

MINUTES
Sustainability Committee
November 16, 2022
Municipal Complex, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 16, 2022 at Crystal Lake City Hall.

2. Roll Call/Attendance

Present were the following committee members: Terry Dieckhoff, Carol Elkins, Emilie Hoffman, Jen Oliver, and Lisa McLaughlin. Members of the public in attendance were Stephen Platt, Dean Farr, Dr. John Zahina-Ramos, and Assistant City Manager Nick Hammonds.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of the Minutes from August 17, 2022

Terry Dieckhoff moved to approve the minutes from the August 17, 2022 meeting. Jen Oliver seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, motion passed.

5. Guest Presentation: Dr. John Zahina-Ramos, College of Lake County, Horticulture Department

Dr. John Zahina-Ramos provided a presentation of his research into the benefits of urban agriculture and home grown food. He discussed his background and experience with home gardening that has been through generations in his family. One of the focal points in his research was to determine the impact that a home garden can have on food production and waste reduction. He explained the benefits of urban gardening, which include greenhouse gas emission reduction by shortening the farm to plate chain, reduced water consumption, and cheaper grocery costs. Dr. John Zahina-Ramos emphasized the importance of moving ideas into action and finding out how to get people to understand the benefits of urban gardening.

Jen Oliver inquired about Dr. John Zahina-Ramos' views on food co-ops. He stated that food co-ops and farmers markets are great movements that are closely related to urban gardening. Dr. John discussed how he used to provide tours and food tasting when he had a home garden in Florida. Emilie Hoffman asked if Dr. John would be interested in hosting tours at his home garden in the spring. He stated that he could provide tours after the first week of May when school ends.

6. Mayors Monarch Pledge Action Items Update

Nick Hammonds provided an update on the action items achieved under the Mayors Monarch Pledge. The City will commit to the pledge again in 2023. The Committee agreed to discuss the action items for 2023 at the January meeting.

7. Environmental Defenders November 17 at CL Brewery

Nick Hammonds discussed the upcoming Environmental Defenders meeting at the Crystal Lake Brewery on November 17th. Carol Elkins and Emilie Hoffman reviewed the meeting details and stated

the Defenders are looking to discuss waste reduction at schools and businesses. Emilie Hoffman stated she will try to attend. Carol Elkins stated that she may have scheduling conflict.

8. Open Discussion

Nick Hammonds discussed budget items that were presented at the recent City Council meeting, including bike path connections, rain gardens, and native plantings in the City. Carol Elkins offered her assistance with the native garden in front of City Hall.

The Committee began a discussion of action items and goals for 2023.

Emilie Hoffman discussed the Naperville Sustainability Commission and their initiatives. She stated that Naperville has pollinator stations with educational signs, and the Committee could incorporate this into marketing and educational efforts. Emilie Hoffman suggested that the Committee provide information on the website to connect local native plant areas on a map with signage and information regarding each area. Lisa McLaughlin proposed that residents could send in photos of their native gardens to be highlighted on City social media or the website.

Lisa McLaughlin discussed the possibility of the City requiring deliveries to be performed using biodegradable packaging. Jen Oliver discussed the towns and restaurants that have banned the use of Styrofoam for take-out food. Emilie Hoffman stated that the City could recognize restaurants that use sustainable options. Carol Elkins stated that the Committee could provide handouts at events to educate the public on sustainable take-out food options. Terry Dieckhoff discussed how he will often bring his own containers to restaurants for the take-out food.

Lisa McLaughlin discussed the City calendar. She also stated that the Committee could prioritize goals for 2023 by working backwards on the calendar to make sure events and messaging coincide together.

The Committee discussed the new development at the corner of Main Street and Crystal Lake Avenue. Terry Dieckhoff inquired if there will be a native garden and native plant areas. Emilie Hoffman inquired if bike racks will be available. Lisa McLaughlin asked about low flow fixtures for water conservation, and if there will be compost bins available for the residents at the development. Carol Elkins inquired if City staff is looking at sustainability when approving developments. The Committee would like to know if they can provide input on sustainable measures for new developments.

The Committee agreed to conduct research of the City's website and neighboring communities' websites to make improvements to the Sustainability Committee web page. The Committee will also research Styrofoam alternatives for takeout food to get restaurants to support sustainable options. An agenda item at the next meeting in January will focus on the Committee's goals for 2023.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

10. Adjourn

There being no further business, Carol Elkins moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Lisa McLaughlin seconded the motion. On voice vote, all voted aye. Motion passed.