



City of Lake Oswego Sustainability Advisory Board Minutes

August 27, 2008

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Jean Baumann called the Sustainability Advisory Board meeting of August 27, 2008 to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 380 A Avenue, Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Members present: Chair Baumann, Vice Chair Dorothy Atwood, Matt Briggs, Bruce Brown (alternate), Craig Diamond, Lisa Murphy, Patrick Rowe, Amin Wahab, Jeff DeWitt, and Grant Watkinson. Ron Gronowski and Jacob Shimkus were not present. Staff present: Jonna Papaefthimiou, Natural Resource Planner; and Susan Millhauser, Sustainability Planner. Guests: Barbara Zeller, Chair of the Lake Grove Neighborhood Association. Council Liaison Frank Groznik was not present

MINUTES

Mr. Watkinson **moved** to approve the Minutes of July 23, 2008. Mr. Wahab **seconded** the motion and it **passed** by unanimous vote of those members present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Baumann reported that she was intending to attend the September 4th meeting of the Lake Grove Neighborhood Association and that they invited SAB members to participate in Lake Grove Village Days (September 21st) and a cleanup and recycling event (September 14th).

The staff planned to circulate a reminder from the City Attorney that state law did not allow the staff, or members of city boards and commissions to advocate for or against a candidate or issue while they were “on the job.” However, the City Council was allowed to do that.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Barbara Zeller, Chair of the Lake Grove Neighborhood Association, described the Association’s September 14th cleanup and recycling event at Lake Grove Elementary School and invited SAB members to come and introduce themselves and talk about the Sustainability Advisory Board.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Review Agenda

Chair Baumann highlighted the agenda items.

Review Mission and Duties

The Board generally agreed not to consider making changes to their Mission and Duties after they were advised those were set in the ordinance that had established the Sustainability Advisory Board, and to change them meant going through the public process of changing an ordinance, which could delay their other work.

Review Procedures to Handle Requests

Chair Baumann reported that the Board had received numerous requests to look into or comment on something. She said ODOT had asked the SAB to comment on a proposed Transportation Enhancement Plan by September 15th; the Assistant City Manger had suggested that the Board might work with the School District on a litter pickup program; and Jonathan Snell had suggested the SAB comment on the City's Water Management Permit application. The staff clarified that some requests for comment were part of a government or government agency's general solicitation for public comments, and any board member could submit his/her comments as an individual citizen, but not as a representative of the SAB. Ms. Millhauser related that when members of the public submitted comments via the City's Sustainability webpage she forwarded requests that were directed to the SAB to Ms. Papaefthimiou. Board members generally agreed that Ms. Papaefthimiou should be the party to collect and filter requests and discuss them with the chair and vice chair, who would determine whether the request fit the SAB Mission, Duties and Work Plan (after the work plan was established) and should be distributed to the members and placed on a future agenda for Board attention. Ms. Papaefthimiou advised that if someone directed their correspondence to the SAB, or asked her to forward it to the Board, she had to do that. Chair Baumann planned to fine-tune the guidelines for handling requests so the members could discuss and formally adopt them at their next meeting. The adopted guidelines would then be published so the public was aware of them. Some members planned to keep a log of what their casual conversations indicated the public was interested in.

Overview – Lake Oswego Sustainability:

Chair Baumann had asked Duke Castle and Susan Millhauser to present key elements and strategies of the City's sustainability effort. Ms. Millhauser recalled the City Council had adopted a sustainability goal and plan last year and planned to track the progress of City operations. She explained that a "sustainable city" might also involve revitalizing Downtown, protecting neighborhoods and the environment and supporting small business. She reported the staff had used the Natural Step for Communities framework as a guide. During the questioning period, Ms. Millhauser advised that individual staff members were applying sustainability principles. For example, the City's IT Director decided to use 100% post-consumer paper and leased a special copy machine that could handle it. She said the plan used objectives listed in the American Planning Association Policy Guidelines for Sustainability. She said they were currently fashioning action measures and targets related to energy, transportation, water conservation, purchasing and contracting and waste recycling.

Chair Baumann suggested that the principle and framework of the City's plan be the focus for SAB's planning effort, rather than specific goals. Bruce Brown inquired about the staff currently assigned to sustainability efforts within the City, and Ms. Millhauser reported that she was presently the only staff person dedicated to solely sustainability, with other Staff members helping when it related to their own job responsibilities. Jeff DeWitt inquired if there was plan to expand staffing, and Ms. Millhauser responded that this was mostly a budget issue, and that SAB could propose additional staff in the budget process. Dorothy Atwood inquired when the plan is updated. Ms. Millhauser responded that the intent was to make annual updates, and that it could become a work plan item to review update and comment to Council.

