

Community Environmental Advisory Commission

Regular Meeting

July 11, 2019 -- 6:00-8:00 p.m.

North Market, 4414 Humboldt Ave N

Board/Commission Members: Anthony Varriano, Brady Steigauf, Cody Welchlin, David Watts, Erin Niehoff, Jimmy Randolph, Katie Hill Brandt, Lisa Daniels, Marianna Hefte, Molly Ellis, Nicholas Minderman, Thomas Olsen, Tim Sexton (Quorum 9)

Guests: Brian Zakem, Kate Matusinec, Laura Scholl, Yordanose Solomone, Jeffrey Meek

Staff: Kelly Muellman, Kennedy Kruchoski

Call to Order

Erin Niehoff called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

Marianna Hefte read the following land acknowledgement statement:

“As we meet here today, we are reminded that Minneapolis is situated on the homelands of the Dakota people. An area that is steeped in rich Indigenous history, and today is home to Indigenous people from more than 30 different nations. As a City, we have a responsibility to care for the land on which we live and work and all of its natural surroundings. This stewardship is an integral part of our involvement in this commission, and we honor it as we begin our meeting. We now open up this space to discuss ways in which we can support Indigenous people in our community”.

Discussion items included the following topics:

1. There is an Indigenous Women exhibit on display at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.
2. The engagement subcommittee encouraged members to sign up to help table at upcoming events, including Indigenous Peoples' Day.
3. Members were encouraged to learn about the Green New Deal and its relationship to Indigenous perspectives. Erin shared the article [How to Indigenize the Green New Deal and environmental justice](#) from High Country News.

Members and guests introduced themselves.

Adoption of the Agenda + Acceptance of Minutes of June 6, 2019

CEAC members reviewed the agenda. Anthony Varriano requested the addition of a presentation from Metro Blooms before the group broke into subcommittees. Nick Minderman seconded this motion, and the subcommittee updates were moved to 6:35. The agenda with amendments was adopted, as well as the minutes from the June 6, 2019 meeting.

Announcements

- **Garden Survey** Members or leaders of community gardens, market gardens or urban farms in Minneapolis were invited to complete a brief, 10-minute Urban Agriculture Survey by July 12th, 2019. Also, everyone was invited to RSVP for one of two presentations of survey highlights. Learn more at www.minneapolismn.gov/UrbanAgSurvey or direct questions to Emma at Emma.Greenberg-Bell@minneapolismn.gov or 612-673-6106 or Claire at Claire.Baglien@minneapolismn.gov or 612-673-2466.
- July 21, 2019 Attend a **Toxic Sites Bus Tour** hosted by Northside churches. 1:30-4:00 PM. Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4150 Dupont Ave N, Minneapolis MN. <http://mpls-synod.org/event/toxic-sites-bus-tour/>
- The second **Minneapolis Food Action Plan** meeting is Wednesday, July 24, 2019 from 5:00-7:30 p.m. at East Side Neighborhood Services (1700 2nd St NE). Food Action Plan: Topic 2 is Diets & Community Demand.
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is looking for six new members for our **Environmental Justice Advisory Group**. The Environmental Justice Advisory Group meets every other month and provides recommendations and advises the MPCA Commissioner. Only advisory group at state level where the commissioner is in the same room as the advisory group. Application deadline is August 12, 2019. <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/about-mpca/mpca-and-environmental-justice>
- VW settlement funds. Submit comments about how the next phase of funds should be spent by August 16. Erin suggests that a subcommittee work on writing something about this.
- Lisa: Windustry wind industry center at MN State Fair. Need volunteer assistance to staff the booth and exhibits. Eco-experience building. Free t shirt and ticket to the fair. 4-hour shifts. Lisa will send out the link.

Metro Blooms

Laura Scholl from Metro Blooms gave an introduction to the Boulevard Bioswales project that they are currently working on in Near North Minneapolis. Metro Blooms is a local nonprofit working to providing ecological design, installation, maintenance, and education services to create resilient landscapes, protect clean water, and provide wildlife habitat. In conjunction with the removal of trees impacted by emerald ash borer (EAB), the organization is excavating the newly empty boulevards where the trees were removed and turning it into a bioswale. These bioswales will capture water shedding off of lawns, sidewalks and driveways, and the water will be filtered into the soil instead of gathering pollutants and entering a storm drain. The bioswales are planted with pollinator friendly plants, and are designed to drain within 48 hours. The project started with the Harrison neighborhood in 2017, and the City is funding an expansion of the

project into North Minneapolis. 80% of the trees in the Harrison neighborhood are being taken down due to EAB, and Minneapolis Parks will be replacing trees in the Spring. If this pilot goes well, the City will continue to fund the project and expand into other neighborhoods starting next year. Homes are eligible for the project if their boulevard has a tree stump, an ash tree, or no tree. The program covers the grinding of the stump and the roots, excavation, shaping, mulching, and planting, all of which would cost a couple thousand dollars outside the program. Consultations are also free within this project. Laura mentioned that it would be effective for neighbors to sign up together, in order to create one long bioswale. This would capture more water, and create a bigger visual impact. Encouragement of the continuation of this project from CEAC might be helpful.

