

## West Linn Sustainability Advisory Board

WebEx Virtual Meeting

**DATE: 6-7:30, January 19, 2023**

**Attendance:** Michael Carlson, Greg Smith, Victoria Meier, Charity Hudnut, Ranjini Sridhar, Kate Jaspers (absent)

**Council Liaison:** Mary Baumgardner

**Staff Liaison:** Dylan Digby

**Mission:** From the Charter (Mission): The Sustainability Advisory Board is committed to collaborating with government and residents to improve the quality of life in West Linn by advancing stewardship of our environment, social, and economic resources that is equitable for all present and future generations.

**Public comment:** No one from public present.

### Introductions / Check-ins:

- Greg: Worked as professor of sustainability education at Lewis and Clark for 23 years. Sought involvement with WLSAB as a way of acting upon place-based concerns. Had an opportunity to meet with John Williams, WL City Manager, and Mayor Bialostosky in previous week to discuss how to increase the efficacy of community advisory groups.
- Mike: From TX originally, working as engineer and pursuing graduate education in sustainability. Likes gardening and pulling ivy at parks.
- Ranjini: Moved from India six months prior. Involved with Eco-School network with Charity at Rosemont Ridge MS. Experience with composting and waste management. Background as computer science teacher. Has taught students and West Linn residents art of repurposing paper waste and presented in December WLSAB education series. Interested in gardening
- Victoria: Helps to run WL community gardens. Was able to meet with representative Mark Gamba, former mayor of Milwaukee. Rep Gamba intent on pursuing action on state level to improve sustainability.
- Charity: Involved with Eco-School network and has worked previously with Ranjini. Fan of recycling/upcycling/repurposing.
- Mary: Welcomed Ranjini to WLSAB
- Dylan: Assistant to City Manager, WLSAB Liaison for the moment, though that may change.

Note: Kate Jaspers will be unavailable for meetings until June due to conflict.

### Role of the Community Advisory Boards

- The board has no budgetary or policy-making authority. The primary role of the WLSAB is to advise the city council regarding changes to policy.
- The board is also able to conduct educational events and outreach, as well as to pursue independent initiatives so long as they do not conflict with the ordinances establishing and regulating the community advisory groups. Examples include petitioning for bike racks at city parks, hosting film screenings, requesting and analyzing data, etc.

- Mike provided an overview of previous work of the board to help orient new members.
- Attendance is expected at meetings and any absences should be communicated to board chairs.

### **Education Series**

- Online education series attendance has been poor and suggests exploring return to in-person events
- Further discussion of the education series to be placed on February agenda

### **Earth Day Event**

- Explored idea of sponsoring or organizing an Earth Day event. Charity has seen similar events held at schools previously. All members supportive of the idea of organizing such an event.
- Potential locations include Rosemont Ridge Middle School, Adult Community Center, Willamette Ale and Cider House.
- Event would be geared towards bringing community members together to share information and resources to help promote sustainability within the community and more broadly. Including family-friendly activities would be beneficial and may help attract more community members to the event
- There will be an Earth Day work party event at Willamette Park that could compete for attention.

### **West Linn Old Time Fair Booth**

- Group intends to have a booth at the 2023 West Linn Old Time Fair.
- There will be no fee to register a booth as the WLSAB is a city-affiliated group.

### **Goal Setting Meeting and WLSAB Annual Report**

- No decisions regarding goal setting will be made until the full council and new mayor are seated. Currently slated for April.
- Councilmember Baumgardner stated council is generally eager to promote sustainability, though budgetary considerations can make that challenging. Members of the WLSAB reiterated their belief that a paid position, either a city employee or outside consultant, would yield appreciable benefits to the community.
- Low- and no-cost options for promoting sustainability within the community are a key area of focus for WLSAB action.
- City will be reacting to state-level actions, particularly with the development of the Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities Rules implemented in 2022. Dylan referred the board to the planning department's webpage, which includes information about how the city is expected to implement this new set of rules.

### **West Linn Sustainability Strategic Plan**

- Developed in 2015 and updated in 2021 with a climate change specific appendix. Contains useful information and climate-related goals. WLSAB may be able to tap this document for ideas and efforts to pursue.
- The plan is referenced by city staff during some decision making.
- All members of council may not have read document, and incoming members are not necessarily made aware of the plan or asked to read it.
- WLSAB has opportunity to draw attention to the plan and various elements of the plan as they pertain to city business.

### **Items from October planning meeting that members could pursue**

- Expanding installation of bike racks
- Coordinating with Transportation Advisory Board and area schools on making greater use of safe street process.
- Expanding community gardening and edible plantings in coordination with the Parks and Rec Advisory Board
- Strategies to reduce idling in school drop-off lines
- Strengthening school-to-farm program

### **Community use of city rights-of-way**

- Generally acceptable for community to use rights-of-way for gardening or landscaping
- No water available
- There is a permitting process for rights-of-way use, though there is no fee.
- Call-before-you-dig recommended

### **EV Webinars available through PGE**

- Information to be forwarded to group members

### **Backyard Habitat Certification Program Grant**

- Board was contacted by Susie Peterson, the Backyard Habitat Certification Program manager regarding support for an upcoming grant application
- Board voted to draft letter of support for Backyard Habitat Certification Program's grant application

### **Future meeting format**

- Board generally supportive of transitioning to in-person meetings
- State requires all meetings to be hybrid
- West Linn City HLL in-person meeting setup is not particularly good and makes hybrid meetings somewhat challenging
- Potential for first in-person in March
- Board discussed moving future meetings to different Thursday of the month

### **Action Items**

- **Greg and Victoria** to draft letter of support for Backyard Habitat Certification Program as they apply for grant funds from the City
- **Greg and Charity** to meet and discuss planning an Earth Day event in further detail.
- **Mike** to prepare data analysis for baseline energy audit
- **Victoria** to review process for rights-of-way use
- **Mike and Greg** to add agenda item to February meeting for board to discuss Education Series topics