



CITY OF LAKE OSWEGO Sustainability Advisory Board Minutes

August 15, 2011

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

SAB Co-chair Bruce Brown called the Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) meeting of August 15, 2011, to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Main Fire Station at 300 B Avenue, Lake Oswego, Oregon.

SAB members present:	Co-chair Bruce Brown, Lisa Adatto, Sarah Asby, Andre DeBar, Daniel Gottlieb, Vidya Kale and Suzanne Spencer
SAB members excused/absent:	Gregory Monahan and E. Jay Murphy
Guests:	Mayor Jack Hoffman; and Craig Holmes and Ray Phelps, Allied Waste
Council Liaison:	Sally Moncrieff (Not present)
Staff present:	Susan Millhauser, Sustainability Coordinator; and David Donaldson, Assistant City Manager

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Electric Vehicle Expo was the following Sunday. Millhauser noted that Alex Deley, AmeriCorps member, had completed his term, and that a new sustainability intern would be hired outside of AmeriCorps. Brown noted the Lake Oswego Review had published the Board's op-ed article in support of funding the water conservation rebate program. The Mayor advised the Board regarding the timing of the budgeting process. Matt Briggs' open house had attracted a lot of visitors. The Mayor suggested the SAB invite PGE to come and talk about its smart grid, time of use, and other conservation-related programs.

MINUTES (None)

REVIEW CITY COUNCIL ROLLING AGENDA

The staff planned to include this as a regular agenda item. Staff was going to provide a brief quarterly sustainability update to the Council at a September meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT (None)

REGULAR BUSINESS

Update on the Commercial Organics Program

Craig Holmes, Operations Manager, Allied Waste, reported Allied had 14 active (regular producer) organic waste customers in Lake Oswego: 7 food and beverage establishments; 2 grocers; 4 schools and a mixed use facility. Allied had started the outreach effort last October. So far the results were a “mixed bag.” The primary hurdles Allied encountered were lack of space for the containers (the most common challenge); non-organics-producing businesses that shared service with organic producing establishments were reluctant to pay the additional fees for the service; some businesses just did not want to make a change; and some big organizations that kept operational costs low by having the largest possible container picked up the fewest times were concerned about the additional cost of having to break refuse down into components. Some business owners were reluctant to participate because they worried about the economics of keeping the staff trained. Holmes said the program was in the “early-adopter” phase and he predicted it would get more traction and grow as other nearby local jurisdictions implemented the program (Portland has had a voluntary commercial organics program for several years and will be implementing a mandatory residential organics program in October). Allied representatives always talked about the program when they visited businesses and Clackamas County Recycle at Work staff were also contacting businesses. Allied had the resources now to pick up anywhere and any day of the week. Holmes circulated a newspaper article about Allied’s composting facility near Corvallis.

During the questioning period, Mr. Holmes confirmed that Allied got positive feedback from participants. Sometimes it had to “work out the wrinkles” for customers. After a couple of months the first restaurant to participate was concerned it had made more work for them. But it actually wasn’t. It was about just using a different container. Their monthly bill was lower now. He related that some restaurants in town he had contacted had their pre-consumer waste (for example, unsold bakery goods and off cuts from meat) taken by their agricultural partners. But post-consumer waste had to go to the landfill or through an organic composting process because it might contain bacteria. Allied’s facility was currently the only one in Oregon that was permitted to take post-consumer food waste and convert it into compost. SAB members suggested incorporating design and size requirements for garbage enclosures into the Community Development Code to ensure enough space for additional recycling containers so new buildings would have adequate space and hauler trucks could easily access. They reasoned that would make recycling and composting easier and less cost prohibitive and more people would participate. Mr. Phelps, who also serves on the Wilsonville Planning Commission, related they had put it on their pre-development checklist. He advised every square inch was valuable to the owners. Ms. Millhauser related the Lake Oswego staff had flagged that suggestion. They were aware that the county currently had more robust design review standards for garbage containers than the City had. Co-chair Brown advised that any building with LEED certification had to plan for that. Holmes explained that the restaurants in Lakeview Village only had two small trash enclosures in the parking garage to use. Parking spaces were valuable and a dumpster would not look very good there. Co-chair Brown suggested the City had leverage to cause them to be more aggressive about recycling because the City had invested in the parking structure. He recalled that Metro had implemented a very burdensome tipping fee for construction waste as an incentive to not throw that waste away. He suggested that could be an approach to organic waste. The Allied representatives related that Portland and other

municipalities charged more for larger containers than smaller containers in order to encourage residential waste diversion. But that was not done much in the commercial area. Millhauser related that she served on Metro's Solid Waste Advisory Committee. The group was looking at different policy levers related to organics: everything from a ban to a carbon tax to education/outreach. Holmes cautioned it would be hard to make a landfill ban work. If the driver did not pick up the garbage it might be dumped in a park; people would put garbage in a composting container; and some people would not recycle if they were forced to recycle. It was better to create an atmosphere that encouraged recycling. Lake Oswego was the only community in the region that charged less for collecting organics than regular commercial collection.

The Board inquired about the profitability of the program. Mr. Holmes related that Allied had spent a lot of money on outreach to the commercial community. The result so far was only 14 customers. It might not be profitable, but it was the right thing to do; Metro had helped keep the cost down; and every single customer Allied had signed up had been 100% successful. He estimated there were around 150 commercial establishments in the city that could be potential customers. He believed the program was gaining traction because people now called to ask if Allied provided the service. He confirmed there was high demand for the compost that Allied made at its composting facility. It also owned the landfill across the street, where it turned methane gas into electricity. He confirmed Allied had the trucks and equipment to service all 150 potential organic waste customers. It could internalize the expense because overall the company was making money. The Board wanted to know why only four schools were participating. Holmes explained the School District knew about the program. Allied was prepared to provide the service to every school, but the School District facilities manager had selected the four that were participating. The Board asked how the public could know which businesses were participating. Holmes explained that Allied could not advertise the names of its customers without their permission. But those who wanted to disclose their participation could put the sticker, "We compost our food waste" on their door.

