

SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

Meeting Minutes: March 3, 2022

Attending: Jason West (Director of Sustainability, non-voting), Gabriella Cebada Mora (Secretary, Water), Laura Gulfo (Office of Council), Andre Lake (Environmental Equity), Scott Kellogg (Urban Agriculture), Harriet Lewis (Transportation), Joe Coffey (Water Department), Tina Lieberman (Vice Chair, Zero Waste), Daniel Kirk-Davidoff (Chair, Outreach), Violetta De Rosa, David Hochfelder, Jackie Gonzales (Environmental Equity, Outreach), Frank Zeoli (DGS), Poulomi Sen (Planning Department)

Non-members: Julia Boyne (SAC intern), Barbara Buck (SAC intern), Michelle Rogat (City of Albany Climate Justice Fellow)

Absent: Bill Trudeau (Police Dept Traffic Engineering), Randy Milano (City Engineer),

1. Regular Business – 10 minutes

- Call to Order and roll call – Commissioners, please send designee if unable to attend
 - Daniel Kirk-Davidoff called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.
- Review/Approval of Feb 3, 2022 minutes
 - Motion to accept the Feb 3, 2022 minutes *approved*.
 - Minor changes to spelling, grammar, minor edits
- Public Comment Period (Approx. 3 minutes per comment)
 - Public comment period (meeting was open to the public via the Office of Sustainability Facebook page and the Sustainable Albany Facebook page and via emails to sac@albanyny.gov or Sustainability@albanyny.gov): No comments.

2. New Business –85 minutes

- (30 min) Scott Townsend and Jodi Smits Anderson of Albany Riverfront Collaborative
 - Albany Riverfront ppt presentation
 - Initiative focuses on access and equity
 - Long list of contributors
 - Core Areas of Focus
 - Public health (physical/mental/spiritual at individual and community level), social justice, climate change
 - History of Albany Waterfront & Empire Plaza
 - 1960 image showing how we impacted the river with development/industry

- Redlining resulting in devalued areas/neighborhoods, placement of 787 in redlining districts
- Images depicting Albany neighborhoods that were removed for placement of Empire Plaza and 787
- Both Albany and Rensselaer impacted – killed the downtowns
- 2018 NYS DOT report states that arterial is extremely over built and could go down to a boulevard
 - a. Albany had projected growth in 60s but has seen a decline in recent times of 30 %
- o Current reimagining efforts
 - Reimagining of highways happening currently across the country, pushing back against expansion of highways
 - Upstate cities (Buffalo, Rochester etc.) receiving \$ to reshape existing highways
 - a. Examples given of where highway changes have taken place across the country
 - 787 and Empire Plaza stopped other projects from happening around it
 - Cities surrounding Albany (Troy, Schenectady, Saratoga) -have taken actions to update their environments but 787/Empire Plaza limit that ability in Albany
- o Working to connect with communities (starting March 24 with AVillage in South End) with list of questions
- o Reviewed SAC 2021 plan for connections to Albany Riverfront Collaborative
 - Identified connections to subcommittees: energy (use and space for renewable energy), water (waterfront revitalization project – daylighting streams, transportation (revitalizing of all multi model systems), zero-waste (diverting organic/outreach & education – more community gardens along river/ farmer’s mkt, ~~work on~~ divert organic wastes), urban agriculture (connect people to systems of food and systems of river that support that food), outreach (vital for how engaging with people and inviting people to engage with), environmental equity (communities identify their space in this)
 - Work requires diverse perspectives
- o Q- Did Rochester, Syracuse do traffic studies before design~~ing~~ long term conversion?

- Yes. It's a community planning project that considers transportation accordingly. Road Diet – road trajectory of growth going down although had been designed to go up
- Most recent study on road was in 2018, and project manager for that report recently joined the collaborative
- Traffic flow would increase access points into the city, relieve congestion
- Q – in Cohoes, 787 is a blvd, is there thought to doing sections and more affordable implementation phases?
 - Some discussions to go beyond Albany, but scope is I-90 at port through arterial up to state plaza
 - Know it needs to be phased but it can't compromise end product, don't want to be prescriptive, want to start a community conversation
- Q – would a 10 year plan with a phased in approach work to achieve this?
 - Want to work with the communities to identify what we are aiming for. May take longer than 10 years but if the outcome achieves the community vision then we will see it as successful
- (20 min) SAC's obligations under Albany's Climate Emergency law (Michelle)
 - City of Albany has climate emergency law that makes asks of SAC
 - SAC to develop climate emergency action plan
 - Lists issues of extreme heat, weather, decarbonization, and climate justice and equity
 - Part of resolution was for SAC member and City Councilmember to create short action plan (Jason, Tina, Councilmember Anane)
 - Identified some priority projects to work on
 - 40% reduction of GHG by 2030 (matches CLCPA)
 - Reduce carbon emissions in buildings and transportation
 - Transition to electric vehicles and mass transits as well as Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
 - Reduce food waste, promote food sovereignty
 - Promote more green spaces
 - Water resources
 - 30x30

