

**MINUTES**  
**Sustainability Committee**  
**November 20, 2019**  
**Municipal Complex, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. on Wednesday, November 20, 2019 at the Municipal Complex in Crystal Lake.

**II. Roll Call/Attendance**

Present were the following committee members: Chair John Kavalunas, Emilie Hoffman, Jen Oliver, Greg Glover, and Joe Babiarz. Members of the public in attendance were Joe Scherb and Nick Hammonds, Management Analyst.

**III. Public Comment**

Joe Scherb introduced himself as a frequent guest of the Sustainability Committee's meetings. He stated that he has continued to work with John Kavalunas regarding the bicycle friendly initiative.

**IV. Approval of the Minutes from October 16, 2019**

Greg Glover moved to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2019 meeting as amended. Joe Babiarz seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed.

**V. Greenest Region Compact (GRC): Review Priority Objectives, Plastic Bag Objective Discussion, and Complete Streets Discussion**

John Kavalunas began the discussion of the GRC by reviewing each priority objective:

- Complete Streets Policy: Greg Glover
- Energy Star certification for Municipal Properties: John Kavalunas and Terry Dieckhoff
- Communication of Sustainability Committee initiatives, actions and goals: Lara Smith
- Promote and support local businesses that practice sustainability: Emilie Hoffman
- Plastic bag bans: Nicky Strahl and Joe Babiarz

John Kavalunas stated that he and Terry Dieckhoff had not yet received a response regarding Energy Star. Nick Hammonds stated that the City was not actively pursuing Energy Star at this time. The Committee asked for an update on why the City would not be pursuing, and if any attempts were made in the past. Nick Hammonds will discuss with Public Works staff regarding Energy Star for the December meeting.

John Kavalunas asked if Emilie Hoffman had updates regarding promotion of local businesses. Mrs. Hoffman stated that she could partner with Lara Smith, who is working on communication, since their initiatives overlap in many ways. Mrs. Hoffman stated that she is reviewing what other municipalities are doing for promoting sustainable businesses. She stated that some towns have badges that are color coded and provided by the towns' sustainability committees. The businesses would submit a written application for certification as a sustainable business. Mrs. Hoffman advised that she is working on a set of criteria to determine sustainable business certifications.

Emilie Hoffman also stated that many communities partner with the Chamber of Commerce for this type of program. The Committee discussed the possibility of contacting the Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce, which Nick Hammonds mentioned that they host the Earth Day trash collection event each year. John Kavalunas stated that the Committee could be involved with the Chamber of Commerce for the Earth Day event and also establish the green business program. Emilie Hoffman stated that many communities have a 'green resident' award for people who use rain barrels and conduct other sustainable practices. This program would operate similar to green businesses where residents submit written applications for the award.

Jen Oliver discussed the Conservation District and their programs recognizing commercial and residential awards for sustainable practices. Jen Oliver stated that she can work along with Emilie Hoffman and Lara Smith on the combined efforts for promotion of sustainable businesses and communication by the Committee. Greg Glover agreed that the program is a great idea, and that the program would require an ongoing commitment to evaluate and award businesses and residents. John Kavalunas discussed whether the City would review and award people, and that the workload would not be excessive since not every business will submit an application for recognition. Emilie Hoffman stated that the criteria would need to be specific, stringent, and measurable. Joe Babiarz agreed and said that stringent criteria would ensure that the program is competitive. John Kavalunas confirmed that Jen Oliver and Emilie Hoffman will reach out to the Conservation District and the Chamber of Commerce regarding the program.

John Kavalunas discussed the Complete Streets objective and asked the Committee to review the approved policy. John Kavalunas discussed the possibility of a City staff member with knowledge of Complete Streets and corresponding projects to come to a Sustainability Committee meeting. He discussed the chance to ask questions about the policy and who is responsible for ensuring the objectives of the policy are met. Greg Glover discussed the background of Complete Streets and the direction that McHenry County provided regarding policy adoption by municipalities. He also stated that certain projects are grant eligible, such as roundabouts, and how there is a need for pedestrian and biking access to be considered during the design of these projects.

John Kavalunas discussed the adopted Complete Streets policy that was approved by the City of Crystal Lake. He discussed the exemption language listed in the policy and the future need to have additional exemption approval steps. John Kavalunas discussed how the Committee could be involved going forward to provide input regarding sustainability related to City projects.

