

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

DATE: Thursday Dec. 6, 2018

TIME: Scheduled for 4:30 pm at the City Hall Misato Room

PRESENT: Dan Hall, Lynette Power, Fran Goodin, and Bruno Borsari

GUESTS:

STAFF: Natural Resources Sustainability Coordinator John Howard

1. Meeting called to order by Chair Hall at 4:35pm.
2. Approval of November meeting minutes moved by Bruno, second by Lynette. All in favor.

Lynette had question about adding an agenda item. Dan said to get an agenda item to John prior to the meeting, or could be addressed at the meeting as other business. It is important for the public to know what the CEQC will be discussing. John noted that there is a 3 day public notice period for CEQC agendas.

Other business moved to earlier in the agenda to discuss item.

3. Other Business Part 1:

Lynette shared an invitation to a WSU sustainability fair to be held in Feb. The CEQC is interested in participating. John said he was invited by WSU and has already replied that he would attend on behalf of the City, and would be happy to have CEQC help at the City table.

4. Unified Development Code Review – 43.02.22 through 43.02.24:

43.02.22:

No comment or questions on text before tables.

Dan had question about example of accessory use being denied. Bruno had question about child care, and whether that requires accessory use approval. John will ask planners. John believed child care is a home occupation and permitted in most zoning areas.

Fran asked for clarification about what the CEQC should be looking for in reading UDC? Dan said to review for completeness and provide another set of eyes. John suggested looking at it from an environmental perspective, and if there is anything missing, like a use not being permitted that should be. Any comments or proposed changes will go to the Planning Commission.

Dan shared example of Cytec expansion and concern of neighbors, and how what is allowed can matter to residents. Lynette cited sand storage near Pelzer as a land use that irritated some. Dan said his understanding is that zoning is based on historic uses.

Lynette wondered why community gardens are not allowed in industrial zoning districts. If land is vacant, would like to see gardens to be allowed. John will ask planners about interim use and regulations.

Lynette had question about sand processing, and if Biesanz's site fits with zoning. Also wondered if UDC is restricting innovation. Fran asked what is a makerspace? John said it is like a coworking or shared use space, such as The Garage in Winona.

Bees are not addressed in zoning. Bruno would like to see it permitted. Why not bees? What about rabbits? What about other fowl? Are these animals covered by the pet regulation? John shared that some cities that allow chickens have received questions about allowing ducks or turkeys in place of chickens.

Lynette restated that it is important that the UDC not be prohibitive on creativity or personal property rights. Need to encourage entrepreneurship. Dan believes home occupations are allowed, usually with restrictions on signage. Example of photographer and picture framer who operate out of their homes in Winona.

Corner stores seem to be out of business, and with zoning, would not be allowed back in residential areas.

Lynette wonders about mandatory solar or renewable energy for industrial?

Lynette is concerned by intrusive lights and light pollution. Fran also agreed.

Fran believes it is necessary to have a composting and lawn waste facility in the City. CEQC supports allowing responsible large scale composting in the City so long as site is in compliance with applicable laws. CEQC also supports households having the right to a personal compost pile.

Lynette wonders about stating right to have a front yard vegetable garden. Dan believes it is allowed.

Question about parking too close to intersection – what are City regulations? Seems parked cars can obstruct driver's sight lines. Fencing heights also can be an issue.

43.02.23: No comments or questions

43.02.24:

Fran wondered about setback, and it being 25 feet? Yes, but applies to new buildings. Non-conformities and lots of record apply to most residences in Winona.

CEQC discussed how setbacks seem restrictive.

5. Ongoing initiatives:

Partners in Energy: John said the second green ribbon commission meeting occurred in late November, with the major outcome being further development of the four topic areas.

6. Other business Part 2:

Lynette wondered about salt management, and ways to reduce the amount of salt being used. Downtown area has lots in snow, which eventually ends up in water. She asked if City has a haul out to process that might sequester salt? She suggested a City initiative to educate salt applicators, and shared some information from Maplewood, MN. Fran stated that 3 inch spacing of salt granule is plenty to keep a sidewalk clear. Maybe another article in paper would help? John shared that the City's GreenCorps member is working on a salt education program geared toward the professional snow clearer and building managers.