is often marked free and is a way for residents to recycle each other's goods; Swantz clarified that items left on the boulevard, beyond the 24-hr trash pick-up timeframe, could be cited and that residents should take advantage of the listing services such as the La Crosse Tribune; Salk added Craigslist as another listing service; Pedretti asked if there will be warnings prior to being cited, and Hexom advised that the grace period ended June 1, 2012;
- Public comment from Jessica Olson, on her efforts creating a coordinated recycling program in the Goosetown Neighborhood during student move-out week. This event is held in partnership with the Landlord Association, Dynamic Recycling, and area food pantries. The location of the event is 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Vine Street. Sullivan added that social media needs more exposure in promoting such events.
- Hexom also shared that in October, the City Council will decide if big collection items will be charged per throw; and in 2014, a proposal will be made to automate trash collection by permitting only wheeled trash containers, provided by the City, and wheeled recycle bins. Waste collection will be fee driven based on the size of bin(s) being used (available sizes range from 95-45 gal.).

#### **ACTION ON STRATEGIC PLAN PROPOSED GOALS**

- Nichols requested to integrate the Goals of the Strategic Plan into the County's Strategic Plan. A question was raised as to whether or not the City would have to adopt a resolution reflecting the County's goals. Nichols and Pedretti did not think so. Salk sought to clarify that the

integration of the goals would be an addendum to the plan not a revision, as revisions should be made every 3-5 years. Pedretti offered to have this decision postponed until the next meeting. This item was referred until the next scheduled meeting.

**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER MEETING DATES**

- The next meeting is scheduled for October 25, 2012, and the December meeting will be skipped.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- The County Solid Waste Department is revising several tasks and would like to bring those updates to the commission.
- Tour cards for the County Land Fill will be discussed.

**NEXT MEETING: September 27, 2012**

**ADJOURN**

- **Motion** by Sullivan/Swantz. **Motion carried unanimously.** Chair Pedretti adjourned the meeting at 5:21 p.m.