

West Linn Sustainability Advisory Board

WebEx Virtual Meeting

DATE: 6-7:30, April 20, 2023

Attendance: Mike Carlson, Greg Smith, Victoria Meier, Ranjini Sridhar, Dan Reesor. Charity Hudnut, Kate Jaspers (absent)

Council Liaison: Lou Groner

Staff Liaison: Dylan Digby

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 comment. Beau Genot attended the meeting on-line.

Approval of April minutes

Motion to approve minutes by Victoria Meier and seconded by Charity Hudnut was approved unanimously.

Check-ins

Ranjini – Has sent link to dashboard she has been able to create with Oregon data to Greg who will review and send it on to the rest of the SAB. Would like to post on city website.

Greg – Has been working hard to get in summer vegetable garden in after having been away for almost two weeks since last meeting. Reminds people about meeting on May 24, 11:00 a.m., about EVs. It will be held in the community room at the library. Encourages attendance.

Victoria – Met with Ken Warner about identifying sites for more community gardens. Most likely possibility is Oppenlander if that sale comes through. Other sites considered would require installing water systems, something the city is not ready to invest in.

Mike – He and his wife have just finished Master Naturalist program. Encourages people to apply for it. Mentions seeing the Molalla Rosette, a basalt formation about 20 miles south of Molalla above the river.

Dan – **Submitted letter to ODOT about tolling. Will forward copy to Dylan.** Made presentation at Department of Justice about gardening. **Will send PowerPoint about pruning tomatoes of SAB members.**

Charity – Earth Day was well received. People interested in repeating the event next year. Tomorrow evening will be a fund raiser for ECO Schools. **She will forward information about this.** Describes some of the projects tied into Rosemont Gives Back, a middle school project she has been involved with. Mentions CREST sale of garden starts being sold for \$3.00 a piece. **She will forward contact information to SAB.**

Lou - Marched in the first Earth Day in Poughkeepsie, NY when he worked for IBM. Later, he became a computer and physics teacher. Describes developing program that demonstrated the relationship between the reflectivity of the earth's surface and the atmosphere.

Public Comment

No comments from one citizen in attendance. Mike, however, raises an issue he had encountered on social media about the absence of recycling bins in Old Willamette. **Dylan will check into this.**

Discussion about 2022 Recommendations and City Council Priorities

Greg reviews priorities that emerged from City Council visioning process as described by John Williams at a West Linn Summit meeting the night before.

1. Oppose I-205 tolling.
2. Advance indoor recreation facility.
3. Engage in police review with newly established committee.
4. Define and fund water system capital needs.
5. Begin waterfront visioning process.
6. Begin Highway 43 visioning process.
7. Support city sustainability initiatives.
8. Explore transit service for West Linn given that Trimet and the state are cutting current services.

When asked about which specific sustainability initiatives the council is interested in supporting, Dylan said these included a review of pest management procedures currently in place for city parks, code amendments, a review of LEED certification processes for city buildings, continued replacement of gas-burning vehicles and gas-powered yard tools with EVs and electric tools. Greg mentioned hearing that the council is still considering our request for a consultant to help explore ways the city could tap into new federal funding to achieve some of our sustainability goals. He then reviewed the remaining recommendations presented in December, 2022. Of these, we discussed at length the revision of the tree code. Dylan explained that this is on the

planning docket for the City Council, but it is not high on the list of priorities. Mike suggests that SAB members either get on the agenda for upcoming meetings or present testimony during the public comment period at the beginning of all council meetings to emphasize the importance of this issue for the board.

Old Time Fair/Farmers' Market Educational Events

Charity says that the main purpose of having a booth at the Farmer's Market is sharing information about the SAB, materials about any number of sustainability practices, and information about organizations such as those that participated in the Earth Day event. These events could give us the opportunity to gain public input about concerns they would like the SAB to address as well as a chance to poll people about their interest in initiatives like curbside compost pick-up. **With regard to being present at these events, scheduled for the last Wednesday of May, June, July, and August, Victoria has volunteered for May and June, Greg will join Victoria for the June shift, and Mike will be there in July and August.** Dan has a canopy we can use; Charity may have a back-up canopy. We will need to bring our own table and chairs. Greg has a variety of materials that were made available at the Earth Day event that we can continue to give away.

