**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 (absent), Kate Jaspers (absent)

**Council Liaison:** Mary Baumgardner (absent)

**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 or our environment, social, and economic resources that is equitable for all present and future generations.

**Public comment**

No one from public present.

**Approval of March minutes**

Motion to approve minutes by Mike Carlson and seconded by Dan Reesor was approved unanimously.

**Check-ins**

Mike – Met with incoming city councilors Erwin and Groner to have a conversation about goal-setting recommendations. Thanks Dylan for getting natural gas data to us. This data will satisfy our need for a baseline regarding the city’s energy usage.

Greg – Went to Lake Oswego Sustainability Network gathering previous Saturday. About 15 groups. Met student he had taught 20 years ago who is leading environmental club and is teaching course on sustainability.

Dan – Worked with Victoria on community garden clean-up at Fields Bridge. Will be helping out for Earth Day, manning one of the booths at the Ale House that will share information about community garden program. Worked on drafting letter about I-205 tolling. Thanks people for comments.

Ranjini – Reports on Earth Week activities at Rosemont Ridge. Helped provide garden tools for teachers who are starting small garden. Multiple activities are being planned. Will distribute flyers about Earth Day event on Friday.

Dylan – Had two half-days of goal setting with City Council. Eight topics came up: waterfront visioning, indoor rec center, improving transportation, Highway 43 visioning, drinking water systems, environmental protection and sustainability issues including electric vehicles, LEED certification, integrated pest management systems in parks, reduced use of gas-powered equipment by parks crews, possibly looking at budget for consultant to help us in some ways target sustainability efforts, talking with Planning Commission about water resource areas. Process isn’t done. But a lot of good stuff happened. Moving forward, they will make these ideas more actionable and clear.

**Presentation about Backyard Habitat**

Susie Peterson shares information about backyard habitat program. Met with SAB in past but it was pre-covid. Greg and Mike are in the program. Bethany, another staff person, had participated in one of the SAB education presentations in the past. The program is the result of a partnership between Columbia Land Trust and Portland Audubon. Mission is tied to creation of wildlife habitat but includes other environmental benefits. Over 10,500 participants in the region. Describes process by which people join and participate in program. Site visits lead to site-specific recommendations and on-going follow-up. Contributes to cleaner rivers by reducing use of pesticides, increases biodiversity, addresses climate change by planting trees, reduces use of gas-powered yard tools. Five elements of program: removing invasive weeds, planting native species (not necessarily over entire yard), reducing or eliminating pesticide use, stormwater management, wildlife stewardship. In West Linn, 174 participating households, at least 30 new enrollments a year, 39 certified properties. 60 acres in process of being restored. People throughout the city are participating in the program. Would like to participate in West Linn Arbor Day event next year as well as any tabling in Farmers’ Market if we do this.

Victoria joins our meeting while stopping at a restaurant enroute to Port Angeles.

A question and answer session following the presentations touched on the following points:

• Program works with yards of all sizes smaller than an acre.

• SAB Backyard Habitat participants have seen increased diversity of wildlife in their own yards.

• Plantings on easements adjacent to yards viewed as extra credit when determining whether yard is ranked silver, gold, or platinum.

• Susie is available to speak with other groups like community gardeners.

**Reports on previous action items**

Greg reports for Charity: Earth Day event on coming Saturday is moving forward. A dozen or so groups participating. Dan, Mike, and Greg will be there as well as Terry Shumaker.

Ranjini: Status of dashboard report. Gives overview of what she has done. Will send link to dashboard she is creating to Greg and he will share. Took data from US Energy Profile for Oregon. Will enable someone to discover what is going on in Oregon with regard to energy efficiency and other sustainability initiatives. Ongoing process. Will work to incorporate county and possibly city data going forward.

Victoria: Right-of-way rules. This is a complicated issue. You can garden or even build a small shed on a right-of-way, but as soon as the city needs it, they will take it. Will be e-mailing Ken Warner about creating other community garden sites since there are now seventeen people on two-ear waiting list.

Greg: Presentation about EVs will be on May 24 at 11:00 at the library meeting room. Dylan will post on city website. Mike expressed concern about attendance given the meeting’s timing. Greg says that presenters have been able to attract enough people during the day on other occasions. Lisa Adatto from the Lake Oswego Sustainability Network will be coming to May 18 meeting to discuss work they have been doing in LO. Worth thinking about how to collaborate with this organization.

**Dan’s letter to ODOT about study regarding local impacts of I-205 tolling**

Dan says that he received edits from three people. Premise of letter is that we’re concerned about traffic diversion off Stafford Road exit onto Borland and Willamette Falls Drive. Impacts: increased localized air pollution, noise pollution, and economic impact on historic Willamette District, safety issues with regard to Athey Creek Middle School and Willamette Primary School.

Everyone at the meeting supports sending the letter. After completing revision process Dan will include names of SAB members and forward to ODOT after getting approval of SAB members not in attendance.

**Discussion of no- or low-cost initiatives to present to City Council**

Items ranked most highly were replacing cars and trucks with EVs and efforts to reduce water run-off. Both are part of recommendations made last year to City Council. Other highly ranked initiatives include changing contracts with trash hauler regarding picking up compost. Mike will check with city to see whether they have information about conversation held last year about this topic, particularly anything about rate increases that would be associated with compost pick-up. He mentions that the Earth Day event Saturday will provide an opportunity to talk with citizens about compost pick-up, as well. One of the things to think about may be writing up something that could go into the Tidings as well as the city’s newsletter. Greg will check with Terry Shumaker to see whether he will still be writing articles about sustainability and if he’d be willing to focus on compost pick-up.

Greg indicates that one of the other items that got a lot of interest is related to the control of invasive species. Mike says that there already is a city ordinance that requires people to remove invasives – Municipal Code 5.470. It is just not being enforced. Greg will check with Dylan about this before our next meeting. The final low-cost initiative we could propose involves changing city codes to require that new buildings and multi-family housing include electric panels with the capacity to support heat pumps and EV charging stations. Mike will check out what is being done in other communities. This kind of initiative may already be addressed in new rule making tied to Climate Friendly Equitable Communities.

**Farmer’s Market/Old Time Fair**

Charity is willing to organize tabling Farmers’ Market in Willamette during the summer. We would do this once a month. Dan, Mike, and Greg say they can help with this.

Greg and Mike will take the lead on organizing the booth for the Old Time Fair. Dan said that he could help out with set-up and volunteering there for an hour or so. Greg will speak with Terry and Kim about logistics.

**Possible Name Change for SAB**

We briefly discuss Terry Shumaker’s suggestions about changing the name of the SAB to the Sustainability and Resilience Advisory Board. This is a decision that will need to be made by the City Council. Mike is in support of doing so. Dan and Ranjini have questions about the term “resilience.” We will discuss further at later meeting.

**Additional Items Raised in October Brainstorming Meeting**

Wait until May to discuss items individuals could take on with other city department or boards as well as the school district that came up in brainstorming session in October.

**Action Items**

Dan will be finish letter about polling and send to ODOT.

Rahjini will continue working on the development of dashboard and send link to what she has already created to Greg so he can forward to all SAB members.

Mike will get in touch with Dylan about any information regarding compost pick-up and will research code changes about new construction that will accommodate EV charging stations and heat pumps.

Victoria will approach community garden group about inviting Susie Peterson to make a presentation about Backyard Habitat program.

Greg will check with Terry Shumaker about writing an article for the Tidings about compost pick-up. He will also check with Dylan about enforcement of municipal code regarding removal of invasive species.

Meeting concludes at 7:25.