

**CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS  
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION  
(Special Meeting)\*  
Council Chambers, Urbana City Building  
Tuesday, April 10, 2018**

**Commissioners Present:** Chairperson Stacy Gloss, Dustin Allred, Claire Johnson, Todd Rusk, Andrew Stumpf, Morgan White (7:25 p.m.), Tesfaye Wolde-Medhin

**Staff Present:** Scott Tess, Barb Stiehl, Marcus Ricci

**Call to Order, Roll Call, and Declaration of Quorum**

Chairperson Stacy Gloss called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Barb Stiehl called the roll and a quorum was present.

**Changes to the Agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda

**Approval of Minutes**

Due to the nature of this meeting, a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the March meeting could not be entertained. Meeting minutes for the March 6<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup> meetings will be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Sustainability Advisory Commission.

**Continuing Business**

***Discussion of Draft Resolution on Energy and Climate Funding Source***

Chair Gloss informed the Commission that she would be meeting with Mayor Diane Marlin to discuss this item so there may be changes to the current draft resolution. She asked if the Commission would move to discuss the resolution, but take no action or move to postpone the item and discuss the draft after a meeting with the Mayor had occurred.

Todd Rusk moved to postpone action and discuss after the Chair had met with the Mayor. Andy Stumpf seconded the motion. The Commission with a unanimous voice vote approved the motion.

**Communications**

***Staff Report***

Scott Tess provided an update on the Climate Action Plan. He reported that he has been working with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) for the third round of the Solar Urbana Champaign Bulk Solar Purchase Plan. MREA received five proposals to their Request for Proposals. A community advisory group from multiple cities was working with MREA to score the proposals so an announcement to choose a vendor could be made soon. The City will begin Solar Power Hours in April to inform citizens of the available solar program.

Staff meet with colleagues working on sustainability at the University of Costa Rica and the Center for Urban Sustainability in San Jose, Costa Rica as part of the University of Illinois Study Abroad

program through the College of Education. Mr. Tess mentioned that preservice teachers were there to exchange methods and learn about environmental education in Costa Rica.

Staff spoke with students of the University of Illinois Department of Regional and Urban Planning about energy and climate activities.

As part of the Sustainable Water Management Plan, the City had accepted a bid from a vendor to conduct a one-day Rain Barrel and Compost Bin sale, which will occur on Saturday, May 5, 2018, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the parking lot north of the Urbana City Building. Mr. Tess said that the prices for those items were lower this year. He said that staff monitored past sales to determine prices and quantities for those items. He noted that the date of the sale would coincide with the first day of this year's Market at the Square.

U-Cycle and Urbana Park District staff were working on a Backyard Food Composting presentation that would also coincide with the sale of rain barrels and compost bins featuring best uses for the rain barrels and composting bins.

Mr. Tess added that the U-Cycle staff was working with the Illinois Product Stewardship Council (IPSC) to develop best practices for safe disposal of medical sharps (needles, scalpels, etc.). It was noted that some needles had not been treated as biohazard waste, but had instead been thrown in with regular garbage, thus increasing the likelihood of accidental needle-sticks. He said that the IPSC was also working to fix and improve the State's electronic recycling law.

The next City of Urbana Sustainability Advisory Commission meeting will be on Tuesday, May 1, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the Urbana City Council Chambers.

Scott Tess stated that an updated Environment Sustainability Division Report had been placed in packets for the meeting containing the requested edits from the Sustainability Advisory Commission at a previous meeting. He said that if there were no further edits, he would include the report in packets for the next City of Urbana Committee of the Whole meeting. He asked that any suggested changes be submitted to him by Tuesday, April 17, 2018, to be included in the report given to City Council.

Chair Gloss asked if the public could submit suggestions if desired.

Mr. Tess said that the public could submit changes.

Dustin Allred asked if there were any projects from the Center for Urban Sustainability in San Jose that Mr. Tess would like to share.

Mr. Tess shared that the University of Costa Rica had determined that 50% of commuters in San Jose traveled by foot. He said that traffic was extremely congested during rush hour. He mentioned that those he talked to in Costa Rica were very interested in the Council of Mayors and the study of greenhouse gas emissions.

**Public Input**

Chair Gloss asked to open the floor for input.

Tim Montague discussed concerns about Champaign County's Solar Ordinance. Tim Montague from the Champaign County Sustainability Network had worked with groups to educate the public about all issues regarding sustainability including renewable energy and conservation of resources. Mr. Montague discussed the ability of central Illinois to accommodate rooftop and ground mount solar installations. He stated that the Future Illinois Jobs Act had helped put aside incentives for those wishing to install solar energy panels. Mr. Montague mentioned that he was a licensed solar panel installer. He said that Illinois had a potential to provide \$200 million to solar system owners through the incentive plan. He added that there was a potential to install of 3,000 Megawatts of solar power in the next decade and currently Illinois had approximately 100 Megawatts of solar power.