The Old Time Fair will give us another opportunity to share the same kind of information. **Greg will finalize arrangements with the city for our booth at the fair, contact the business that demonstrated EV bikes last year to see if they're interested in participating again, and see about locating a city-owned canopy for this event as well as the SAB banner.** Charity suggests that in addition to sharing information we include a fun activity for kids like rock painting.

Code update discussion

Mike initiates this conversation. Since we talked about the tree code revision earlier, he moves on to code changes at the city level that would require newly built homes to have electric panels capable of charging EVs. His reading of state code 455.417 suggest that the state already mandates this, so it's not something the SAB needs to recommend. **Dan will do some research about this matter and report back at our June meeting.** Greg then raises a question about whether a panel capable of charging an EV would be able to operate a heat pump. **Mike will check into this.**

Curbside composting

We move to curbside compost pick-ups. Dylan says that in 2016 the City Council considered this issue. The trash hauler indicated that including compost in yard debris would raise household fees by \$2.50-3.00. It would not be an opt-in/opt-out program. The council decided then not to move in this direction; current council may have a different perspective. **Dylan will speak with the trash hauler about two things: (1) Estimated cost in 2023 for compost pick-up; (2) whether all customers would be charged for service regardless of whether they use it or not.** He makes it clear that this is a council decision.

Board name change

Greg presents a rationale for making resilience or a comparable term part of the board's name, suggesting that resilience and mutual aid are central elements of sustainable communities. The feeling of the majority of the SAB is that moving in this direction would complicate our work as well as be very time-consuming since such a change would require City Council approval.

Individual efforts to encourage sustainability initiatives in the community

Mike says that he has been told by people in the Parks Department that they plan to install bike racks in Mary S. Young and that doing this is part of the long-term open spaces visioning plan for other parks as well.

Charity has encouraged teachers at Rosemont Ridge who worked on an anti-idling campaign to present what they have done to the school district so that it could be replicated elsewhere. **She will report back to us about where this plan stands at the moment.**

We discuss a proposal from citizens that had come to Dylan about having the city sell recyclable plastic garbage bags to reduce the amount of heavy-duty plastic bags going into landfills. Dylan explains that the city does not have the staff needed to oversee a program like this. **Greg will write a letter to the couple who shared this idea.**

Mike provides information about West Linn City Code 5.470 that requires the removal of noxious weeds. Dylan indicates that the enforcement of this code is complaint based and involves a significant amount of work. A notice letter must be filed; there is an appeal process; a contract must be written with an appropriate landscaping company if the property owner doesn't comply with order to remove the weeds; and a lien must be placed on person's bank account to pay the company. Greg asks about the removal of invasives from city properties like along the bike path that runs east from Willamette Park. Dylan indicates that a small park staff means that keeping up with this work is not possible; the city has relied heavily on volunteers and organizations like SOLVE to get this work done. Mike says that the local Soil and Water and Water Conservation District can provide grants to help with invasives removal. **Mike will contact someone from this organization to learn more about what assistance might be available for West Linn.**

Action items

Dan will forward copy of ODOT letter to Dylan. He will also send PowerPoint about pruning tomatoes to interested SAB members (Greg and Mike already expressed interest).

Charity will forward contact information about CREST plant start sale to SAB members as well information about the ECO School fundraiser. She will also report back to us about where anti-idling campaign among schools in the West Linn-Wilsonville District stands,

Dylan will check into the absence of recycling bins in Old Willamette. He will also speak with the trash hauler about two things: (1) Estimated cost in 2023 for compost pick-up; (2) whether all customers would be charged for service regardless of whether they use it or not.

Victoria has volunteered for Farmer's Market booth in May and June, Greg will join Victoria for the June shift, and Mike will be there in July and August. Victoria will also check with community garden participants about hosting a meeting with Susie Peterson.

Greg will finalize arrangements for Old Time Fair booth with the city, contact the business that demonstrated EV bikes last year to see if they're interested in participating again, and see about locating a city-owned canopy for this event as well as the SAB banner. He will also write a letter to the couple who shared Idea about the city selling reduced cost recyclable heavy plastic garbage bags.

Dan will do some research about state codes 455.417 and report back at our June meeting.

Mike will investigate whether an electric panel capable of charging an EV will also be sufficient to run a heat pump system. He will also contact someone from the Soil and Water Conservation District to learn more about what assistance might be available for West Linn for invasive plant removal.