John Kavalunas began the discussion of the plastic bag objective. Joe Babiarz stated that he is willing to take the lead on the plastic bag initiative and would like to know who with the City he can work with to get the objective going. Joe Babiarz stated that he is willing to contact businesses to begin gauging their feedback regarding plastic bag fees or bans. John Kavalunas discussed how there are still questions regarding the plastic bag fee approved by Woodstock and how the fee will be collected back to the city. Joe Babiarz stated that he would like to contact someone at the City and to get direction regarding implementing a plastic bag fee. Each member of the Committee indicated their approval of implementing a plastic bag fee.

## **VI. Bicycle Friendly Community/Bike Shop Application Discussion**

John Kavalunas discussed the bicycle friendly initiative and the Committee's previous discussion about establishing a 'bicycle friendly triangle' between certain businesses near the downtown area. Joe Scherb discussed his proposal for creating a bicycle friendly destination, and hoping to involve Duke's, the Crystal Lake Brewery, Forge Fitness and Wheel Werks to join together. Joe Scherb discussed the requirements and expectations of the bicycle friendly designation for businesses and communities. He discussed grants available and low cost options such as signage and small bike racks. The primary reason is to become bicycle friendly in this area, with the hope that the initiative would spread throughout the downtown area and Crystal Lake in general.

Jen Oliver inquired about who operates the bicycle friendly organization. Joe Scherb stated that the League of American Bicyclists operates the program and that he has extensive history working with them and other businesses to achieve the designation. Emilie Hoffman asked about any fees involved. Joe Scherb discussed the fees assessed depending on business size, and that there is a fee to apply. Fees are generally modest. Joe Babiarz asked if the application is broken out into categories, or if it is 'all or nothing' where a business either gets the designation or not. Joe Scherb discussed the categories and how businesses prove they are achieving certain steps. Jen Oliver then asked if businesses get more than just a plaque for the achievement. Joe Scherb stated that businesses receive an award and publicity from the organization, which provides maps and publications about the location of bicycle friendly businesses and communities.

Joe Babiarz discussed bike paths in Crystal Lake and asked why the Prairie Trail is not connected in the downtown area. Joe Scherb discussed the initiatives that Batavia has pursued to make their downtown more bike friendly. Greg Glover reviewed possible reasons for the bike trail to be detoured from the downtown area. He also discussed the importance of addressing infrastructure along with pedestrian and bike paths together.

Joe Scherb discussed his goal of getting businesses together for a meeting to create the 'bicycle friendly triangle' that he discussed previously. The Committee agreed that this was a good idea. John Kavalunas asked Joe Scherb what he believed would be the City's involvement. Joe Scherb provided a breakdown of costs involved to conduct a meeting with businesses and begin creating a bicycle friendly workflow. Joe Scherb stated that he is hoping to have the meeting organized before the end of the year.

## **VII. Husmann Elementary Environmental Night Review**

John Kavalunas discussed the Environmental Night and how the Committee was well received by children and parents at the school. Jen Oliver was in attendance and stated that the information provided by the Committee was appreciated by parents at the event. John Kavalunas stated that people were interested in the promotion for the Zagster bikes and the Committee had multiple people sign up to receive updates from the Committee for the Bike With Your Neighbor event. Emilie Hoffman stated that the feedback from guests at the Johnny Appleseed Festival was similar in that the reception was positive. The Committee discussed and agreed that Nick Hammonds should contact Tina Serra for an update and to provide feedback regarding the event.

### **VIII. Open Discussion**

Nick Hammonds advised that the Crystal Lake Park District asked if the Sustainability Committee would be interested in combining the Bike With Your Neighbor event along with another Park District event at Main Beach. Emilie Hoffman stated that the event would need to match appropriately with the Bike With Your Neighbor theme. The Committee agreed with Emilie Hoffman. The Committee agreed to discuss the rain date for the event at the December Committee meeting.

Nick Hammonds began a discussion regarding anti-idling at South Elementary. The City recently received a request from a concerned resident to install anti-idling signs at the school due to a large number of vehicles that idle outside the school waiting to pick up their children. Jen Oliver and Greg Glover stated they are interested in assisting with this initiative. John Kavalunas suggested the Committee review the past information when the Committee was involved with implementing anti-idling signs in the City. Jen Oliver discussed how the schools send out information to parents, but that there are still people who idle in their cars. Greg Glover discussed the possibility of working with the school district to implement the signs and provide information to parents.

John Kavalunas discussed terms of Committee members. Nick Hammonds stated that new members are appointed for three year terms. John Kavalunas discussed the process for designating a chair of the Committee. The Committee will plan to rotate the chair position after the new year.

### **IX. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

### **X. Adjourn**

There being no further business, Greg Glover moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m. Joe Babiarz seconded the motion. On voice vote, all voted aye. Motion passed.