Sustainability Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 23, 2024

City Hall Council Chambers – 601 Main St W. Ashland, WI 54806

6:00 PM

Take notice that a meeting of the Sustainability Committee will be held in- person in the City Hall Council Chambers, with the availability to attend virtually.

To join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone: https://meet.goto.com/740241965. Or dial in using your phone. United States (Toll Free): 1 866 899 4679 Access Code: 740-241-965

The following items will be considered:

1. **Approval of Agenda**
2. **Election of Chairperson**
3. **Approval of Minutes**
   a. Approval of minutes from the March 28th, 2024 meeting
4. **Citizen Participation Period**
5. **Projects/Discussions**
   a. Discussion on Future Direction of the Committee
   b. Potential Proposal regarding Fruit and Nut Trees on City Properties - Discussion
   c. No/Low Mow May - Update
   d. Committee Recruitment - Discussion
   e. Committee Recruitment - Discussion
6. **Items of Interest for Future Meetings**
7. **Adjournment**

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City of Ashland – Sustainability Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 28th, 2024

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm HYBRID MEETING:

Meeting Link: https://meet.goto.com/740241965 | Access Code: 740-241-965 - CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS (601 Main Street W)

Energy Action Plan, 25x25 Plan, Sourcewater Protection Plan linked here: https://sites.google.com/view/ashland-sustainability/themes

Present: Jim Gregoire, Lissa Radke, Kelly Westlund, Steven Wiley (Planning and Development Director), Chianne Schweitzer (Administrative Clerk)

Agenda

1) Approval of Agenda
   The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.
   Westlund moved to approve and Gregoire seconded. The motion carried 3-0.
2) Election of Chairperson
   Westlund made a motion and Radke seconded the motion to table the election of Chairperson until the April meeting. The motion carried 3-0.
3) Approval of minutes from the February 22nd, 2024 meeting
   Westlund explained that she was not present at the February meeting. Gregoire moved to approve the minutes as written and Radke seconded. The motion carried 2-0-1 (Westlund abstained).
4) Citizen Comments
   There were no citizen comments.
5) Projects/Discussions
   a) Climate Change
      Westlund explained that there was $25 million of new federal funding in the region for renewable energy. A significant amount was to go to Bad River and the remaining to Bayfield County. Radke was waiting to hear back for a similar grant for Ashland County. Westlund stated that funding from the Department of Energy went through the State of WI Office of Sustainability & Clean Energy. She stated that she would share the specifics. There was $24 million in funding for tribal and rural communities. Bad River got 14.1 million. This included funding to reduce utility bills and help with workforce development. It is a joint effort between Red Cliff and Bayfield County to deploy microgrids, etc.
   b) Water
      i. Develop Sourcewater Protection Plan Initial Recommendations
         Acting Chair Gregoire introduced this item. Radke summarized the recommendations. Public Works Director John Butler and Radke met two weeks ago about these and discussed how to make the recommendations more attractive to the public and how to move forward. The public needed to know how much work the City was doing. There was discussion about outreach to partners also. Wiley summarized Radke's update for the record. Westlund mentioned in the past that this would be good fodder for other groups in the

community. Parks and Rec does something for Earth Day every year. Partners that have youth would be good. It was good to involve young people whenever possible. Radke mentioned it is a matter of finding the right people who would do these things. City staff has a full load. Recommendations will be shared with everyone. It needs to be a community sourcewater plan. Radke and Butler brainstormed an exhaustive list of everyone that could be involved.

c) Seed Mix – Discussion/Action

Gregoire opened the item for discussion and Radke had also had some discussion with John Butler on this item. Radke looked at other communities that had some seed mix best management practices (BMPs). There is a list of other communities' BMPs, other ordinances, etc. We decided that the committee was done with this at the last meeting but Mr. Butler could figure out how to move forward. Butler mentioned considering cost and may or may not do an ordinance depending on what his department decides. The City will dig up more properties on public and private infrastructure repair so the questions was how do we get ahead. Westlund asked if there is anything to take action on with this item. Wiley answered that he had placed the item on the agenda as an action item in the event that the Committee determined action was necessary. No action was necessary however.

d) Lawn Chemicals – Discussion

Westlund explained that we had talked about the possibility of passing an ordinance to restrict the City's use of these chemicals on City properties. Westlund asked if an ordinance is the best way to go? Wiley explained that discussions involved the City's use of the chemicals, where they are, and how to mitigate their use. A question involved outreach to the community and who would do it. Radke stated that she would talk to Mr. Butler.

e) Potential Ordinance/Proposal regarding Fruit and Nut Trees in City rights-of-way-Discussion/Action

Wiley explained that staff would prefer to see trees on City properties and not along the rights-of-way. There were concerns with potential conflicts with underground utilities, potential disputes over ownership, maintenance concerns, etc. Westlund mentioned permitting and the consideration of whether it was an option to have trees along the corridor trail or waterfront trail. Gregoire mentioned Peterman's desire for everyone possible to have a fruit tree and map of their locations. Gregoire understands staff's desire to start with City properties but feels for Peterman's desire because Peterman has a lot of passion for this. Radke suggested bringing in City staff who would oversee planting of these trees. Gregoire agreed that this is a really good idea. Westlund mentioned for an online map there is a Wikipedia of maps (Online Street Maps) where you can map individual trees and that a next step would involve starting discussions on what locations might make sense. Radke stated that the Chequamegon Bay is a bird migration route and perhaps some trees could be of species that feed birds. Gregoire asked if anyone wants to make a motion or move this to the next meeting. He suggested asking the City to bring a tree person in and see what is possible. Wiley stated that he could ask Sara Hudson as City Forester if she would attend and speak with the committee.

f) Invasive Species – Discussion
Wiley provided an update on this item. He explained that Sara Hudson had asked him if he could bring this to the Sustainability Committee. The City has ordinances for invasive species management on construction sites for developments but the ordinances are rather permissive. Westlund asked if there were specific species that were giving us problems. Wiley stated that there were but that he was not sure the exact species. He stated that Ms. Hudson had mentioned some however especially at the Timeless Timber site where the Superior View Cottages are located. Gregoire explained that buckthorn was an issue that Ms. Hudson has mentioned for years.

Annual Report

Wiley provided an update on the annual report board. Committee members supported the concept and explained that it looked good. Radke asked if it could go as a flyer in the water bills. Radke moved and Westlund seconded. The motion carried 3-0.

6) Future agenda items
Westlund mentioned No Mow Way and asked if it will be a thing. Wiley answered that he believed it would but had not discussed with Mr. Butler or Ms. Hudson yet. Committee recruitment is an important topic-we need more folks especially with Radke being done towards the end of April. If there is an update for solar/PV for the WWTP the committee would like to see that. Westlund mentioned information for the Transitional Housing applying for CDBG funds through the county. Bill Bailey is collaborating on potential PV and solar there.
7) Adjournment
Westlund moved to adjourn and Gregoire seconded. The motion carried 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:57 pm.

Recorded by:

Steven D. Wiley, AICP
Planning and Development Director