He expressed concern about a solar ordinance being developed by the Champaign County Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), which might require setbacks of 500 to 1,000 feet for solar farms. He felt that the ordinance would suppress renewable energy in a similar way that a wind farm ordinance made the installation of wind farms prohibitive in Champaign County. He noted that the recommendations of the committee would then go to the Environmental Land Use Committee (ELUC) and then to the full Champaign County Board for action. He said that there were only a couple more meetings of the ZBA before a recommendation was made. He cautioned that if setbacks were more than 250 feet, solar development in Champaign County would not happen. He urged members of the community to attend the meeting of the Champaign County Zoning Board of Appeals on Thursday, April 12, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. or to submit e-mails to Mr. Jon Hall to voice concern about the legislation.

Dustin Allred asked why the proposed setbacks were being entertained.

Mr. Montague said that he felt a person impacted by living near a wind farm believed noise from a solar farm would be the same. He believed that many of those on the board were fearful of a disruption of farm life with the installation of the solar farm. He said there was concern about noise and visual pollution that was based more from fear than from actual experience. He said there was no precedence for setbacks as large as suggested.

Todd Rusk asked if setbacks of less than 250 feet would influence development.

Mr. Montague said that if all of the solar installations were solar farms and none was rooftop mounted, it would encompass 15,000 acres within the state of Illinois for 3000 Megawatt. He said that would be equivalent to 2% of the land within Champaign County alone. He stated that the planned project near Sidney was a 1,200 acre/200 Megawatt installation, and there were five other projects that would be 10 to 15 acres/2 Megawatt installations proposed for Champaign County.

Marcus Ricci said that he was not discouraging anyone from attending the meeting and expressing their thoughts about the ordinance, but he asked where the information about setbacks being 500 to 1,000 feet was found. He noted that the current ordinance only stated a setback of 55 feet from a minor street, 100 feet from an existing building and setbacks, but he noted that the only setbacks of

500 feet were for airports or subdivisions. He asked if there were additional setbacks requested other than what was in the current ordinance.

Mr. Montague said that Mr. Hall wanted nothing less than 350 feet setbacks to be included in the ordinance based upon comments from the ZBA members.

Morgan White asked if the Commission was asked to support a position of concern about the ordinance.

Chair Gloss said that the Commission had not expressed a statement of whether to support or not support.

Ms. White encouraged the public to speak up and expressed appreciation of Ms. Montague's effort to increase awareness of the ongoing discussion.

Mr. Montague suggested that those with concerns look at the University of Illinois solar farm to understand the impact of the facility.

### **New Business**

#### ***Exercise Re-visioning the Lincoln Square Mall and Surrounding Area (Planning Division)***

Marcus Ricci discussed that goal of the re-visioning exercise with the members of the Sustainability Advisory Commission. He explained that the primary goal was to connect the Lincoln Square area with the community. He mentioned that the re-visioning of Lincoln Square Mall would integrate with MCORE to better connect this site with campus. He said that the site covers 17 acres within a nine-block area. Mr. Ricci reviewed the history of the Lincoln Square Mall and the Historic Lincoln Hotel. Mr. Ricci directed the Commission through the visioning exercise.

Members of the Sustainability Advisory Commission discussed their proposed visioning of the area. Included in their discussions were pop-up vendors, open spaces, areas for physical activities, cafés, residential areas and cinema. Infrastructure treatments such as permeable surfaces and parking deck. Also suggested was a waste-to-energy facility.

Mr. Ricci explained that input would be taken at additional public re-visioning exercises. He said that these exercises would be opening for the public in the future. He encouraged people to look for more information on the City's website.

### **Announcements**

*Riding a bike instead of driving a car is good for the environment, but how much?*

A presentation of research conducted by Leonardo Covis

Champaign Public Library

Robeson Pavilion Room C

April 18, 2018

7:00 p.m.

Bill McKibbon: Building a Better Environmental Movement  
University YMCA

April 13, 2018  
12:00 p.m.

Backyard Composting Workshop  
Anita Purves Nature Center  
May 5, 2018  
10:00 a.m.

Build Rain Barrel and Compost Bin Sale  
Parking Lot North of the City Building (400 S. Vine Street)  
May 5, 2018  
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

This meeting was recorded.

\*A Special Meeting of the Sustainability Advisory Commission was held because the regularly scheduled meeting of the Sustainability Advisory Commission was cancelled. The cancellation was a result of the improper notice of the meeting. (The agenda was not posted within 48 hours of the scheduled meeting.)

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Stiehl  
Recording Secretary