Evanston Environment Board
Thursday October 13, 2011
7:00 pm
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Ave., Room #2200

**Members Present:** Paige Finnegan, Susan Besson, Kevin Glynn, Anne Viner, Laurie Zoloth, Ellen King, Jill Franklin, Hugh Bartling

**Members Absent:** Likwan Cheng, Suzanne Waller

**Staff Present:** Carl Caneva Division Manager, Catherine Hurley Sustainability Coordinator

**Community Members Present:** Thomas Owen, Christina Washam, Alison Burdo, Lingzi Zhang, Elizabeth Miller, Zach Glaser, Alicia White, Andrew Hobaugh, Mike Dreninan

**Presiding Members:** Paige Finnegan, Susan Besson

**MINUTES**

I. Call to order and declaration of quorum. There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

II. Approval of minutes from September 8, 2011. Motion to approve L. Zoloth, 2nd by E. King. Passed unanimously.

III. Citizen Comment (Please sign in)

a. Students from the Roosevelt Institute at Northwestern University (NU) introduced themselves as a policy group. They are working to eliminate plastic bags at NU and decrease use of disposals. The students favor an outright ban of plastic bags instead of a recycling program. A survey aimed at students intended to identify plastic bag behavior will be distributed Oct. 21, 2011. Statistical analysis from the survey will be available November 11, 2011. More information can be found on their website [http://baglessnu.wordpress.com](http://baglessnu.wordpress.com). L. Zoloth suggested distributing the survey to faculty as well via the faculty senate.

IV. Ongoing Business/News/Updates

a. City Code, Carl Caneva
   i. No new information was available.

b. 2012 Meeting Schedule
   i. Board agreed to set the meetings as the 2nd Thursday of each month and to review the 2012 calendar by the November meeting in order to
identify any scheduling conflicts. Members agreed there would be no meeting in August.

ii. H. Bartling updated PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy [http://pacenow.org/blog/]), a bipartisan, local government initiative that allows property owners to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy products for their homes or commercial buildings. It is a voluntary program; owners can opt in to receive financing that is repaid through an assessment on their property taxes for up to 20 years. H. Bartling indicated some municipalities have begun to work with 3rd parties for financing and cited an article appearing in the New York Times leveraging private funds (attached). Chair Finnegan stated the legislation has passed. C. Hurley stated she is unaware of any communities that have gone forward to create PACE districts.

a. Stormwater Management

iii. Chair Besson reported she and L. Cheng participated in the Sept 22 walk on Sheridan Road with City staff to survey/discuss opportunities to incorporate stormwater management elements (bioswales, permeable pavement, etc.). Chair Besson requested a follow-up report on next steps.

iv. Chair Finnegan indicated a desire to see a menu of items for stormwater management on future projects similar to the LEED system.

v. Members agreed this topic could be further discussed as a City policy recommendation within the Board’s strategic planning.

b. Chairs Besson and Finnegan attended the Oct. 3 Rules Committee; an item on the agenda was to consider an Environment Board member on the Transportation/Parking Committee (TPC). Members of the Rules Committee asked that the question be considered by the full TPC. TPC will consider this appointment at its October 26 meeting.

c. Bike Plan Update

vi. E. King updated members. She and H. Bartling had been working with Evanston merchants with a plan to place a bike corral in front of the Evanston Athletic Club. It was their understanding the issue would be discussed at the TPC at the July or August meeting. This did not take place. Instead, unbeknownst to them, bike racks were installed down the street and signage was placed at the parking meters indicating the location of the rack. Board members objected to this news, as it does not further the goals of the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (to facilitate bike parking), and instead could discourage bike use in the downtown. Additional concerns were voiced by Board members because the City of Evanston Municipal Code indicates: *No person shall park any bicycle in such a manner as to constitute a hazard to pedestrians, traffic or property* (Title 10 Chapter 9-6), and this may allow the city to impound bicycles improperly parked. C. Hurley was asked for the economic impact of the corral; she stated each space earns approximately $3000.00 in revenue annually.

vii. A. Viner suggested the board draft an official recommendation to the Human Services Committee, Transportation/Parking Committee, and/or City Council regarding bike corrals.
V. Disposable Bags

a. J. Franklin and L. Zoloth presented their formal recommendation to the Board with regards to plastic bags (attached). At the conclusion of their research, they recommend a $.05 fee for plastic bags of which $.02 goes to affected retailers and $.03 to the City. The recommendation calls for a 6-month education, during which businesses and the public could be prepared and businesses could exhaust stock. J. Franklin suggested free reusable bags be distributed as part of the education effort. J. Franklin and L. Zoloth spoke with Dick Peach and Citizens’ Greener Evanston, reviewed public comments and industry group correspondence among other items to research the practicality of the proposed fee. There are also exemptions. Reduction or elimination of single-use bags is one of the recommendations of the City’s Climate Action Plan.

