



Minutes City Council's Community Sustainability Committee January 14, 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council's Community Sustainability Committee held on Wednesday, January 14, 2009, 7:30 a.m., in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Members Present:

Mayor Hugh Hallman
Vice Mayor Shana Ellis
Councilmember Onnie Shekerjian
Councilmember Corey Woods

City Staff Present:

Lisa Collins, Deputy Development Services Manager and Committee Liaison
Molly Enright, Mayor's Aid/City of Tempe
Jan Hort, City Clerk
Lisa Lathrop, Administrative Asst. II/City of Tempe
Chris Salomone, Community Development Manager
Mark Vinson, Principal Architect/City of Tempe
Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Programs Director/City of Tempe

Guests Present:

Kristina Abrams, ASG Architects
Anne Ellis, ASU
John Kane, Architekton
Kirby Spitler, Citizen
Denise van den Bossche, US Green Building Council, AZ Chapter

Mayor Hallman called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances/Call to the Public

None.

Agenda Item 3 – Creation of Action Items for the Subcommittees

Mayor Hallman summarized the three action items for the creation of the subcommittees:

- Economics of Sustainability (Finance) Subcommittee – Councilmember Shekerjian, Chair – to include cost/benefit analysis, O & M vs. Capital, a process to determine whether to move ahead to implement a technology. Kirby Spitler and Anne Ellis will serve as the citizen members.
- Code Subcommittee – Councilmember Woods, Chair – how to implement codes that are not mandatory at the moment, but permissive and allow people to try to adopt new technologies, and to create the matrix of

determining whether or not something should be done by the City and whether or not that goes forward with the private sector. John Kane and Kristina Abrams will serve as the citizen members.

- Technology Subcommittee – Vice Mayor Ellis, Chair - Denise van den Bossche will serve as the citizen member.

Mayor Hallman added that there will be a lot of overlap between the subcommittees. Mr. Spittler might also be part of both the Technology subcommittee and the Code subcommittee. He suggested not having co-chairs. With the open meeting law issues, by creating co-chairs, the chair and co-chair can't speak except in agendaized meetings. He encouraged the councilmembers to create the subcommittees with at least five people participating so that the chair and the private sector member can work together to create agendas and create ideas and use committee members as part of the process.

Agenda Item 2 – Discussion of Work Plan

Mayor Hallman suggested beginning with the work points for the subcommittees.

Economics of Sustainability Subcommittee

Councilmember Shekerjian suggested that the subcommittee look at organizational sustainability as a City. Organizational sustainability frees up money to do other things and she would suggest delving into that to find efficiencies, especially in ways to sustain economic downturn times without having lay-offs. That's a different twist than the environmental piece, however. The only way environmental sustainability will come to the forefront and be practiced on a regular basis is when there will be some economic benefit to people.

Mayor Hallman clarified that the subcommittees will set the scopes of work and determine what they will do. The goal is to get something done, as well as looking at opportunities for the future.

Mr. Spittler added that his expertise is environmental sustainability in the built environment.

Councilmember Shekerjian further clarified that there are two parts to economic sustainability. One part is organizational sustainability in terms of efficiency as an organization, and the other part is the economic benefits and how we can play up the benefits of being more environmentally sustainable.

Mayor Hallman clarified that Mr. Spittler was stating that if we are looking at adopting environmentally sustainable activities, he can play a role, given his expertise and understanding of the cost/benefit analysis that goes along with whether or not to adopt the technology or move forward on something. Councilmember Shekerjian is saying that in addition to that, it is important to look at the organization. He would also add economic development activities because this committee's broader scope is economic, cultural and environmental sustainability. Concerning the economic development activities, we have not had a committee examine the businesses and activities we are trying to attract and whether they add to the sustainability of this community, for example, the economic results, the cash flows, the employees, the services that are rendered. We've never really looked at what kind of jobs add value to the community long term.

Code Subcommittee

John Kane stated that he is working on a collection of individuals that could be brought to the table and he asked what the protocol is in terms of proceeding. He felt the subcommittee could go right to Development Services and lay it out there, but he wanted to make sure there is a protocol in place. He is not trying to cause trouble, but is trying to improve something. This permeates through Engineering and Development Services and everything is so intertwined. There are a lot of ways it has been done.

Mayor Hallman added that the goal could be to create the uniform code for sustainable practices and the committee could spend the next fifteen years doing that, or outline specific things that could be added to the code right now.

Start looking at the things that make sense and work with staff to see where we can get the most “bang for the buck” in changing the code. He encouraged the subcommittee to look at making it permissive rather than mandatory. The whole job will be to change thinking about what can be done and why.

Mr. Kane asked how the subcommittee starts.

Mayor Hallman responded that once the subcommittee sets out what it wants to do, it rolls into the Committee's scope of work which will ultimately be a collection of the subcommittees' scopes of work. The original scope for the Committee was:

“Address environmental programs and capital projects, including (1) development and application of cost-effective, environmentally sustainable programs, including recycling programs and resource conservation and waste reduction programs, both for city operations and community application; (2) consider and develop environmental design standards that are specifically applicable to the arid, relatively warm climate of Tempe.”

