



City of Lake Oswego Natural Resources Advisory Board Minutes

June 20, 2007

APPROVED

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Co-Chair Craig Diamond called the Natural Resources Advisory Board meeting of June 20, 2007 to order at 6:38 p.m. in the Santiam Room of the West End Building (SAFECO), 4010 Kruse Way, Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Members present besides Co-Chair Diamond were Co-chair William Gaar, Sarah Asby, Nancy Gronowski and Douglas Rich. Morgan Holen and Stephanie Wagner were excused. Kate Mogentale (student member) was absent.

Staff present were Jonna Papaefthimiou, Natural Resources Planner; and Deb Wechselblatt, City AmeriCorps Volunteer.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

Elections

Board members present indicated they preferred to hold elections when the two absent board members were also present. **Co-chair Gaar moved to postpone the elections until the next Natural Resources Advisory Board (NRAB) meeting. Ms. Gronowski seconded the motion and it passed 5:0.**

Community Forestry Open House Update

Ms. Wechselblatt had written a summary report about the second open house. She estimated that 15 – 20 persons attended. NRAB members and staff had manned the “conversation stations.” She reported that six comment sheets had been returned during the Open House but no one had responded to her follow-up emailed request for comments. Board members suggested offering some kind of “reward” incentive for submitting comments in the future.

Ms. Wechselblatt noted that several attendees had commented that too much tree canopy would affect solar access rights if a neighbor’s trees blocked sunlight. She advised that the City addressed that in the Solar Access Code, which specified that lots had to be designed for potential solar access. Board members recalled other issues raised at the open house included a concern that the program would be “shelved” unless the City ensured adequate resources were available and drove the process initially to

ensure there was a tree inventory and early, tangible improvement (especially removal of invasive species) that would encourage volunteers to commit to continuing the work.

The Board saw a need for adequate staffing to complete the inventory and periodically update it. Some board members suggested the City offer an incentive to businesses that co-sponsored the initial effort. They saw a need for at least one full time forester and perhaps 1.5 full time equivalent (FTE) foresters after Ms. Papaefthimiou clarified that arborist, David Odom, was an Assistant Planner and his time was primarily spent administering the Tree Code. They anticipated a community forestry program would describe the value of the urban forest and it could frame a more holistic approach to modifying the Tree Code. Ms. Wechselblatt reported that the university professor who had studied the City of Portland's tree canopy would charge \$20,000 to do the same in the City of Lake Oswego, and she observed that was too expensive for Lake Oswego. She clarified the current version of the draft urban forestry proposal had not yet been developed to the point of recommending having a city forester.

Ms. Wechselblatt confirmed she planned to hold a third Open House on July 25, 2007 at City Hall between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m. She asked NRAB members to volunteer to help again. She reported she had not yet decided on the format, but she anticipated it would include a formal presentation that would give an overview of the plan and stress the economic benefits to the community, and there would be conversation stations. The members suggested presenting a "before" and "after" picture of an area from which invasive species had been cleared.

Ms. Wechselblatt anticipated that most of the content of the draft proposal for an urban forestry program would be in place by the time her service with the City ended in September. Ms. Papaefthimiou anticipated that she and Mr. Odom would draft the final proposal. She reported that an invitation to apply to be the next City AmeriCorps worker had been posted on the website for a month, but there had been no applicants. She suggested board members encourage people they knew to apply. The board asked Ms. Wechselblatt to present the draft proposal in whatever form it was in at the time of their August board meeting so the NRAB could begin drafting comments. They saw a need to present "selling points" to encourage the City Council to adopt and fund the program. Ms. Wechselblatt confirmed that she already had information to present related to how mature trees on a residential property increased its market value, but she agreed with Mr. Rich that it might help to also have input from a local realtor. The members agreed to reserve a booth at a July Farmers Market in order to survey how the community felt about the value of having an urban forestry program. They decided to modify the survey form used at the Open House for that purpose.

NRAB Joint Meeting with Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB)

Ms. Papaefthimiou announced a joint NRAB/PRAB meeting was scheduled on September 19, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. in the West End Building.

Water Conservation

The Board examined a letter drafted by Ms. Asby regarding water conservation. Ms. Asby had served on the Water Conservation Committee. She reported that since she composed the draft, she had received a copy of the final draft of the water conservation plan from the City Engineer, and the draft plan cover letter announced the City Council was to consider it at an August 6th study session. Since it was a State-mandated program, the plan was to be forwarded to the State to examine after the City Council approved it. Ms. Asby reported the State required each plan to include five-year benchmarks and an incremental water use rate structure that meant that entities that used more water paid more. She reported the City did not yet have such a rate structure, and she observed the draft plan called for a study to help formulate an incremental use structure, but the related funding was not in the 2007/2009 budget. She advised the City was one of several cities that were allotted river water, but the City did not use its entire allotment because of limited water treatment facility capacity. She added that the allotment could be changed in dry periods to ensure there was adequate water for fish passage.

Ms. Asby clarified the draft plan did not address use of gray water. She noted the draft plan called for the City to identify its top 20 residential and commercial water users and provide a free water use audit for one user in each category each year, then track their consumption over time to see if they had achieved more efficient water use. It also called for the City to supply or finance retrofitting or replacement of inefficient water using fixtures and to develop a rebate program for low water use appliances and replacement of restaurant rinse heads. Mr. Rich reported the Clean Streams Committee had also discussed allowing re-use of “gray” water. He saw a need to educate people about water conservation to encourage them to make changes, such as to stop washing their cars at home, and to re-use gray water for industrial irrigation. He noted that would also effect surface water runoff. He recalled the City of Portland was advocating disconnecting downspouts. He suggested the NRAB letter should emphasize the relationship between the water conservation program and the clean streams program.

Ms. Asby pointed out her draft letter suggested a related change in the Plumbing Code to allow the use of rainwater for residential use. She asked if the Board wanted to expand that to call for gray water re-use. She pointed out the draft letter also asked that the new staff member the City planned to hire to be responsible for implementing water conservation programs should also be charged to work with the NRAB, since the Board’s mission was to review trends in air, water and land quality, and water conservation was a significant trend. She recalled the Water Conservation Committee had talked about using the West End Building as a demonstration project to promote low water use landscaping. She said the Water Conservation Committee had found the Country Club watered the golf course with lake water, which was a private resource. She agreed to email the draft letter to the members so they could offer comments, finalize it at their next meeting, and send it to the City Council in time for their study session.

Update on Sustainability Board

The Co-chairs reported they had forwarded the NRAB memorandum suggesting that the City Council create a Sustainability Advisory Board to the City Manager, and they planned to meet with him the following week to advocate for the new board and a related budget and staffing. Board members observed that even if “sustainability” was an appropriate NRAB focus, it was significant enough to the City to deserve a separate board, and the NRAB already had a heavy workload addressing other goals, such as the urban forestry program.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, July 18, 2007. There being no further business Co-Chair Diamond adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonna Papaefthimiou /s/
Jonna Papaefthimiou
Natural Resources Planner