

SUSTAINABLE LA CROSSE COMMISSION

Thursday, October 25, 2012
City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room,
400 La Crosse St.
4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Marilyn Pedretti, R. Jean Salk, Sara Sullivan, Dick Swantz, Diane Wulf, Rob Tyser

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Wayne Olson, Dan Bagniewski

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sharon Hampson

OTHERS PRESENT: Nick Nichols, Amy Peterson, Jacob LaRow, Erica Black

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Pedretti called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- None received.

APPROVE MINUTES OF August 23, 2012

MOTION by Wulf/Tyser to approve the minutes of August 23, 2012. **Motion carried unanimously.**

STAFF REPORTS / INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

- **Recent legislation moving through the City (Peterson)** - Amy Peterson informed the Commission that the Common Council of La Crosse passed resolutions approving the Green Tier Charter for Legacy Communities and the Sustainable Building Policy. Laurel Sukup from the Wisconsin DNR's Sustainability Communities Sector would like to speak to the Commission in November.
- **Climate change (Peterson)**
 - **Website** – The Sustainability website has been updated with information relating to the Climate Change Workshop. A brochure produced by the DNR is also accessible on the site.
 - **EPA Green Infrastructure Grant Project** – Consultants visited La Crosse to see the Johnson Street Basin and met with the City's Engineering Department. Peterson briefly described the boundaries of the basin and discussed possible avenues to proceed in addressing the flooding issues. Future discussion will be focused on what if any green infrastructure projects can be implemented to help mitigate flooding issues versus just installing larger pipes. Both permeable pavement and bio cells will be included in the EPA study. Peterson suggested that steps taken on this project could be used as a template for other areas of concern in the city.
 - **Global Warming Presentation October 25th** – The presentation will be at 7:30 p.m. at the Eco Park and is co-sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship and the USGS.
- **Sustainable Communities Conference update (Nichols)** – Nick Nichols gave the Commission an overview and summary of the conference he attended on October 3rd in Dubuque, Iowa. One speaker in particular from Madison, Wisconsin spoke about networking and the importance of the "buy in" or bringing in stakeholders. Other topics touched on sustainable versus conventional decision making (i.e. life cycle costing versus cheaper) and building citizen and employee engagement. Nichols brought up the topic of glass recycling and how that fits into a larger discussion on how to measure sustainability. Glass is very expensive to recycle and does not pay for itself; some communities have stopped collecting glass for recycling.

- **County landfill community forest – sustainable timber harvesting (Nichols)** – A bid opening will take place on the 29th of October to log the 88 acres of forest in the landfill. This logging operation will likely result in a harvest of 50 to 70 thousand board feet. The Outdoor Recreation Alliance (ORA) will assist in mitigating the environmental impact of the logging roads by building trails and part of the money raised through the harvest will help pay for the trails. It is expected that the next harvest would be in 15 to 20 years.

SUSTAINABLE EFFORTS IN THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT – STEVE CAROLYN (PETERSON)

- Unfortunately, Mr. Carolyn was not able to attend the meeting, as he was attending the ORA Summit and meeting with the Secretary of the Wisconsin DNR. Peterson said she would inquire if he would be available to speak to the Commission at the November meeting.

ACTION ON STRATEGIC PLAN PROPOSED GOALS

- Chair Pedretti stressed the need to view the Plan as a living document and these goals were sought from department heads and from County Administrator Steve O’Malley. It will be an ever changing document that will need updating from time to time.
- **MOTION** by Salk/Tyser to adopt the proposed goals into the Strategic Plan. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- Chair Pedretti said the plans are very ambitious and facilitated a brief discussion on how and when to update the goal sheet. The Commission agreed to have a future agenda item on how to update strategic plan goals.

TOUR CARDS FOR THE COUNTY LAND FILL DISCUSSION

- Nichols had laid out tour cards for the Commission and suggested referring any interested groups to look into the tour to help better understand what the County is doing in the area of waste management. Thus far Nichols said 600 people have toured the landfill and he heard personally from one person how their tour was an eye-opener in how they viewed the process of throwing things away.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER MEETING DATES

- The next meeting is scheduled for November 29, 2012, and the December meeting is cancelled.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Baseline group updates on sustainability indicators
- Viterbo – Efforts toward sustainability
- Sustainable week at City and County Buildings
- Update strategic plan goals discussion

NEXT MEETING: November 29, 2012

ADJOURN

- **Motion** by Sullivan/Tyser. **Motion carried unanimously.** Chair Pedretti adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.