Evanston Environment Board
MEETING NOTES
Thursday, December 9, 2010

Board Members Present:

- Bartling, Hugh
- Besson, Susan (Co-Chair)
- Cheng, Likwan
- Cox, Dan
- Finnegan, Paige (Co-Chair)
- Glynn, Kevin
- Kaplan, Susan
- King, Ellen
- Viner, Anne
- Waller, Suzanne

Community Members Present:
- Michael Drennan, Citizens' Greener Evanston, Disposable Bag Tax
- Chadwick Strum, Sustainable Action, Evanston Bicycle Library

Staff Present:
- Carl Caneva, Health Department
- Catherine Hurley, Sustainable Programs Coordinator
- Ashley McIlwee, Health Department

There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chair Finnegan.

I. Approval of Minutes from November, motion to approve by S. Besson, seconded by Dan Cox. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Citizen Comment
   a. Chadwick spoke briefly about Sustainable Action, a bicycle library interested in exploring possibility of starting up in Evanston. He will provide more information to the Board at the January 13, 2011 meeting.

III. News
   a. Backyard Hens
      i. Applications – Carl Caneva indicated there have been nearly 20 requests for applications to date.
      ii. Permits – Three hen coops have been permitted and are operational.
   b. Wind RFI Update
      i. The Rules Committee met on December 6 to consider the composition of a wind farm committee. Per a City press release, and reports in the Chicago Tribune and Evanstonnow.com, Mayor Tisdahl has invited community members to submit letters of
interest to participate in the wind farm committee to wind@cityofevanston.org. Ms. Hurley, the City’s new Sustainable Programs Coordinator, indicated there will be 3-4 meetings of the ad-hoc committee with a recommendation issued to Council in February or March. Chair Finnegan asked if the suggestions offered by the Environment Board to the Mayor and City Manager regarding the committee’s composition were considered. It is unclear what was decided about the Environment Board’s recommendation that the committee include representatives from the Environment Board, Utilities Commission, Citizens’ Greener Evanston, and City staff.

c. New Sustainability Coordinator – Catherine Hurley was introduced to the Board. Ms. Hurley indicated her background in engineering and sustainability. She is involved in the America Water Association and Association of Engineers, and is a LEED AP.

d. Disposable Bag Tax – Michael Drennan provided an update to the Board relating to disposable bags in Evanston. More than a year ago the idea of passing a $0.25 tax on disposable bags was suggested. CGE did not perceive the tax was going to be successful due to concerns about taxes. Alderman Burrus submitted a proposal for a $0.25 tax, it did not get to committee. The goal is to educate and change behavior rather than to enforce, and follows four goals:
   i. Reduce the use bags that are disposable
   ii. Encourage use of recyclable and reusable bags
   iii. Mandate recycled and recyclable bags
   iv. Fund sustainability efforts

He would like to move the ordinance forward with the goals mentioned above. He indicated the best means to reduce is found in the goals. D. Cox shared an article about China’s plastic bag program. The program told retailers to charge an amount of their choosing for plastic bags. According to the article there was a 50% reduction in plastic bags. D. Cox stated he too was concerned about the idea of taxing and that the program in China helped businesses. Michael indicated the charges would go 50% to the Evanston Climate Action Fund and 50% to the City for administration. D. Cox indicated businesses may be more apt to take part in the program because they could control the funds. E. King indicated she had read a study where taxation is not as effective as community involvement. E. King recommended a $.05 fee rather than a higher fee. Chair Besson asked what the process is for presenting an ordinance, and how it will move forward. P. Finnegan, E. King and A. Viner suggested to Michael that his group define its wishes for the ordinance and present them to the Environment Board for consideration before drafting an ordinance. And that then a refined draft of suggested ordinance parameters be presented to A&PW for their consideration, much like a ‘letter of intent.’ He indicated it is set for A&PW in January. S. Besson indicated her support for the businesses charging and receiving the extra funds. Michael also indicated there was a need to change norms. Sustainability Coordinator stated she was in agreement about education, could there be a reduction in cost to focus on positive
behavior. L. Cheng stated in some countries the charge would go into
effect one day a week. Michael indicated the ordinance needed to be
clear and specific as to the type of bags that would be charged. The
Washington, D.C. model is in the grassroots arena. A. Viner stated it
would be essential to reach out to merchants, and indicated a concern
about opposition. She asked if people in bordering municipalities have
been approached about the ordinance. S. Besson suggested research on
the topic at George Mason University
www.climatechangecommunication.org addresses the issue of effective
progressive communication. Chadwick Strum stated a strategy of a
painted sign on the ground of a parking lot “don’t forget your bags.” Chair
Finnegan asked what was requested of the board. Chair Besson,
indicated submitting a separate memo that outlines background and
justification for the ordinance, along with the ordinance. E. King
suggested meeting with the City’s Law Department. E. King stated it
would be good for Ald. Burrus to approach the Law Department about the
ordinance. S. Besson requested that feedback from merchants be
included in shaping of the bag ban or tax. Michael indicated the
discussion was started at the Chamber of Commerce. A. Viner indicated
research at the corporate level will also be necessary. C. Finnegan
indicated members with ideas should email her.