When the Scope of Work is finalized, it will go to the Council to be adopted. Determine what area you want to cover. The Committees will then work through issues and when they have something to be adopted, like the code, it comes back to the Council as well. That's the process. It is formalized by having the Council say the Committee wants to develop a code for sustainability practices. It can be that broad and that comes back to the Council to be approved. It is better to bring it back to Council and make sure the subcommittee is on track.

Mayor Hallman added that at the last meeting, Mr. Kane mentioned that the County codes are supplying some difficulty. One example is water quality for full-body contact. Currently, the County's position is that Town Lake cannot be used for a swimming facility on an ongoing basis because the water quality isn't a swimming pool. The global issue is that the subcommittee may have to decide how state or county codes need to be changed in order to allow the City to implement something that is sensible. That would add to the scope of work to identify government relations issues to tackle that can then come up to the Council level and get assigned to the Government Relations office or to council members who have contacts to lobby and get approval from the Council to push that forward. He would suggest that the subcommittee specifically look at Town Lake and Giuliano Park. He has long argued that Giuliano Park needs to be activated and one way would be to create a swimming beach on the south side of the river, immediately east of the Mill Avenue bridges. Sun Cor would be happy if that were to occur. City code would have to be changed and maybe the County would have to change its code or merely its regulations or administrative view of how Town Lake is characterized. Can we go back to this community's culture and re-implement beach park as a beach?

Technology Subcommittee

Mayor Hallman stated that ASU is now fast implementing shade structures covered with photo voltaic cells. Is there a cost /benefit?

Mr. Spittler responded that there are business models that make it work if your organization pays taxes.

Vice Mayor Ellis added that the US Air Center got a grant and APS put in solar.

Mayor Hallman asked if that matrix would work in a non-profit or government setting. He recently suggested using photo voltaic cells on the southwest facing roof of the O'Connor House or on top of the Arizona Historic Museum structure to add to the sustainability campus and power the house itself with solar power. He would add consideration of that to this subcommittee.

Mr. Kane asked whether it makes sense to spend \$70M to encourage a developer to come in specifically, and whether anyone has studied the impact of spending \$70M on the community from a sustainability standpoint to make it more sustainable. Who is looking at those numbers?

Mayor Hallman added that the Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET), for example, could be utilized as a tool in redevelopment circumstances. There is a community value to having buildings come on line off the grid and GPLET could be used in redevelopment areas to help pay for that additional cost. There are lots of flat roofs and parking lots and it may get to the point that the City may have some tools to assist that are not currently being accessed. That money could potentially be used to buy into creating sustainable energy models and that could go toward that point.

Agenda Item 4 – Future Agenda Items

Mayor Hallman stated that the Committee will break out into its subcommittees. The time the Committee would come back together is when a subcommittee has something to advance to Council or when we need to brainstorm. It may not be necessary to convene a full meeting, but we could use this as the place to vet ideas before they go to Council, but there wouldn't necessarily be a need to meet consistently. He directed that subcommittees report back in 60 days.

Agenda Item 5 – Future Meeting Dates

The next Sustainability Committee meeting will be on March 18th at 8:00 a.m.

Subcommittees will be scheduled as needed. The Mayor encouraged those present to think about who should be attending in the subcommittees and then designating people truly as members. The goal would be to have at least five people present at each subcommittee meeting. The subcommittees will choose meeting dates. Minutes will be adopted at the committee level and then accepted by Council.

Announcements

Denise van den Bossche announced that Green Build is coming to Tempe in November. She suggested setting goals to have something done and be involved. We need to look at how we are communicating this to the public. It is probably an economic development issue. She suggested using the website and *Tempe Today*. The City has the opportunity to be in the forefront. This is a huge event. The session proposals are due Friday.

Councilmember Shekerjian added that since this is an international event, it would be great if we could put them on the light rail and bring them into Tempe so they can actually see Tempe.

Mr. Kane added that they are trying to put together the idea of coming to see the transportation center.

Mayor Hallman added that Tempe has a series of projects that could be highlighted.

Ms. Ellis added that one of the committees is "greening the community" and when people come in, everything they see is green and all the information they get is supportive of this green. It would be hard to do that without Tempe. It is early in the process, but we should be aware.

Mr. Kane asked if this Committee is the one that would talk about the idea of how to make Tempe a green community, more from the public perception.

Mayor Hallman clarified that those actions are already in the subcommittees. How do we make sure the public knows and businesses know that to the extent they are making the decision, it is true that things will generally be done if they are cost effective? There is a taste for certain things. People will pay more for things because there is a taste for that. There is a taste toward doing things that are environmentally more sensitive even if the cost is higher. As a result, cost/benefit analysis has a unique feature that taste is built into it. As a result, there are some times when we would say we wouldn't make this decision based on this dollar vs. this dollar, but rather the value to the community because we choose to do things that are more expensive because they get us something else. That's got to be built into this matrix. We need to advertise that because there are businesses making decisions. Let's try to capture what things we should be doing for Green Build. Three of the committee members are already actively involved. We have some touchstones that we can decide whether there are things the City could be doing to engage in Green Build that might touch on the idea of how we promote that.

Lisa Collins will set up a meeting with the Mayor, Kris Baxter, and Shelley Hearn to get the ball rolling.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 a.m.

Prepared by: Connie Krosschell
Reviewed by: Lisa Collins

Jan Hort, City Clerk