



August 30, 2019

Citizens Environmental Quality Committee
Winona, Minnesota 55987

Dear Committee Members:

The next meeting of the Citizens Environmental Quality Committee meeting will be held on **Thursday, September 5th, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. in the Misato Room of City Hall.**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Review and approval of August 2019 meeting notes**
3. **Review progress on CEQC Goals (35 minutes)**
4. **Discussion of future work topics (10 minutes)**
5. **Other Business (10 minutes)**
6. **Adjournment**

Sincerely,

John Howard

Natural Resources Sustainability Coordinator

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

DATE: August 1, 2019
TIME: Scheduled for 4:30 pm at the City Hall Misato Room
PRESENT: Bruno Borsari, David Rupp, Dan Hall
STAFF: John Howard, Sadie Neumann (intern)

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 4:37 pm by Chair Hall.
2. **Review and approval of June 2019 meeting notes:** Approval of June minutes moved by Bruno, seconded by David. All in favor.

3. **Information on City Wetland Policy:**

John discussed that the wetland section of the meeting is included based on questions at the June meeting, and provided a summary of the included materials. The City Planner makes a determination about whether a project causes a net loss of wetlands, and if yes, then a banking or mitigation proposal goes to the City council for their review. David asked about the annual Wetland Conservation Act report. This report shows there are a limited number of wetlands being impacted or filled – just a couple applications for determining boundaries in 2018. Dan asked about the filling of the Menards area about 15-20 years ago, and whether that required mitigation or banking? John said the area did need wetland banking and was accomplished through a wetland complex constructed near Kellogg. David added that the wetland area is near Weaver Dunes and is still in operation.

4. **Community Garden Discussion:**

Chair Hall noted that the garden at the East Rec. is immensely popular, and more room is desired, so what can CEQC do to support more gardens? John described that community gardens are possible as a primary use in most residential zones, and gardens as an accessory use are permitted in all zones. In Winona, all the existing community gardens are accessory uses.

David noted that the parks laid out in the parks plan as potential community garden sites are distant to the center of town and therefore not very accessible for many Winonans. David wondered if the ERC garden is mostly used by locals. John spoke from personal experience that the majority of the ERC garden users live in town, some from the neighborhood, but spanning the full breadth of the City. John added that ERC has a mix of people who have homes and are renters. Bruno enjoyed the community culture of the Wapasha garden by the Winona Health complex. John relayed that usually only one or two people at ERC garden at any one time, which is surprising given the number of plots.

David sees two angles to developing more community gardens: Should the CEQC push for more gardens? Should local groups take on the initiative? Bruno relayed a previous garden conversation with Lynette about allowing all types of plants vs. only edible ones. John added that the ERC garden allows any plants. Bruno supports allowing gardens of all types.

Bruno spoke about his experience getting a yellow tag indicating that his boulevard was not in compliance with City policy. Bruno also shared his experience in a previous city where his native plants were seen as weeds. It seems the City responds promptly to complaints, and maybe better to direct residents to resolve the issue themselves. Bruno believes that since we are a pollinator city after all, we should be open to allowing boulevard pollinator plantings. Dan wondered about policy of allowing native boulevard plantings. John said that the height is what matters, and plants cannot be over 36 inches, and need to be a little shorter near corners.

David wondered about the action item. John said the CEQC could pass a resolution supporting more garden opportunities. Bruno suggests working with Pollinators and other supportive groups. Sadie suggested a community workshop to encourage community gardens. David believes a community garden group would make more progress than the CEQC. John suggests engaging master gardeners, and will make that contact.

5. **Unified Development Code Review – Article 7:**

John asked whether the CEQC believes electric vehicle (EV) charging stations should be included with 27) Automobile Service Station or Filling Station or be a separate definition. CEQC suggests keeping EV chargers as a separate item.

David noted that it is interesting that the bluffs are uniform enough to be defined by contour levels (34 & 35). John stated that his research indicates this is not always true and wanted to ask the CEQC how they felt about revising the definition to be in line with the overlay definition. CEQC concurs in amending the bluff face and bluff slopes definitions so it matches the bluff overlay definition.

John noted that the definition for 66) Detached Heating System would include geothermal and solar heat. John suspects this is not the intent, however. David suggests tying the definition to combustion, rather than the specific heat source.

118) Natural slope: David wonders if USGS topographic data is really the best source. David believes USGS contours are 10 feet, and more precise would be useful. LiDAR by the County would be more accurate and precise, so use that public data source instead.

138) Ridgeline: Not accurate, or useful, so delete.

