MEETING NOTES
Evanston Environment Board
Thursday, May 8, 2014
7:00 p.m.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge, Room #2200

Members Present: Todd Schwier, Tom Clark, Samuel Headd, Linda Young, Jamal Bowleg, Husayn Allmart

Members Absent: Ellen King

Staff: Catherine Hurley, Sustainable Programs Coordinator, Suzette Robinson, Director of Public Works, Kenya Evans, Executive Secretary

Presiding Member/s: Todd Schwier (Chair)

I. CALL TO ORDER – Todd Schwier called meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. APPROVAL of MINUTES from April. Minutes approved with amendments. Todd Schwier made a MOTION to approve. All in favor.

III. CITIZEN COMMENT
Residents Linda Beck and Dorothy Headd introduced themselves and were representing Evanston Neighbors United. They had no further comments or questions.

IV. STAFF UPDATES (ATTACHMENT)
T. Schwier directed the board’s attention to the Staff Report. C. Hurley informed the board of the Evanston Liability Plan that will be presented to the Evanston City Council on May 19th 2014. This plan calls for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. C. Hurley explained that the City Council would like to exceed its past goal of about 13% and that 20% will be a new goal for the Council this year. C. Hurley then informed the board about the past Earth Day/Arbor Day Celebration. She stated that it was quite successful, and feedback from participants and volunteers was positive. Volunteers came to support the mission of protecting the environment and for clean-up efforts. T. Clark from the board also participated in this event and aided in clean-up efforts as well. T. Clark also suggested local activities all throughout the year rather than annual events and T. Schwier also posed a question about follow up events. C. Hurley will research further opportunities to present events to the public year round as well as any follow-up to Earth Day/Arbor Day. C. Hurley stated that she is looking into statistics and collecting data from Public Works for possible future events. Other updates included the newspaper boxes. T. Clark expressed concern regarding the amount of free newspapers and newspaper boxes in the city. He stated that many of these papers ended up littering the city. L. Young stated that through research
conducted from journalistic sources, she has since favored a reorganizational approach, rather than reduction.

V. PLASTIC BAG ORDINANCE
T. Schwier directed the board’s attention to the plastic bag ordinance. T. Schwier advised that the board prioritizes bike parking rather than plastic bag ordinance. C. Hurley states that although the board should address bike parking, it would benefit the board to also be informed of current ordinance issues which include the plastic bag ban in Chicago. C. Hurley stated that Chicago has recently passed this ordinance regarding stores with 10,000 square feet or more. Evanston may consider this ban as well and it will possibly be brought to City Council. Linda Y. supports possible plastic bag ordinance and asked if this is phase 1. And if so, would there be a second phase to the ban as well.

C. Hurley stated that stores less than 10,000 square feet may be researched as part of phase 2. However, most of the bags found in Evanston as trash have been coming from big box stores and chains. Linda Y. asked if this also included stores such as Sam’s and Foods for Less. C. Hurley affirmed that these chains would be also included. Linda Y. raised a concern about the economics as many people shop there to save money and if the ban would negatively impact them. J. Bowleg also inquired if the fines found in the Chicago ordinance would be duplicated in Evanston. And if so, would that include a person or organization. C. Hurley stated that fines would be assessed to businesses and organizations only. C. Hurley will also clarify this point with council. T. Schwier commented that the last ordinance passed in Chicago was not well received, but Evanston could try to bring the ordinance to fruition as long as no real difficulties can be seen to ensue. T. Schwier made a MOTION to support discussion of ordinance to council. ALL IN FAVOR.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY
S. Headd submitted to the board a proposal for creating an ad hoc committee regarding strategies to work with community members and volunteers on environmental issues. C. Hurley proposed that this committee would help build a framework onto which issues can be addressed alongside community members. K. Glynn asked if committee can then ask for grants and educational opportunities for the community. C. Hurley stated that some of the proposals from the committee could include both grants and educational opportunities. H. Bartling stated that he was particularly interested in the board looking into other issues including waste transfer. C. Hurley stated that some of the challenges include the focus on community needs and a bigger picture perspective. C. Hurley stated that this perspective is needed so that the community can be engaged in many of the plans and big proposals. She stated that the board can also look into how to apply strategies across communities. K. Glynn asked for clarification and if the goal was to ultimately create a framework to apply across the community. C. Hurley affirmed this point. S. Robinson commented that due to certain segments of the population possibly being overlooked, a strategy that reaches across the entire community would be beneficial. K. Glynn raised the point as to how committee should proceed. T. Schwier requested that board continues to address certain topics and issues. T. Schwier then made a MOTION to create subcommittee. K. Glynn seconded. ALL IN FAVOR. S. Robinson then asked if any board members
were interested in staffing the committee. K. Glynn, H. Bartling and S. Headd all expressed interest. Linda Y. will also contact a colleague who works in environmental justice give her expertise to the committee. The board moved to discuss this in further detail at the next meeting.

