

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

February 11, 2016
City Council Chambers

The Special Meeting of the Environmental Commission of the City of Woodstock was called to order at 5:35 PM on Thursday, February 11, 2016 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

In the absence of Chairwoman E. Poremba, the meeting was called to order by S. Wenzel. A roll call was taken.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Ed Ellinghausen, Laurie Kacmar, Jaci Krandel, and Steve Wenzel.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Erica Poremba

STAFF PRESENT: Assistant Public Works Director Tom Migatz and Chief Deputy Clerk Jane Howie

OTHERS PRESENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by J. Krandel, second by E. Ellinghausen to approve the January 7, 2016 Meeting Minutes as presented. Ayes: E. Ellinghausen, L. Kacmar, J. Krandel, S. Wenzel. Nays: None. Absentees: E. Poremba. Abstentions: None. Minutes were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Continue Review of Environmental Plan Recommendations List

S. Wenzel commented that at last month's meeting the Commission briefly discussed solar energy and geothermal energy and we questioned if tax credits or rebates were still in effect. There are still federal tax credits available. However geothermal tax rebates expire at the end of this year, so there's really no reason to have them referenced. Solar _____ and thermal hot water credits survive until the end of 2020. It's at 30% right now, but it steps down each year. The State of Illinois chose to extend their rebates, but they're not funded, so we're not sure where this will go.

E. Ellinghausen mentioned that LED street lighting has a lot of advantages such as the life of the product as well as cost to use the product. It costs a bit more up front, but overall it's a huge cost savings over the life of the product. S. Wenzel asked if the City controls street lighting. T. Migatz answered that ComEd controls the majority of street lighting and the City receives a bill for usage. He asked if the Commission members are inquiring and thinking about a possible LED conversion. The Commission members answered, yes. S. Wenzel asked who is the decision up to? T. Migatz said the City may have some input. But, staff is unsure of the charge for LED lighting. E. Ellinghausen has read that the City received funding from a service transportation program to build a roundabout at South Street & Lake Avenue. He believes this will involve a whole new lighting system. The Commission would like to know if the City would consider more advanced technology such as LED lights, or lights that come on instantaneously.

E. Ellinghausen has read about lights that have sensors in the pavement. These lights are only dimly lit until traffic appears, at which time the lights come on fully. Over the years this would amount to a big energy savings. He hopes that in the design stage of the roundabout, these types of products would be considered for energy savings. J. Krandel asked if this includes pedestrian traffic. E. Ellinghausen is unsure; however, the lights are always on, just very dim when no one is around. He'd heard that it's used fairly successfully in other locations. This is something that deserves some attention. T. Migatz believes the project is currently in Phase I.

Item #194 – Green Building materials; how do we feel about these. Are these a high or low priority? And, is any of this already in play here in Woodstock? Is there a purchasing policy in the city? L. Kacmar said she's wondering the same thing. S. Wenzel asked if there's a procurement policy. And, if so, is cost the driver? T. Migatz said he will look into this. J. Krandel would like the Commission to encourage people to use green cleaning products in addition to using green building materials and other environmentally friendly products. S. Wenzel who does the cleaning for City of Woodstock buildings. T. Migatz said it is mostly outsourced. J. Krandel said whenever she hires companies she requests that they use 'green' products. T. Migatz said that city staff cleans facilities in the parks. For after hours, the city hired a cleaning service.

S. Wenzel asked how the Commission would like to rank this item. Is this a high or low priority? E. Ellinghausen asked what items would bring better results. Do we need more informational programs? L. Kacmar feels this is a medium priority. S. Wenzel agreed; medium priority. E. Ellinghausen asked if the city code has increased the R factor for insulation. T. Migatz is not sure about this. He'll look into this and get an answer back to the Commission. E. Ellinghausen wants to know what the current City Code is. S. Wenzel asked what BOCA code.

S. Wenzel asked if the Commissioners want Items #194 – 199 to be listed as a medium priority. All Commissioners agreed.

S. Wenzel said the next section is Energy Efficiency in New and Existing Buildings. E. Ellinghausen said this is low-hanging fruit. S. Wenzel said that at the time this was drafted there was a recommendation to conduct energy audits on municipal buildings for potential cost savings and to reduce carbon emissions. S. Wenzel asked T. Migatz if the city ever had an energy auditor inspect City buildings. T. Migatz said he'll ask the City's Facilities Superintendent and get back to the Commission with an answer.

J. Krandel asked, when the Commission recommends these things, who actually can make this happen? The Commission could recommend this testing so that it could be determined what kind of energy is being used and how to save energy. T. Migatz said this would probably go to the Parks & Facilities Division, or perhaps to the Code Enforcement Officer. (Building & Zoning)

S. Wenzel asked is the Commission has any comments. E. Ellinghausen said that Item # 202 suggests a timeline for adopting high energy standards for the City's building codes. He believes this is a worthy measure that could bring some immediate savings. S. Wenzel said this process started in 2009, so this is probably from 2011-2012. S. Wenzel said the Commission would like to seek a modification in the Building Code to include energy efficiency. E. Ellinghausen wondered if this is automatically done thru BOCA.

Does the City download their Amendments? Or, is the City still working with a code from 2010? He believes that with all the improvements in energy efficiency that some of these codes need to be upgraded. S. Wenzel asked if the Commission should pursue making changes to the adopted BOCA code. Who would handle this? This Commission? Or, City staff? T. Migatz said he believes both City staff and the Commission, and then it would go to City Council. S. Wenzel said the Commission would have to do further research to find out what is currently in the Code. T. Migatz said he'll look into this and find out what Building Code the City is currently using; he'll forward information to this Commission.

L. Kacmar asked about buildings that already exist. Could changes be made? E. Ellinghausen brought up the conversion of energy efficient exterior public lighting, Item # 205. J. Krandel said there are many modern options available. T. Migatz said a good portion of the lighting in the Square have already been converted over to LED. J. Krandel said the Commission would like to encourage the City to also make these types of changes outside the Square, if possible. E. Ellinghausen said this should result in some energy savings. S. Wenzel asked the Commission if Item #205, Exterior Lighting should be a high priority. All Commission members agreed that Exterior Lighting should be a high priority. J. Krandel it would be good to educate the residents. She mentioned that she didn't realize there were different ratings for Energy Star Ratings. The Commission agreed that Items #200 - #207, and energy efficiency in general, should be a high priority.

B. Develop action items ranking matrix from Environmental Plan Recommendations List.

ADJOURN

Motion by E. Ellinghausen, second by L. Kacmar, to adjourn this regular meeting of the Environmental Commission. Ayes: E. Ellinghausen, L. Kacmar, J. Krandel, S. Wenzel. Nays: none. Absentees: E. Poremba.. Abstentions: none. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM. Environmental Commission members will be attending the Special Joint "Bagless" Meeting with the Cultural & Social Awareness Commission which begins immediately at 6:00 PM. The next regular meeting of the Environmental Commission will be held on Thursday, March 3, 2016 at 5:30 PM in the Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Howie
Chief Deputy Clerk