



CITY OF LAKE OSWEGO Sustainability Advisory Board Minutes

November 15, 2010

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Co-chair Bruce Brown called the Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) meeting of November 15, 2010, to order at 6:33 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Main Fire Station, 300 B Avenue, Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Members present: Co-chair Grant Watkinson, Co-chair Bruce Brown, Sarah Asby, Dorothy Atwood, Gary Bachofner, Matt Briggs, Daniel Gottlieb, Vidya Kale, and Gregory Monahan

Members excused/absent: None

Council Liaison: Sally Moncrieff (not present)

Staff present: Susan Millhauser, Sustainability Coordinator; and Alex Deley, Sustainability Outreach Specialist/AmeriCorps

MINUTES

The **Minutes of August 16, September 20, October 18 and November 3, 2010** were approved by unanimous vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Comprehensive Plan Update Citizens' Advisory Committee had reviewed and commented on the draft vision statement. It was available on the City website. The public was invited to help validate it by participating in the associated online survey. Congressman Earl Blumenauer had recently voiced his support of the streetcar project. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) related to the streetcar was about to be released. A public comment period would follow. The City Council had just held an emergency preparedness forum. The Fire Department offered Community Emergency Responder team training. The recent drug takeback event had been successful. The next community shred day was December 11th. The Natural Step "Train the Trainer" program would be conducted January 28-29, 2011.

PUBLIC COMMENT (None)

REGULAR BUSINESS

Goal Setting

The board had held a special meeting on November 3rd to start work on goal setting. They had established four mega-goals: Net Zero Energy Use; Net Zero Water Use; Zero Toxins; and Zero Waste. They had brainstormed ideas for shorter term sub-goals and actions that would

eventually accomplish the broader goals. At this meeting they continued to refine goals. It was suggested that shorter term goals should be specific and actionable so that at the end of each year the Board could list its accomplishments. It was suggested that individual SAB members “champion” an aspect of the work program they were especially knowledgeable about.

Sustainability Action Month, the Natural Step “Train the Trainer” program, and development of the sustainability evaluation tool were already ongoing work program items. The members contributed other ideas. The Cascadia Green Building Council might be able to provide ideas about how to achieve zero water use and Clean Energy Works Oregon might be tapped to fund energy retrofits. The results of the City’s carbon baseline study would be available in the spring. Lake Oswego could set up a zero carbon demonstration program at one or two houses and businesses. Briggs’ house could be one of them. It would be an educational project complete with step-by-step instructions and cost and payback calculations. Briggs anticipated the state legislature would call for retrofitting schools. The group discussed asking the Council to adopt a policy to consider a “living building” option for any new building. A “living building” could cost 10% to 15% more than a typical building. But the City could at least “set the bar higher” when it built a new building. The City was the perfect user of a living building because it could spend more money up front and would use the building long enough to recover the additional cost through savings. Millhauser advised that there were staffing resource costs associated with drafting, evaluating, and implementing a policy.

The Zero Water goal was to use only the water that fell on the City. The City could adopt a goal to reduce water use by a certain percentage every year. The City might research the most sustainable alternative systems for gray water catchment and offer “disconnect yourself” training. The City had been budgeting \$30,000 per year for the toilet rebate program. That amount should be increased to pay for more incentives; rain water catchment grants and a related pilot program; and additional water audit staff. The funds might come from increased water rates, dedicating a portion of the money saved by water conservation efforts, or allowing people to voluntarily pay an additional 3% for water (similar to paying more for “green” energy). The Board asked the staff to research what it cost to treat water at the existing, aging plant. They reasoned that if the existing system was old and broken down, but had to continue to serve until the new water facility was built, the City had to find new ways to cut down on consumption so it did not overtax the capacity of the old system and make it even more expensive to operate. Millhauser advised the City had discussed a water conservation demonstration garden at the WEB. The members anticipated the garden could serve as an example of edible landscaping that was easy to grow and would not require much watering. They noted that the building had great solar exposure.

The Board discussed how to achieve Zero Toxins. They suggested the City should have a policy of pesticide free parks and landscaping. It should have a policy of zero toxins in the chemicals it used for maintaining buildings and equipment. They would provide a good example for the public. When the City purchased non-toxic chemicals for itself, it could make them available to the public at the same price in order to promote their use. Board members suggested selecting a small park to use as a demonstration project and getting “Salmon-Safe” certification for machine shops and landscaped areas. Millhauser reported the staff toxics team had met this summer to discuss mercury as a first focus area for City toxics reduction.

Deley mentioned he was working on a purchasing guide and policy modeled after a Metro policy. Watkinson suggested guidelines that favored products with recycled content. Atwood advised an electronic environmental assessment tool was available (EPEAT). The group suggested the City adopt a policy to have zero waste at City-sponsored events.

The “Three R’s” of achieving zero waste were Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. One way to help achieve it was to buy less and share or rent tools. The Board suggested the City email utility bills instead of mailing paper bills. Some asked the staff to reduce the amount of paper documents distributed at meetings by emailing materials before the meetings and projecting them on a screen during meetings. But not all the SAB members had a laptop available to view them during the meeting. Members suggested the City install more curbside and neighborhood recycling facilities and put a recycling directory on the website. Millhauser reported Parks staff found they had to monitor and sort the items that went into those kinds of receptacles. The Board suggested that might be because they needed to be more clearly marked. They suggested the Farmers’ Market offer a regular booth to the Master Recyclers.

The group considered a suggestion to hold a neighborhood association sustainability summit as part of the SAB’s educational outreach. But they recalled their experience with Sustainability Action Month was they had been more effective partnering with other organizations than initiating their own events. Millhauser offered to discuss a summit with the neighborhood planners.

Kale was concerned about using the term “zero” for a goal because that might take a very long time to achieve. But others explained it meant “moving towards” zero, or achieving enough of a reduction that nature could finally keep up. Atwood advised zero waste had been achieved in some places. Brown planned to record and circulate the list of ideas to the members so they could each decide what they wanted to champion and refine that part of the document.

Board Liaisons

This discussion was postponed until the next meeting on December 20, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business Chair Gustafson adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Millhauser
Sustainability Coordinator

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