- Michelle reviewed NYC's decarbonization of buildings, interest in Ithaca actions
 - a. Daniel and Jason have had conversation with Ithaca Director of Sustainability~~mayor~~
- Joe Coffey – will city generate a dashboard of how we measure reductions?
 - a. Jason – City just completed fleet study, agree with idea of dashboard/M~~mayor~~ asked for something similar
 - i. Joe and Jason will meet to discuss ideas
 - b. Tina – NYPA providing info on buildings to measure energy use year by year, plans to install more EV chargers
- (5 min) SUNY Interns – updates (Tina, Jackie, Dan)
 - Arturo will be working with Michelle on canvassing levels of building weatherization
 - Michelle connecting him with community groups
 - Working to provide information to communities for heating subsidies
 - Barbara doing social media,
 - Julia working on outreach
 - (~~Name~~Xanthe Plymale) composting initiative and events
 - (~~Name~~Soham Kapila) prepping for Tulip F~~f~~est for sustainability tent
- (5 min) Update on Clean Energy Community Campaigns – 3 campaigns (*Energy Efficiency/Heat Pumps, Community Solar and Electric Vehicles*) approved by NYSERDA on 10-18-2. (Tina, Jason, Jackie)
 - Received 2 \$15,000 grants - \$ needs to be used for measurable decrease in GHG emissions
 - Reached Community Solar and EVenergy Efficiency/Heat Pumps goal
- (5 min) Reports on meetings with Mayor, Common Council Planning
 - Spoke with Mayor and Common Council Planning committee
 - Will provide notes
 - March 15th more formal meeting with Planning Committee
- (5 min) Debate and Vote on Resolution: “The Albany City Sustainability

Advisory Committee hereby resolves to create the position of Treasurer with the following duties: Powers and Duties of the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall:

- Track and record requests for expenditures from the budget and bring such requests to a vote by the SAC as needed
 - Keep accurate accounts of monies spent and received, and report out any balances at regular SAC meetings and to the Director of Sustainability
 - Assist the Office of Sustainability in preparing a budget for the SAC and for other sustainability projects and tasks as needed for the following fiscal year.
 - Ensure that all invoices have been submitted timely per City of Albany procurement policies or otherwise release previously committed funds.
 - Other duties as agreed and voted on by the full committee.
 - Motion to change MOES in by laws to Office of Sustainability and to add Treasurer language. Vote passed unanimously.
- (15 min) Director of Sustainability, Commissioners and Subcommittee Chairs:
 - Began data collection phase of building audits for building greater than 1000 sq ft
 - Looking toward Ithaca electrification process to provide electrification for 1000s of low income homes
 - Reviewing CAC draft scoping plan and
 - Reviewing Barriers Report
 - Joe Coffey
 - \$2M for lead service replacements – likely announced mid-year, bids for paving/roadwork etc. with lead pipe do full lead service replacement there
 - a. Meeting all requirements = >\$12,000 per service
 - b. Katie applying to EPA for lead service replacement (\$20M nationwide currently)
 - Attended conference on water rate affordability, broke city down for bills – average bill is less than \$500 (annual), satisfied that rates are affordable and want to keep it that way
 - Frank/DGS
 - In early May announcement on Food Waste Composting program
 - Tree Program – another 200 trees going in in Spring, removed trees in front of Albany HS (diseased) and will be replanting
 - Water – first intern working with Outreach
 - Outreach – CEC outreach, quarterly mtg with Equity sub committee, posted info
 - Zero Waste – working with Frank and Sonny to put together a plan for food scrap recycling this season at City events; meeting with Office of Cultural Affairs. Will have a large Sustainability event w 10 tables, tables for city will be free, need to know who wants tables by April 1st. Also in person workshops for Tulipfest outdoors. NYS Organics Summit happening in Albany (also online) April 4th & 5th and 6th, City of Albany will be represented
 - Poulomi - Two studies completed shoreline and brownfields

- Transportation – Violetta new co-chair, gather more info on what organizations are doing in Albany and benchmark progress
 - CDTA doing new car share
- Equity – working with Outreach SC, met with Arlene Way and others, in next stage of editing for documentary
- Urban Ag – 50 tree planting planned for Spring, majority will be apple and pear trees, finalized contract with Albany school district- garden based learning to occur

● ~~(15 min) Director of Sustainability, Commissioners and Subcommittee Chairs:~~

- Updates
 - Upcoming events, calls for Volunteers for Earth Day (Saturday, April 23rd)
 - Drive Electric Earth Day/ ZW tent event ~~in~~ at Westminster Presbyterian 11 - 3 pm
 - a. EV vehicles there to check out, noon to 1 presentation
 - South End Earth Day, Saturday April 23rd
 - a. 9-2 event, 12 -2 for tent – set up at 11:30
 - b. Invited to have Sustainability tent at event
 - c. Groups of volunteers go to 10 or more garden sites to do cleanup

3. **Next meeting –Thurs. April. 7, 2022 at ~~7:30~~ 6 pm.**

- **Laura checking on video communications for room**
- **Need an alternative note taker for April 7**
- **Other ideas for presenters**

4. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:32pm.

Minutes prepared by Gabriella Cebada Mora March 3, 2022