

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

DATE: Thursday March 7, 2019

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

PRESENT: Dan Hall, Lynette Power, David Schmidt and Bruno Borsari

GUESTS:

STAFF: Natural Resources Sustainability Coordinator John Howard

1. **Call to Order:** Made by Chair Hall at 4:36 pm
2. **Review and approval of Feb. 7, 2019 meeting notes:** David noted that there seemed to be contradictory wording in a sentence describing invasive species under heading #5. David suggested revising the sentence to read as “not be invasive or noxious weeds, including but not limited to buckthorn, honeysuckle and Japanese barberry”. Motion by Bruno, seconded by David. All in favor.
3. **Recap of Council meeting on Energy Efficiency:**

John provided a brief summary of the report, presentation, and conclusions that he and Sarah made to the City Council earlier in the week regarding energy efficiency program options for the City to apply to their own facilities. He and Sarah recommended the Guaranteed Energy Saving Program (GESP) because of the high degree of state guidance within this program. The City Council was supportive of this recommendation.

Dan noted the ice dams and icicles on many houses are indicative of poor insulation. Thus need for energy efficiency at many houses in town.

John asked for suggestions and input on the report and recommendations.

Lynette asked about audit programs, and if utility has offering for the City. John said yes, but not exactly the same as the business or residential offering that he has discussed in the past.

Dan asked about the potential savings and opportunities. John did not have exact figures, but said almost all buildings have at least one project to do, and the least efficient buildings could easily make up the majority of savings of the project. Ten to thirty percent savings are in the realm of possibility.

Lynette shared her favorable experience with switching to a heat pump.

Lynette asked about the wastewater treatment plant turbine, and if it was working? John said yes, and running 24/7 at around 65 kW. The plant has the potential to utilize more. Lynette asked about what caused the initial issues, which John replied was impurities in the gas, specifically siloxanes. The City Council has asked about the turbine on multiple occasions.

4. Unified Development Code Review – Article 3, Division 7 (40 minutes):

Dan noted it was odd that solar panels are regulated the same way as a building in 43.03.79 L) (p.122). CEQC members believe any restrictions would impede renewable energy, and may not be in spirit of City objectives. John relayed that the current standard does not restrict solar on roofs, and that UDC really applies to new construction. Dan suggests asking solar developers about whether they feel restricted by the code. Current UDC language would prohibit solar panels and wind turbines from being in the side or front yards of buildings. David sees the main conflict would be when side yard is on the south side of property, and unable to place on roof. Lynette suggested viewing Paul Schollmeier's house, as it has a notable solar system, which would presumably not be allowable under the current UDC. David sees the Garvin Heights neighborhood as an example where solar use may be difficult with the existing code language as a number of houses do not have south facing roofs. David believes City should keep solar permissive.

Lynette was curious about size and standards of wind turbines. John read the definition, and stated it was developed by him.

Dan sees no reason to limit roadside stands to only sell what is produced on the site (43.03.79 D)). Seems this provision would prohibit the shrimp truck and similar, including farmer markets. Dan can only note one roadside stand that seems to be in compliance. CEQC suggests this standard be changed, so vendors can sell wares not produced on the property.

Discussion about allowing birds other than chickens, such as ducks or quail, under 43.03.79 C). Lynette is supportive. No objection to allowing similar birds to be included with chicken ordinance.

John asked if the CEQC had thoughts on livestock provisions? David noted that the restrictions are based on animal unit, which is usually based on manure production. John read the definition of the animal unit from the last section of the UDC.

Bruno asked about allowing goats – does not seem to be listed. Bruno does not see any real difference between goats and a pet dog in terms of disruption or size. Bruno said 12 hens is a pretty large quantity, more than a single family would use.

Bruno disturbed by prohibiting slaughter of chicken, seems to make sense to allow slaughter as what else can they do with a chicken. Bruno believes it is good to reconnect with food system.

Bruno discussed allowing beehives, which are not currently addressed by code.

David noted that landscape requirements are generally vague throughout the section, may make sense to apply condition about not being invasives or noxious weeds. Bruno relayed personal experience with non-native lilacs on a neighbor's property, and how this species produces many seedlings on adjacent property.

5. Ongoing Initiatives Update (5 minutes)

5.1. Partners in Energy: John noted that the Partners in Energy program is wrapping up this month since the program runs for 2 years. He will have an accomplishment report and summary data at an upcoming meeting. The Partners in Energy goals will continue as will initiatives like the Green Ribbon Commission.

5.2. GreenStep Cities: John and Sarah have been reviewing the GreenStep criteria and recording new actions to our GreenStep page. John expects the City to be a Step 2 City this year, potentially a Step 3 city. Full report will be at the April meeting.

6. Other Business (5 minutes):

Bruno asked about available positions on the CEQC, and any updates on applicants? No new applicants, so one open position remains.

Lynette relayed a conversation with a member of the public who is afraid of fluoride in the water.

Bruno suggests reading the "Blue Death" book for those who want to better understand drinking water contaminants. Bruno described Potters for Peace that create water filters for rural Africans.

7. Adjournment: by acclamation at 6:06 pm.

Minutes prepared by John Howard.