e. ICLEI Webinar – “Sustainability in Town-Gown Communities,” December
16, 2010. Registration at
http://www.sustainablecommunitiesandstates.org/2010/12/webinar-
sustainability-in-town-gown-communities-dec-16/ Ms. Hurley asked who
would want to attend. Chair Besson indicated the best means is to have
NU and COE representatives in the same room.

f. Veolia Update – Ashley McIlwhee is working with the City to resolve the
problems of noise and odor at the Veolia transfer station. C. Caneva
explained that the City has established a web page on the City web site
where residents can get updates on the progress of the issue
(http://www.cityofevanston.org/news/2010/12/transfer-station-
information/). A. Viner called to Ashley’s attention that Veolia would have
received a zoning variance for its business, and that it would be important
to check that variance, to verify that the company is meeting the
obligations of the zoning.

g. Highland Park Styrofoam Ban – S. Besson related the Chicago Tribune
Local had written a story about a Styrofoam ban that is proposed in
Highland Park. This had been in development for 2 years. The ordinance
was similar to one in place in Santa Monica, CA. The ban is not yet at
Council. The ban would require compostable cups and bowls, but
clamshells would be exempt. S. Besson indicated Highland Park enacted
a program in 2009 that recycles milk cartons in grade schools. A service
was found to remove the milk cartons. Bill Bogot, of Highland Park, has
suggested to S. Besson in a telephone conversation that a milk carton
recycling program would be relatively easy to implement. A. Viner offered
to speak to Mr. Bogot to learn more about the Highland Park recycling
program. A. Viner asked about recycling packing Styrofoam. ABT will
recycle packaging. The ban only applies to Styrofoam used for food services. S. Besson indicated the school tray issue could be solved by plastic trays. In Oak Park a grant was obtained for the washing of trays. D. Cox indicated that at an event hosted by the Business Alliance for a Sustainable Evanston (BASE) Dan Rosenthal, founder of the Chicago Green Restaurant Coop, indicated that Styrofoam bans were not effective nor were they realistic.

h. **Sustainable Cities Institute** – S. Besson indicated Ald. Grover sent her a link, this institute was begun by Home Depot and had many good links. [http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/view/page.home/home](http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/view/page.home/home)

IV. **Stormwater Management** – S. Besson stated there was no update, and that the Board would like to help implement sustainable policies, if appropriate, but needs guidance on the most effective actions. She suggested the Sustainability Coordinator look to the Climate Action Plan for conflicts and the study performed on the City Code. L. Cheng indicated an area of focus could be pavement. He has started to look at lifecycle impact assessment of paving. C. Hurley indicated one obstacle now is finding the carbon footprint of goods. C. Hurley indicated a decrease in runoff is closely associated with carbon reduction.

V. **Multi-Modal Plan Roundtable** – Questions posed by H. Bartling’s presentation have been moved on to Public Works and would hopefully be received by the Board by the January 13, 2010 meeting.

VI. **Roundtable**

a. **Board**

i. **Vacancies** – There are currently three vacancies on the Board. For now the Board will not seek to recruit new members, but will wait for action from Mayor Tisdahl.

ii. **Quorum** – A. Viner confirmed that quorum is based on the number of Board members at any given time, not the number of Board members required (13) by the by-laws. At current level of 10 members, quorum is 6.

iii. **2011 Meeting Dates**

1. January 13th
2. February 10th
3. March 3rd
4. April 14th
5. May 12th
6. June 9th
7. July 14th
8. September 8th
9. October 13th
10. November 10th
11. December 8th

D. Cox asked about the Talking Farm. S. Besson indicated the farm has been negotiating land for years for an educational and productive farm in Evanston. Michael
Drennan indicated they are moving away from the educational model to develop annual demonstration projects.