Group norms and expectations

Erin noted that it would be helpful to set group norms and expectations in order to create consistency and ensure that members can attend full group and subcommittee meetings amid their own busy schedules. Commission members made suggestions based on what has been working for them as individuals and for their subcommittees. These suggestions included scheduling subcommittee meetings during or directly before or after the main meeting, sending out an agenda days in advance, making cancellations as early as possible, and creating a system for communicating who will be present and absent. In order to communicate who will be present at the meeting, members suggested using calendar invites and requiring responses. It would also be helpful to ensure that there are call-in options available for each full meeting and subcommittee meeting, and to plan carpools when possible.

A member suggested that since the subcommittees are starting to address overlapping issues, it may be helpful to meet based on specific time-sensitive issues and their related projects as opposed to broad, general topics. As the commission broke into subgroups, they were instructed to consider areas and topics that each group is interested in focusing on, and to report back to the full group at the end of the meeting.

Subcommittee Updates

- a. **Pollinators/Sustainable Landscaping:** David mentioned that Food Systems and Pollinators have separated. He is interested in leading a Pollinators and Sustainable Landscaping subcommittee. Contact David if you interested in this proposed subcommittee: davidbwatts1@gmail.com.

- b. **Environmental Justice + Community Engagement:** The subcommittee is looking for members to sign up to table at four upcoming events including Urban League Family Day (August 10), Franklin Ave Open Streets (Aug 25), West Broadway Open Streets (Sept 14), and Indigenous People's Day (Oct 12-13).

- c. **Climate + Energy + Air Quality.** A stretch code (SB 2030) that didn't make it through this past Legislative session would require new buildings and large retrofits to be built to a high energy standard. Stacy Miller from the Sustainability Division at the City of Minneapolis had been gathering support from other cities during session. The issue so far has been that the City can't require construction to exceed the State's standards.
- d. **Sustainable Transportation + Land Use.** Most of this group's conversations have been about electric vehicles. The group will be meeting with the Climate + Energy subcommittee, since they have also been discussing electric vehicles. Brady Steigauf drafted a letter for near term electric vehicle steps for the City to take.
- e. **Zero Waste + Beautification.** The group met with Kellie Kish from the City's Solid Waste and Recycling department. They received a number of ideas for projects to take on, including creating a standardized organics and recycling program to implement at parks, schools, and community housing residences. For example, there currently isn't consistency between elementary and middle schools in their organics and recycling programs, so kids have to learn new habits. The group also met with Kim Havey, the Director of Sustainability at the City, about potential engagement strategies, like creating videos about black plastic, celebrating green buildings, etc.
- f. **Green Workforce.** This group met with Marie Larson, the industry relations manager for the City's Workforce Development team, and discussed the recently released energy workforce report. The group will be referencing strategies to prioritize from that report. Marie is coming up with a near-term action plan for one strategy.

Subcommittee Work

The group split into their subcommittees to discuss and advance their projects.

Report out – topics to focus on from the subcommittees

The group discussing electric vehicles broke into three groups based on specific projects:

- Identifying goals for the City to incorporate electric vehicles into the long term transportation strategy in a way that reduces carbon emissions, local pollution and energy consumption, while acknowledging that not everyone will have an electric vehicle. This group will work on a list of expectations for the transportation action plan, so that comments can be made as soon as they are needed.
- Electric Vehicles and off-street parking: This group is reviewing an ordinance from Saint Louis Park on this topic. This could be used as the base of a letter to send to City Council to ask that they consider a similar ordinance.

- Looking into the next round of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency VW settlement funds, and encouraging the City to apply for those funds.

Zero waste and beautification

- The group will be moving forward with the schools/park project mentioned above.
- Members are asked to review the City's [zero waste plan](#), identifying topics that interest them.

Engagement

- Michelle and Erin will continue to work on events for tabling and writing newsletter blurbs.
- Cody Welchlin suggested hosting an event next summer at the JXTA skatepark in North Minneapolis. An opportunity to engage people in the community around this event would be to create a template of a skateboard, have kids design a skateboard based on the template, and award an actual skateboard to the person with the winning design. CEAC could partner with Northern Green Zone Task Force for this event.
- Pollinator habitat on new private developments could be part of the sustainable building policy. The housing advisory committee could be a potential partner on this project, although they may be more focused on renters' rights.

Evaluation of this meeting and agenda setting for next meeting

Members support the meeting structure that was used for this meeting, and appreciated the time to break into subgroups. Erin was interested in bringing forward revised bylaws. Presentations would be welcome during the full group meetings, if relevant to the whole group. The Climate Action Plan is something that the group is interested in discussing in the future, considering that it is due for an update soon. The group could write a letter of support in the updating of the plan. A presentation to CEAC would help identify where updates would provide the greatest opportunity for engaging the community and setting the City up to pursue resources to implement the plan.

8:03 Adjournment

Next Meeting: August 1, 2019

Location: Webber Park Library
4440 Humboldt Ave. N
Minneapolis, MN 55412

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact the Sustainability Division at 612-673-3014 or e-mail kelly.muellman@minneapolismn.gov. People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626. Para asistencia 612-673-2700 - Rau kev pab 612-673-2800 - Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500.