Bruno wondered about why malt liquor is specifically defined? John and David noted this is the distinction between a brewery and distillery in the UDC definitions.

John asked about 175-177? (Small Scale Wind Turbine, Solar Farm, and Solar Panel). Sadie asked if the wind turbine restriction was due to public safety. John does not believe there is a specific safety reason, but more a visual impediment. John said that he will add specification about AC or DC to sizing. David wondered how large 100 kW is, and Dan described use of hair dryer or microwave at 1 kW.

6. **Turf grass Maintenance Workshop:** John noted there is a flyer about an upcoming environmental turf grass maintenance workshop included in the agenda packet. All are welcome to attend.

7. **Other business:** David thanked John for putting on a rattlesnake informational open house. Dan wondered if population or rattlers are increasing, or more snake and human contact? John and David don't think population is growing. David postulated that early June heat may have led snakes

to leave den earlier. Logging at Woodlawn was raised as a reason for more snakes in neighborhood. John noted that the event was livestreamed on Facebook, so available to watch. David seconded recommendation to work with the DNR to minimize trails near dens and snake areas. Informational signs would be helpful.

Minutes prepared by John Howard.

DRAFT

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 3. Review progress on CEQC Goals

PREPARED BY: John Howard

DATE: Sept. 5, 2019

Included for CEQC review are the goals compiled by the CEQC last September. Staff believes it would be useful to review these goals to gauge our progress and see if they are all still items the group would like to keep as goals.

The Goal: Documenting the City's Environmental Actions and Progress

1. **Specific.** What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?

Information will be compiled for the B3 energy benchmarking program and GreenStep database by City staff and CEQC members. An annual report on the City's environmental progress should be produced utilizing the information collected. As part of this report, or possibly as a distinct report, information on local food production and evaluation should be tallied, such as the number of participants in community gardens and pounds of food grown.

The information compiled will inform and guide future city actions/endeavors.

2. **Measurable.** How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached? If not quantifiable, how will you determine success?

Annual report completed and disseminated to the public.

3. **Achievable.** Is it possible? Have others done it successfully? Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish the goal? Will meeting the goal challenge you without defeating you?

Yes, other cities complete GreenStep and B3 reports, as well as broader environmental reports.

4. **Relevant.** Is this Committee the place to take on this goal? Does it fit with the Comprehensive Plan or other City objectives?

Yes, environmental goals have a clear connection to CEQC, and Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan. Documentation is a large piece of the GreenStep Cities program.

5. **Time-bound.** What is the established completion date and does that completion date create a practical sense of urgency?

GreenStep data is due May 1st, B3 has multi-year backlog, but could be complete by May 2018. Annual report assembled by end of the summer of 2018 utilizing this data.

CEQC Goal Setting Worksheet – adapted from the [Univ. of Virginia](#)

The Goal: Support and Work Towards Cost-Effective Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

1. **Specific.** What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?

Hold additional workshops to educate the community about energy efficiency and renewable energy option. Review and select GreenStep energy efficiency goals to achieve. Utilize renewable energy for City electricity. Also implement Partners in Energy (PiE) goals. Work will be accomplished by working with Sustain Winona, the Partners in Energy Group, and the City's Sustainability Coordinator.

2. **Measurable.** How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached? If not quantifiable, how will you determine success?

Number of workshops, completion of GreenStep reporting, and meeting PiE goals. Percentage of City electricity coming from renewable sources, and reduction in City electrical usage.

3. **Achievable.** Is it possible? Have others done it successfully? Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish the goal? Will meeting the goal challenge you without defeating you?

Yes, multiple Minnesota Cities have completed GreenStep reporting. Approximately 10 other Minnesota PiE communities. Many cities in Minnesota utilize renewable energy and have implemented energy efficiency measures.

4. **Relevant.** Is this Committee the place to take on this goal? Does it fit with the Comprehensive Plan or other City objectives?

Clear connection to Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan, specifically policy # 2.

5. **Time-bound.** What is the established completion date and does that completion date create a practical sense of urgency?

Energy efficiency projects should be undertaken in 2018, with PiE activities underway since fall 2017. City is currently moving forward with investigating solar.

The Goal: Investigate Water Quality

1. **Specific.** What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?

Water is an essential resource, so it is important to understand and determine steps to protect against threats to drinking water, such as contaminants of emerging concern. Improve quality of water discharged to local waterways. The CEQC will research and investigate alternatives to the currently used water treatment methods.

2. **Measurable.** How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached? If not quantifiable, how will you determine success?

Decisions made regarding the use of fluoride and chlorine. Establish a list of contaminants of emerging concern, and a testing protocol for possible contaminants.

