

APPROVED MINUTES

EDEN PRAIRIE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2018

7:00 PM—CITY CENTER

Prairie Room, 8080 Mitchell Road

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Lori Tritz (Chair), Cindy Hoffman, Anna Anderson, Michael Bennett, Daniel Katzenberger, Kate Lohnes, Ashley Young

CITY STAFF:

Senior Planner Beth Novak-Krebs, Planning Division, Kristin Harley, Recording Secretary

STUDENT MEMBERS:

Troy Johnson, Rhea Sharma, Govind Makaram

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Tritz called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Absent were commission members Lohnes and Young and student representatives Johnson and Makaram.

Katzenberger arrived at 6:22 p.m. Sharma arrived at 6:51 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Anderson moved, seconded by Bennett to approve the agenda **Motion carried 4-0.**

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Bennett moved, seconded by Anderson to approve the minutes. **Motion carried 4-0.**

IV. REPORTS

A. REPORTS FROM STAFF

1. DISCUSS 2018 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2019 WORK PLAN

Tritz led the commission members in a discussion on the goal of concentrating on a single focus area in 2019: the two candidates were energy and water. She summarized the Partners In Energy meeting and the list of possible support areas generated as a result. She suggested

Conservation Commission Minutes

December 3, 2018

Page 2

partnering with Carol Lundgren, Sustainability Specialist, with the help of staff. Anderson suggested a goal to deepen the commission's integration with the Sustainability committee. Discussion followed on having and/or one or more of the members regularly attend Conservation Commission meetings. Novak-Krebs stated Stovring had reported the Solid Waste Management Plan was close to being completed. There were strategies for energy, and many water rebates. Pollinators was a more difficult focus area with regard to metrics. Anderson replied the other strategies in the focus areas could support pollinators. Novak-Krebs added Lundgren would soon be sending the commission data on water conservation in Eden Prairie and on the Energy Action Plan. Solid waste was also a difficult focus area since much of this was dealt with on the county level, and the City Manager wanted to see some emphasis on all four focus areas; education could fill the gaps, although action items such as rebates returned measurable results. Anderson emphasized feeding the commission's efforts toward the City's initiatives and goals. Novak-Krebs suggested brainstorming smaller events the commission could get involved in. Bennett replied the idea of focusing on the four areas was generic and asked if the City Manager had specific recommendations. Novak-Krebs mentioned the Solid Waste Management plan and the energy Action Plan. Regarding water, initiatives could include rebates and behavioral change, and pollinators and landscaping was discussed in terms of buckthorn removal.

Bennett noted the goats had not proven as effective as anticipated, but they were being brought back. Tritz noted the goats ate everything, so this worked well in particularly infested areas. Bennett replied an advantage to goats was they ate the buckthorn in winter. He added the energy initiatives were ambitious ideas, and while the sustainability group had tried to narrow its focus the goals remained broad. He suggested follow-up on the energy audits and get measurable results about behavioral change from that. He also asked how the commission could measure the effectiveness of its education and outreach.

Anderson asked if there was an identified person responsible for each strategy, and Novak-Krebs replied there was. Anderson asked if these people were looking for support. Discussion followed on where support was needed. Hoffman suggested partnering with Parks, Recreation and Forestry on water.

Tritz urged the commission members to brainstorm ideas for the commission members to be most effective for each focus area. Katzenberg would take energy; Stovring could guide the commission with regard to solid waste; water had several possible partnerships although Tritz was not sure about Parks, Recreation, and Forestry here—the larger partner would

Conservation Commission Minutes

December 3, 2018

Page 3

be the Watershed District and the smart irrigators program. Novak-Krebs offered to follow up on the smart irrigators. Regarding pollinators, there was a patch of prairie at the Eden Prairie Community Center that seemed to need maintenance, and she suggested partnering with the Wild Ones to make this an educational/demonstration garden. Anderson suggested involving the school nearby. Tritz replied she would love to see all the schools have some kind of educational garden, similar to the rain gardens, which emphasized both water and pollinators. Anderson replied many schools also had vegetable gardens.

Katzenberger looked through the energy initiatives for 2019 and suggested using again the incentive for the Home Energy Squad visits and the energy challenge in October. Novak-Krebs noted Lundgren wanted to hold another energy challenge, launch a survey, and offer the energy audits again. Novak-Krebs offered to find out when the 2019 budget would be announced. Bennett noted the Home and Garden Show in March would be the time to promote the energy audits. Water conservation would be a more appropriate theme for Arbor Day, although the commission members could start thinking about this early. Tritz suggested inviting another Home Energy Squad person in attendance, and Bennett replied the commission could promote it whether or not a guest was in attendance. Katzenberger noted the contest for a smart thermostat in October for residents to sign up for wind energy was effective.

Katzenberger noted the commission had long-term goals and short-term strategies, but they were not connected. He asked if there were possible solar projects to be done on Parks, Recreation, and Forestry property. Novak-Krebs replied the City was looking at the old landfill, and solar was being added to some City buildings. Katzenberger suggested having a small demonstration project such as swivel solar panels that are visible to residents. Novak-Krebs noted the solar panels on the community center were not very visible, and the exhibit inside could be improved in its visibility and message; perhaps the commission could help with this. Tritz suggested holding a contest for artists for the display.

Hoffman urged promotion of the water rebates, and reminded the commission members the Eden Prairie website did not highlight these as it could. She urged the involvement of the Communications Department. She emphasized searching in Google to find interior pages rather than trying to navigate the Eden Prairie website to the desired page.

Discussion followed on new projects for the commission. Tritz urged having a written goal that supported existing City goals.

Conservation Commission Minutes

December 3, 2018

Page 4

Bennett suggested synergizing two or several focus areas, particularly at meetings at the multi-family dwellings, such as introducing solid waste or recycling at the same meeting. Novak-Krebs agreed there are issues with recycling and garbage at the multi-family dwellings, along with education on energy. Tritz suggested addressing water and salt, and agreed with targeting an audience rather than merely focusing on one or more focus areas. Novak-Krebs suggested partnering with Housing and Community Services on a program. Hoffman asked if this department presented to residents or managers, and Novak-Krebs replied it presented to both. Bennett stated the first meetings were with the managers, who have a monthly meeting to which residents are invited. Novak-Krebs stated there was a group that taught people how to read energy bill. Discussion followed on the possibility of a partnership here.

Tritz urged the commission to capitalize on the award given to Elim Shores. Hoffman suggested a tour of the building with the idea of broadening that message. Anderson suggested developing a curriculum, and Tritz replied much of that work had been done.

Anderson asked for next steps. Novak-Krebs replied she wanted to bring these ideas and the suggestions at the upcoming joint meeting to Lundgren. Hoffman stressed the education of multifamily unit residents could be a possible priority.

Possible initiatives for 2019 were:

Adopt a storm drain

Pollinator garden at the Community Center

Multi-family outreach: water irrigator rebates

Community Center display: a call for artists

Home irrigation initiative

B. REPORTS FROM CHAIR

C. REPORTS FROM COMMISSION

1. WATER GROUP UPDATE

2. WASTE GROUP UPDATE

3. LANDSCAPE/POLLINATOR GROUP UPDATE

4. ENERGY GROUP UPDATE

D. REPORTS FROM STUDENTS

Conservation Commission Minutes

December 3, 2018

Page 5

V. OTHER BUSINESS

VI. UPCOMING EVENTS

VII. NEXT MEETING

The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held Tuesday, January 8, 2019, 7:00 p.m. in Prairie Rooms A & B.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The commission joined the joint meeting with the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department at 6:56 p.m.