A. Viner motioned to adjourn, motion seconded by E. King. <Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm. Motioned passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING – January 13, 2011

Please remember that Board members are expected to attend all meetings. Please contact Carl Caneva, 847-859-7831 or ccaneva@cityofevanston.org if you are unable to attend this meeting.

All meetings of the Evanston Environment Board are open to the Public. The City of Evanston is committed to making all public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. Persons needing mobility or communication assistance should contact Brian Barnes, Inclusion Specialist, Parks, Recreation, and Community Services at (847) 448-2054 (Voice), bbarnes@cityofevanston.org or 847-448-8052 (TDD).
TO: Evanston City Council
FROM: Evanston Environment Board
CC: Honorable Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl, City Manager Wally Bobkiewicz, Sustainable Programs Coordinator Catherine Hurley
Joel Freeman, Evanston Utilities Commission
Ron Fleckman, Citizens’ Greener Evanston
DATE: January xx, 2011

The Evanston Environment Board is pleased to present this recap of activities for 2010 and update of ongoing and pending projects. At this time we’d like to reiterate our interest in working with City Council and City staff on matters of mutual concern, and we invite you to view us as a resource to consult with and call on for research, policy recommendations, and dialogue.

COMPLETED

1. Sustainable Pest Control and Pesticide Reduction Policy – Created a resolution that codified existing City policy on pest management. Passed by the City Council on April 26, 2010, the policy is the State of Illinois’ first such municipal resolution. The resolution supports Goal Five of the City’s Strategic Plan: ‘Protect and optimize the City’s natural resources and built environment, leading by example through sustainable practices and behaviors.’

The Safer Pest Control Project of Chicago, with whom the Board worked closely to create the resolution, awarded the Environment Board its first-ever ‘Hero Award’ at its October fundraiser.

2. Backyard Hen Ordinance 23-O-10 – Worked with the Evanston Backyard Chicken Committee to craft an amendment to an existing ordinance (Title 9, ‘Public Safety,’ Chapter 4, ‘Dogs, Cats, Animals, and Fowl’) banning the keeping of chickens. The amended ordinance was passed by the City Council on October 20, 2010. The amended ordinance supports the Evanston Climate Action Plan (ECAP), which makes a recommendation to ‘support and encourage efforts to grow more food in Evanston’.

3. Green Building Ordinance Fact Sheet – Following passage on October 26, 2009 of the Green Building Ordinance (14-O-09), the Environment Board created a comprehensive fact sheet detailing provisions of the Green Building Ordinance, including FAQ, for use as a handout by the Building Department for builders, contractors, and the general public. (See attached.) The fact sheet is awaiting production.

ONGOING/PENDING

1. City Code Review - Initiated review of City Code to identify portions that require revision to remain compatible with provisions of the ECAP. Have submitted suggested revisions to City staff, for consideration, and await direction.
2. **Multi-Modal Plan** - Identified areas of the City’s 2009 Multi-Modal Plan that the Environment Board can support in the interest of reaching ECAP transportation goals. Have met with Paul Schneider and Rajeev (sp? Last name?) in the Transportation Department to coordinate efforts. Await response to specific questions in the areas of bicycle parking, racks, and routes/lanes.

3. **Stormwater Management** – Following questions about construction runoff policy (pending), the Board studied the City’s stormwater management requirements (as detailed in the stormwater code, passed in 2007 and detailed in Title 4, Chapter 24 of the Evanston City Code). The Board invited presentations by Lara Biggs and Paul Schneider from the City, and is currently considering ways it might facilitate compliance with the MS4 Permit and/or otherwise aid in improving stormwater management practices.

4. **Offshore Wind Farm** – Have remained apprised of continuing efforts of CGE citizen group, and City staff, to pursue potential of an offshore wind farm. Offered specific recommendations for composition of an advisory wind farm committee, and remain available as the process continues.

5. **Partnerships/Collaborations** - Helped to formalize an ad hoc group of environmental commissioners from several North Shore communities (Highland Park, Wilmette, Winnetka, Glenview, Glencoe, Northbrook). Have met twice to share news of activities, and possible regional collaboration.

6. **Membership** - The Environment Board has continued to welcome new members as colleagues’ terms have expired. We are impressed with the qualified community members who have stepped forward to serve the City in 2010. We’d like to introduce our new members, and here provide a full list of the current 10-member Board, along with brief biographical information [see attached].