b. L. Zoloth stated the recommendation represents a ‘middle-of-road’ plan and is a compromise between and all-out ban and a $.25 fee called for in an earlier proposal. The fee creates an incentive.

c. L. Zoloth indicated Santa Monica has a full stop, ban on plastic bags, and is contiguous with other cities, similar to Evanston.

d. Chair Finnegan asked was this true of bulk items or meat? L. Zoloth indicated there was no expectation of bags to be provided by the merchant.

e. K. Glynn asked how the fee would be collected. The members indicated an administrative plan would be a discussion for a later date.

f. Chair Finnegan and J. Franklin spoke about Washington DC & the fee offsetting some monies expended by the city.

g. H. Bartling asked if Downtown Evanston or the Chamber of Commerce were involved in the conversation. J. Franklin indicated they did not talk to the Chamber. H. Bartling asked how the business community would be brought on board.

h. L. Zoloth indicated she didn’t think the fee would be a deterrent to shoppers because patrons come to Evanston looking for a particular good or wanted a neighborhood store.

i. H. Bartling is concerned with not consulting the area businesses. Chair Finnegan indicated the plan was to have a stakeholder advisory group, and have the onus of administration be on the City.

j. A. Viner stated prior to voting the Board needed to invite the stakeholders in. She agreed with parts 1-4 and introduction of the recommendation.

k. Chair Finnegan indicated a desire to add number 5 in the details section about the ordinance sunsetting.

l. H. Bartling asked why is there specific numbers regarding the fee? Why not indicate a fee without specific numbers?

m. A. Viner indicated the fee amount is a starting point and will be discussed to gauge comfort and appropriateness. She is aware of other communities charging more.

n. A. Viner suggested a section entitled legislation/implementation giving direction; this would then be brought to the Human Services Committee.

o. Chair Finnegan stated a need for an assessment after 2 years.

p. A. Viner did not support the idea of assessment due to possibility of fighting the ordinance within 24 months. Suggested renewing at three years and an automatic renewal if no objections or concerns.

q. S. Besson stated concern about discussions with the merchants as they are lacking in the recommendation. She stated concern with the rationale as well, saying that it reads like a whereas. She said she thinks there should be a description as to why these recommendations were chosen.

r. C. Caneva indicated if the recommendation was to be voted on the amendments should include motions and votes.
s. L. Zoloth summarized the changes.
t. A. Viner motioned to approve recommendations 1,3,4 as written seconded by K. Glynn. Motion passed unanimously.
u. A. Viner motioned to amend the recommendation, #2 be stricken and relocated within the document as implementation, seconded by L. Zoloth. Motion passed unanimously.
v. A. Viner motioned to amend the recommendations a 4th recommendation “two years from the effective date of the ordinance it is automatically renewed for another 2 year term” L. Zoloth seconded. Motion unanimously approved.
w. A. Viner requested a moment of discussion, as she did not feel the rationale section needed to be relocated. She suggested including language to reference other plastic bag legislation.
x. L. Zoloth suggested the reason for the $.05 is it represents a compromise and is a fee instead of a ban. J. Franklin added it is a choice.
y. A. Viner indicated stressing other ordinances of this nature have been enacted.
z. A. Viner motioned rationale section of the memo be supplemented to include explanatory information including individual choice, comparison of other cities, and why the implementation period has been selected, seconded by K. Glynn. The motion passed unanimously.

aa. A. Viner motioned to approve recommendation memo consistent with prior motions to be presented to council on October 17, 2011. Motion seconded by Chair Besson. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. Strategic Plan Review,

a. Chair Finnegan gave a strategic planning presentation to the board, outlining the last plan (slides attached). The board has been tasked with updating the plan by September 5, 2012.
b. H. Bartling asked where the Green House Gas levels were at. It was his understanding that by 2012 Evanston should be at 7.5%. C. Hurley municipal operations reduced by 22%, transportation use increased by 2%. C. Hurley gave an update at the end of 2010.
c. S. Besson stated it was her preference for the Board to make short and brief recommendations to the Evanston City Council or standing committees of the Council. L. Zoloth agreed with this recommendation.
d. S. Besson indicated a desire to amend the Board’s by-laws, as the current description of the Board’s purpose seems antiquated.
e. L. Zoloth suggested reviewing the 150 ideas (http://evanston150.org/) for Evanston and advocate for those directed at the environment. She is interested in using vacant land for gardens and prairie. She noted a strong support for bike paths and urban gardens.
f. K. Glynn read the times to vote on Evanston 150.
g. S. Besson requested that Board members consider ideas for next month’s discussion of the strategic plan, including the 150 ideas, and bring back items they are interested in for discussion.

VII. Meeting was adjourned at 9:03pm

VIII. NEXT MEETING – Thursday, November 10, 2011

Respectfully Submitted,

Carl Caneva Division Manager