

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 1, 2019
4:00 P.M.
THIRD FLOOR, PUBLIC WORKS CONFERENCE ROOM
CITY HALL

Committee Members Present: Sara Pesek (Chair), Dane Kuppinger, Rajesh Kapileshwari, B. Lee Stackhouse, Denise Terry, Leah Lavin

Committee Members Absent: Allison Bowling, Angela Young, Amber Baker, Keyra Williams, Stephanie Friede

Attendance of City Staff: Council Member John Larson, Jennifer Chrysson, Helen Peplowski

MINUTES:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sara Pesek at 4:07 p.m.

Chief of Staff Helen Peplowski welcomes Council Member John Larson from the South Ward.

Council Member Larson welcomes every one and thanks them for being on committee. He gives a brief background in his interest in the committee and sustainability work in Winston-Salem. He charges committee with addressing the city's commitment to the Paris Accords. He asks for committee members to share what they are interested in.

Sara calls for committee members to introduce themselves with information about their knowledge and interest.

Committee member Lee Stackhouse starts introductions and discussed interest in farming, work with extension agents.

Committee member Rajesh Kapileshwari introduces himself next as an engineer and interest in reducing carbon footprint of mankind. Interest in speaking with people in community about climate change. Member of PEA board. Experience with LEED certifications.

Committee member Denise Terry was appointed by Council Member Scippio in the East Ward. Attending meetings in the ward, small business owner, new member of Forsyth County agricultural advisory council, farmer through cooperative extension, started Forest School this year.

Council Member Larson inquires about farming practices and vacant lots in that area of Winston-Salem.

Committee member Leah Lavin is a grant writer and fundraiser. Moved from the island of Hawaii and helped work with energy sustainability grants for a boarding school that is striving to be the greenest school in the country. Farming experience in DC area. Board of PEA.

Committee member Dane Kuppinger is a professor at Salem College for ecology, helps run the herbarium. Environmental education interest.

Council Member Larson would like to see articles/editorials from the group to help inform public of the work of the committee and information around sustainability.

Chair Sara Pesek has experience in policy in NY state, and water/wastewater funding. Knowledge around convergence of sustainability effort and local government. Board of USGBC, part of team to create STAR Communities index. Interested in land use and development.

Adoption of minutes – motioned by Lee, seconded by Rajesh.

Bee City USA update from Jennifer Chrysson. Brief introduction of the program and current progress, looking for feedback on next step ideas. This led to a brief discussion between several members around new programming efforts. One specific idea was to add information about ways to address “pest” bees without harming “good” bee species. Another idea related to developing lesson plans around pollinator education. Council Member Larson then commented on ways to incorporate long term environmental integration between departments to help bees, urban forestry, etc. The third idea discussed involved removing invasive species from riparian buffer areas during creek week with the help of community volunteers.

Sara then introduces new business to open the floor to discuss the priorities of the committee.

Rajesh starts discussion by suggesting addressing the Paris Climate Accords and how to address that as a city. He also mentions that downtown businesses are interested in doing more and learning more about recycling in that area.

Council Member Larson asks committee to consider scope of their work in terms of city as an organization versus community. Asks if an assessment of some sort is necessary? STAR gives us a point of reference, but want something that is further out in the future.

In reviewing the STAR gap analysis, Rajesh suggests taking that information and the LEED of Cities and Communities prerequisite data to help inform the first priorities. Helen mentions these are the two frameworks she is taking into consideration to help create her internal sustainability plan for the city.

Lee adds to the discussion that while we may develop a plan within our committee or department, this should be information we spread throughout the community in some way or another.

Sara asks if more information could be provided around the six opportunities for growth from the STAR analysis to help inform the decisions to make sure the priorities and goals are what the city needs.

Sara suggests that the committee continue the discussion over email since committee members are absent to make sure they are included, and that reading material should be shared to make sure everyone is on the same page on the topics we are discussing.

Rajesh suggests the possibility of subcommittees to further discuss in detail certain ideas outside of our meetings.

Council Member Larson mentions the Environmental Justice Symposium from a local Baptist church. This is an opportunity he wanted shared with committee as a resource for more information on environmental justice.

Meeting adjourned at 5:02 P.M.