



1200 Wilmette Avenue
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091-0040

**MEETING MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY COMMISSION**

THURSDAY, November 21, 2019

6:15 P.M.

VILLAGE HALL TRAINING ROOM – 2ND FLOOR OF WILMETTE VILLAGE HALL

Members Present: Julie Wolf, Chair
Rebecca Boyd
Arthur Haut
Michael Kim
William Muno
Kenneth Parkhill
Joel Feinstein

Members Absent: Amanda Ault
April Cesaretti

Staff Present: John Adler, Director of Community Development
Kate Amoruso, Assistant to the Director of Engineering & Public Works
Kate McManus, Planner II

Guests: Diana Hackbarth
Linda Kurtz of Go Green Wilmette
Saima Abbassi
David Price

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:16 P.M.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Wolf directed the Commission's attention to the draft minutes of the Environmental and Energy Commission meeting of October 10, 2019

Commissioner Kim Noted that the minutes misidentified the Chair of the Committee, and Commissioner Parkhill noted that Linda Kurtz's contributions to the sustainability plan needed to be properly stated. Following these two revisions, the Commission moved to approve the Minutes from October 10, 2019.

III. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Wolf informed Commissioners that they should be using footnotes in their respective sections of the draft sustainability plan for reference purposes, and updated the Commission on the timeline and revision procedures for the draft plan.

At the Chair's request, Commissioner Parkhill discussed the GHG Protocol and recommended its usage when creating the Wilmette Green House Gas Inventory.

IV. STAFF REPORT

Kate McManus updated the Commission on the Village's SolSmart designation, noting that Wilmette is now recognized as a Silver member, and the goal continues to be achieving a "Gold" designation.

Ms. McManus also noted that the Village was working on enrolling several municipal electric accounts into a Community Solar program.

John Adler explained that the Community Solar program has two different programs, and explained the differences between both programs, noting that the main difference is lengths of contracts, and possible saving percentages. Mr. Adler explained that the Village will have to decide which program they would like to enroll in, Ms. McManus mentioned this decision would likely be made in February.

Kate Amoruso informed the Commission that the Village signed on to the Mayors Monarch Pledge, and provided an update on the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for draft plans. Additionally, Ms. Amoruso updated the Commission about the status of the Rain Ready program, which will be replaced with an in-house credit and incentive program.

Last, Ms. Amoruso spoke about the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) grant that the Village received to help cover costs for a permeable parking lot renovation at the Village Hall, which will be further explored during the 2021 budget formulation.

V. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN DISCUSSION: CLIMATE and ENERGY chapters

Commissioner Boyd presented a PowerPoint covering the 2017, 2018 & 2019 United Nations Climate Conferences. The 2018 UN Climate Report findings were discussed, specifically the need to stay under the mark of 1.5 degrees Celsius warming, to do so, we need a 45% Greenhouse Gas Emission reduction by 2030 and for Greenhouse Gas Emissions to hit the net-zero mark by 2050. Next, the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement, global temperature increases rates, and strategies to reduce emissions such as mitigation and resilience were discussed. Commissioner Boyd then presented Illinois' goals and recent policy adoptions to combat climate change, and Wilmette's membership in a number of climate and sustainability groups and initiatives.

Commissioner Haut suggested trying to reference more climate professionals on draft sustainability plans, commenting that the Commission could only benefit from more professional resources.

Chair Wolf directed the Commission to discuss the Climate section of the draft sustainability plan. Commissioner Muno discussed Wilmette's Stormwater Management plan and how this project was built into topics like green infrastructure.

Commissioner Boyd then discussed carbon sequestration and how it could be built into the draft sustainability plan, and suggested that climate should be addressed in every chapter of the draft plan.

Commissioner Feinstein asked for clarification regarding which electric accounts would be covered by the Community Solar program, and Chair Wolf responded that as of now, only street light accounts have been submitted for enrollment into the program.

Commissioner Muno mentioned that he has received notices from a private company to enroll into a solar/green energy program, so he assumes residential green energy programs are an option to Illinois residents.

The Commission then discussed natural gas and how it has become a preferred energy source in the US, and the effects it has had on greenhouse gas emissions.

Commissioner Boyd asked the Commissioners if they wanted to include a commitment to the 2018 UN Climate Report goals in the draft sustainability plan, specifically the 45% reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2030 and net-zero status by 2050 goal. The Commissioners agreed to explore specific action steps and objectives that could be built into the draft plan to address the Paris Climate Agreement goals.

Mr. Adler informed the Commission that Illinois has certain electric and natural gas regulations that new construction needs to abide by, so mentioning this in the draft plan could be worthwhile.

Chair Wolf and Mr. Adler discussed how interim goals and recommendations would be the first priority once the final draft plan was completed.

Commissioner Boyd mentioned that Evanston refers to their plan as a Climate Action Resiliency Plan, and how climate is an over-arching theme, so she suggested Wilmette's plan follow a similar format.

Commissioner Feinstein suggested adding a glossary to the plan to make it more easily understandable and digestible to the public, and Chair Wolf agreed with this suggestion. Chair Wolf then suggested the Energy chapter address specific reduction goals, whereas Climate could remain more broad and contain more over-arching, long-term goals.

Chair Wolf suggested the Commission put together resources and materials for the upcoming Going Green Matters event in March 2020. Commissioner Muno mentioned having a table dedicated to the progress the Commission has made on the draft sustainability plan.

Chair Wolf then directed the Commissioners attention to the Energy chapter, and mentioned the idea of creating a “green” team, made up of different stakeholders to examine current Village and local practices which could be charged with determining how different improvements can be made.

Commissioner Haut discussed various types of power sources available to residents, and suggested the Village explore ways to recommend residents enroll in renewable energy source programs. Chair Wolf then spoke about several programs different neighboring municipalities have enrolled in.

The Commissioners then discussed electric vehicles and the active biking/transportation plan in Wilmette. The Commissioners and present staff members discussed electric vehicle charging stations and the possibility of seeing more of them around Wilmette in the near future.

Commissioner Parkhill discussed including a social carbon cost in the Energy or Climate chapters of the draft sustainability plan. Commissioner Boyd asked if the Commission envisioned this as a Village tax that would be levied, or just something for residents to consider.

The Commission finished with discussing greenhouse gas emissions and their connection to typical residential and commercial use, and discussed revising draft plan language from energy use to energy generation.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Diana Hackbarth asked for clarification on whether or not outdoor air quality would be addressed in the draft plan, and the Commissioners responded that it would be.

Linda Kurtz of Go Green Wilmette thanked the Commission for mentioning the Going Green Matters event in March 2020, and urged the Commission to put together a display for the event.

Saima Abbassi pondered if the Village was aware of who would be considered the largest polluters in the Village, and shared her concerns with gas powered leaf blowers and lawn mowers.

David Price asked for an update on whether or not the Wilmette Park District was exploring installing solar panels, and also informed the Commission that Nicor and ComEd conduct free energy audits for property owners in and around Wilmette.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wolf called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Parkhill moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Boyd seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alex Arteaga
Management Analyst, Village Manager's Office