Mr. Holmes described how Allied and Master Recyclers had worked with the organizers of the Festival of the Arts to make the lobster feed almost a zero waste event. At the end of the event they disposed of 5 yards of trash instead of the usual 20 yards. Master Recyclers trained people and the organizers agreed to use durable plates, etc. and decrease throwaways. The goal for the next festival was zero waste. He reported that the first local restaurant to participate in the program was now recovering 65% to 70% of its waste. They had waived after a couple of months because they thought it was a lot of work, but then decided to stay in the program. He planned to talk with Parks about Farmers' Market food vendors giving customers food in non-compostable containers. Co-chair Brown thanked the Allied waste representatives. He said he was encouraged by their report. He hoped the City would make noticeable progress each year in reducing its waste stream. He advised that becoming a zero waste city by 2050 was achievable.

Election of Officers

Mr. Kale **nominated** Bruce Brown for chair. Mr. Gottlieb **seconded** the nomination. Mr. Brown indicated he would accept the nomination, but he suggested having a vice or co-chair to share

the work load. Gottlieb **nominated** Vidya Kale for co-chair, but Mr. Kale said he would **withdraw** if Gregory Monahan was interested in serving as co-chair. The Board **elected Co-chair Brown** by unanimous vote. It postponed voting on a co-chair until the next meeting.

Board Liaison Assignments

The Board updated its Liaison List as individual members volunteered for open liaison positions. Co-chair Brown wanted the SAB to set a goal to work more aggressively to interact with the other boards. Ms. Millhauser related that Alex Deley had recommended appointing an SAB member to be the point person for the next Sustainability Action Month. The Board added that to the list of positions and Ms. Asby volunteered to fill it. When Ms. Adatto suggested having a liaison to the Chamber of Commerce the board added that position and she volunteered to fill it. Ms. Spencer offered to work on one of the toxin free environment-related goals if the title were changed from “Pesticide/Herbicide Free Public Space” to “Organically Managed Public Space.” That title better reflected the philosophy of how the land was managed. She would be guided by the Oregon Tilth program. The Board agreed. Co-chair Brown suggested a little neighborhood park that might serve as the perfect pilot project. Although Matt Briggs had already fulfilled the goal for a Model Green Home, Mr. DeBar planned to look for more model green homes. Millhauser announced that Lake Oswego, West Linn and the County had applied for grant for a solarize Lake Oswego/West Linn project. It would promote the use of solar panels and provide discounts to program participants through group purchasing power. If the City got the grant, Millhauser looked toward some SAB members to get involved as the goal was for the project to be community led. The project was added to the liaison list. The SAB planned to finalize the liaison list at its next meeting.

Luscher Area Master Plan – Sustainability Filter

Mayor Hoffman related that the Parks and Recreation Director had given the Council an overview of the parks system master plan. The Council had put that ahead of the Luscher Farm plan. During the presentation the Council had talked about what activities were permissible under the Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) zoning; gone to Google Earth to see what the area looked like in 1994; and talked a little bit about urban farming and the CSA. The Parks and Recreation Director had shown them the 1997 plan and overlaid it with the proposed 2011 plan. She had pointed out natural areas, Stephens Meadow, and the potential tennis facility site. Co-chair Brown advised that the SAB and NRAB were reviewing the plan and preparing their responses.

Co-chair Brown had already let SAB members know that Mr. DeBar and Mr. Gottlieb wanted to be part of the recreation needs and analysis topic. Parks and Recreation had sent the board a copy of the asset analysis that was done a few years ago. Mr. Donaldson reported the Kincaid intern was already working on updating it by collecting information from all the different types of sports teams. Individual Board members commented on the need for playing fields. One observed that destroying an organic farm and using it for something else did not make sense and the City should be able to find other places for the facilities in town. Another asked why everyone wanted to go out of the City to that little farm area? Another reasoned that if the School District was closing schools because the number of young people in the City had declined there might be less need for Lacrosse fields. Some wondered if the problem might be

space utilization: was it because youth were using adult size fields so adults did not have enough places to play? Perhaps there needed to be more small fields around the City. Some fields could be used for more than one sport. Mr. DeBar advised that weather was a factor. Teams could not use the grass fields during the rainy season. Ms. Millhauser related that Comprehensive Plan planners had advised that the Comprehensive Plan update process would put policies in place that were intended to bring more families with kids to the City by 2035.

Co-chair Brown was writing about the Twenty-Minute Neighborhood. He planned to recommend that both playing fields and community farming plots be located in neighborhood school sites and parks around the City. He questioned why people should drive to outside the City for those activities. If the soil at the farm was good perhaps the CSA could be expanded and grow food for the poor and the schools. Ms. Millhauser advised that community gardens were typically 20' x 20', but could be split in half. She was part of an innovation team that had considered the lawn of the West End Building for a community garden. It had great solar access and multiple plots could fit on that site. Some board members observed that many plots could fit on a pretty small chunk of land if water was available.

The SAB was scheduled to have another joint meeting with the NRAB on August 24. Ms. Millhauser reminded the Board that the Parks and Recreation Director has asked them to develop a sustainability filter and a set of principles and high level statements that could go into the narrative of the master plan.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business Co-chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Millhauser
Sustainability Coordinator

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