3. **Achievable.** Is it possible? Have others done it successfully? Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish the goal? Will meeting the goal challenge you without defeating you?

Specific examples of other cities is unknown, but very likely there are models to follow. Research is ongoing on a variety of water quality topics within the scientific community.

4. **Relevant.** Is this Committee the place to take on this goal? Does it fit with the Comprehensive Plan or other City objectives?

CEQC would be the best committee to serve in an advisory role. Water quality and monitoring would be undertaken by City staff, consultants or academic experts.

5. **Time-bound.** What is the established completion date and does that completion date create a practical sense of urgency?

Review status in 6 months.

The Goal: Develop Air Quality Monitoring Proposal

1. **Specific.** What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?

Propose and investigate initiatives to monitor air quality throughout the City in order to understand air conditions including impacts from silica sand activities. Review latest literature to understand what and how to monitor particulate matter. Utilize free MPCA resources. End result will be clean air that is welcoming to visitors and citizens.

2. **Measurable.** How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached? If not quantifiable, how will you determine success?

Begin research into monitoring this year and establish program to regularly report air quality. Develop a repository of informational resources.

3. **Achievable.** Is it possible? Have others done it successfully? Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish the goal? Will meeting the goal challenge you without defeating you?

Air quality monitoring does not require the invention of new technology. Resources are available and monitors are able to be put in place that will effectively measure air quality including the level of silica in the air. The assertions by some industries that such monitoring is not needed should be respected but verified. Data was recorded in past, so there is precedent. Literature is available on monitoring and health impacts of various types of air pollution.

4. **Relevant.** Is this Committee the place to take on this goal? Does it fit with the Comprehensive Plan or other City objectives?

Yes, clearly air quality is an environmental consideration and part of GreenStep Cities. May be too technical for CEQC to review without outside assistance.

5. **Time-bound.** What is the established completion date and does that completion date create a practical sense of urgency?

Ask MPCA for monitoring equipment and process help. Develop informational resources by March 2019.

The Goal: Define and Inventory Green Infrastructure

1. **Specific.** What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?

Develop a definition of green infrastructure, and start by seeing if GreenStep process has definition and guide to green infrastructure. Document existing infrastructure, such as rain gardens. Research and make suggestions to utilize infrastructure in less environmentally damaging ways – for example needing less de-icing salt and lawn fertilizer.

2. **Measurable.** How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached? If not quantifiable, how will you determine success?

Success means having a definition and inventory including location of infrastructure. The surface/coverage of rain gardens and infrastructure is measurable.

3. **Achievable.** Is it possible? Have others done it successfully? Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish the goal? Will meeting the goal challenge you without defeating you?

Cities commonly have repositories on infrastructure, so it is reasonable to have one on green infrastructure. The limited nature of green infrastructure makes this task feasible.

4. **Relevant.** Is this Committee the place to take on this goal? Does it fit with the Comprehensive Plan or other City objectives?

Yes, fits with goals of Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan and the City's stormwater pollution prevention plan.

5. **Time-bound.** What is the established completion date and does that completion date create a practical sense of urgency?

Definition within 2 months, inventory complete within 6 months.

The Goal: Support Active Transport

1. **Specific.** What will the goal accomplish? How and why will it be accomplished?

Coordinate with and follow progress of Active Transport committee so that the CEQC may help as needed.

2. **Measurable.** How will you measure whether or not the goal has been reached? If not quantifiable, how will you determine success?

Successful implementation of Active Transport goals.

3. **Achievable.** Is it possible? Have others done it successfully? Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish the goal? Will meeting the goal challenge you without defeating you?

Yes. Primary responsibility will be with the Active Transport group. Other cities have successfully produced and implemented bike & ped plans.

4. **Relevant.** Is this Committee the place to take on this goal? Does it fit with the Comprehensive Plan or other City objectives?

CEQC would be secondary to the Active Transport committee. Work fits with GreenStep Cities, and the Comprehensive Plan such as Chapter 7 goal #2 and Chapter 12.

5. **Time-bound.** What is the established completion date and does that completion date create a practical sense of urgency?

Review status in 6 months.

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 4. Discussion of Future Work Topics

PREPARED BY: John Howard

DATE: Sept. 5, 2019

Now that the CEQC has completed the review of the UDC, which constituted a major portion of meeting time, there is an opportunity to engage in new focus areas. Staff suggests CEQC input would be valuable in assessing our demolition policy, use of pesticides, and use of public lands for forestry and foraging. Chronic wasting disease within the deer population may also be an important topic.