Ms. Millhauser then briefly reviewed the list of adopted Plan goals, listed on slides.

Chair Baumann inquired whether the Sustainable City statements were intended to serve as principles or objectives driving the plan. Ms. Millhauser stated that the Sustainable City statements were included to clarify the meaning and purpose of the Plan to the public, and that the authors used the Natural Step four system conditions to develop the plan. However, the Sustainable City statements also reflect City concerns, e.g. fiscal responsibility.

Matt Briggs noted that many of the studies cited in the plan were from the 1990s, and perhaps did not reflect the heightened urgency indicated by more recent greenhouse gas emissions studies.

There is an agreement to revisit this issue with respect to the work plan, and that the work plan should reflect sense of urgency.

Overview – The Natural Step

Duke Castle introduced himself as a founder of the Oregon Natural Step Network. He then presented a PowerPoint presentation that described the Natural Step (TNS):

TNS is about a holistic approach that is strategic and focuses on overall sustainability. There is a “funnel” [shows slide] of decreasing natural resources and increasing population and resource demands, leading to a decreased margin for action. The longer the world waits, the harder it becomes to change course.

TNS provides a systems perspective. It focuses on principles rather than details, and provides a shared framework for action. The idea is a five-level model: system-success-strategy-action-tools.

The systems basis is: matter and energy last forever; entropy increases; value for human life is in structure and order within the system; photosynthesis creates order within the Earth system.

The Earth is a system that is open with respect to energy (sun energy comes in) and closed with respect to matter (negligible matter leaves). Geologic cycles are extremely slow.

Human influence Earth's cycles by: taking materials from the Earth's crust, creating synthetic chemicals that persist in the environment; physically inhibiting natural cycles;

and inhibiting people's ability to meet their own needs--thus not allowing them to concern themselves with the broader system.

Chair Baumann commented that this approach aligned with the City's own plan.

Craig Diamond stated that the City needed to consider how Lake Oswego contributes to world sustainability and what it means in our own context.

Mr. Castle enthusiastically supported this statement, and added that the City should start with its own organization and then it's sphere of influence, including vendors, clients, and colleagues.

Mr. Dewitt asked: "If only 90% of all organizations do this, does that mean the planet is doomed?"

Mr. Castle stated that everyone has to deal with the scientific realities of environmental change, but that not everyone has to approach it through TNS. He then provided an example of an organization adopting this framework:

Collins Pine adopted TNS and saved \$1 million in year one. They now have a blueprint for sustainability that projects decades into the future. They have employee committees to address each flow in and out of the organization. They used backcasting.

Backcasting means developing a vision of a desired future and then working backwards to set goals.

Whistler is also an excellent example.

The key to sustainability is a solid framework that is based in science and that creates a shared mental model of what we mean by "sustainable."

It creates a cultural shift that is embedded at all levels.

It uses backcasting so everyone is aligned towards a desired future condition.

Mr. Dewitt asked how Whistler engaged the community. Mr. Castle stated that dialog was key; leaders started with conversations focused on the science. When that made sense and the community had consensus, leaders introduced the system conditions. The community reached consensus on those too. And throughout the process, they looked at examples that inspired and encouraged them.

Amin Wahab asked about the differences between TNS and EMS [environmental management system). Mr. Castle said that EMS/ISO14001 is a tool, but that it doesn't define success; it just calls for annual improvement. Ms. Atwood added that EMS can be adapted to TNS through the use of backcasting and sustainability goals.

Chair Baumann said that Mr. Castle's presentation reminded her that the SAB can let go of details for the time being and think big-picture—embracing the TNS outlook and putting energy into big picture thinking, moving that forward in the community.

Goals and Work Plan

Chair Baumann noted that the group had surpassed the allotted time for previous agenda items and could not realistically have a meaningful discussion of the Goals and Work Plan in the time

remaining for the meeting. The group agreed to defer the discussion to the following meeting, where Chair Baumann promised to return with a draft work plan to spark discussion. Mr. Diamond and Mr. Watkinson agreed to assist in the development of the draft plan.

Meeting Time

Jean shows a slide of preferred meeting times. Based on everyone's preferences, Mr. Rowe moved that the SAB meeting on the third Monday of the month from now on. Mr. Diamond seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Jonna announced that among those with a meeting location preference, everyone preferred the WEB. Grant Watkinson moved that the SAB meet at the WEB. Mr. Atwood seconded this motion and it was approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, September 15th at 6:30 pm. There being no further business Chair Baumann adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonna Papaefthimiou
Natural Resource Planner

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