VII. BIKE PARKING FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

H. Bartling asked that the board refer to the attachments and stated that zoning codes are different across the board. H. Bartling stated that many of the zoning codes for Evanston have little to do with bike parking. H. Bartling suggested that the board continues looking into including a bicycle parking guide for developers to follow. This kind of guide would not cost developers money. Linda Y. asked if multi-family dwellings will be considered in any bike parking plans. H. Bartling stated that most documents researched were regarding commercial establishments. Linda Y. stated that the board should think about multi-family properties as people usually have no place to park their bikes. S. Robinson supported this point and stated that these experiences are common to multi-family dwellers and the board should explore possibilities of researching incentivizing bike parking for owners of multi-family properties. She stated that there are many modifications that can occur on the properties to accommodate bikes. H. Bartling also suggested that new developments use proposed bike parking guides for those modifications as many of these dwellings have only a limited amount of spaces per unit. H. Bartling also supported incentives for bike parking in multi-family dwellings.

C. Hurley informed the board that buildings less than 20,000 square feet are not required to address this issue. She suggested that it is possible that CDBG funds could be used to fund bike parking for some of these types of properties. H. Bartling commented that ordinances could be a good way to compel landlords to build spaces for bikes. T. Schwier then proposed that all information being presented regarding bike parking be uploaded to google documents so members could discuss and exchange ideas. T. Clark suggested that the board look into creating a guide depicting good places for individuals to park. S. Robinson stated that board look into various ways bikes can be mounted in many places without sacrificing space such as wall mounts. T. Clark raised a concern about the number of abandoned bikes in the city and S. Robinson agreed that it was a concern as the city has about 300 abandoned bikes, many of which have quality issues and cannot be used.

H. Bartling raised a concern regarding the city’s current proposed bike lane draft. He was concerned about the possible restrictions suggested by the online map and wanted clarification. S. Robinson stated that restrictions are on side walk biking which is limited to only certain areas within Evanston. Restrictions are also in effect for areas where signage restricting biking is posted. S. Robinson is collecting feedback from residents and businesses regarding restrictions and routes. S. Robinson stated that online maps are proposals, and will not be complete action plans until all options are thoroughly considered. S. Robinson also stated that routes along Dempster, Maine and Central are high stress areas. These areas experience high volumes of traffic, including an influx of trucks. There needed to be reduction in stress levels of cars, trucks and also buses. H. Bartling
also wanted to know if reduction of bike lanes on certain routes such as Main Street and Central will occur. S. Robinson reiterated that routes are only proposals and there is no clear indication of what routes will be eliminated or restricted if any. She also stated that as she looks into statistics, comments and opinions from the public, it is unsure if we will have a comfortable corridor in certain areas as a number of factors are at play. H. Bartling mentioned that this point needs to be clarified on website. S. Robinson will look into modifying some of the website content to reflect that plans are proposals only.

Linda Y. then raised a question concerning the Divvy Bike Program. The concern was if there will be stations at Maine or Dempster and how will draft plan integrate Divvy into Evanston. S. Robinson stated that some transit stations are included and proposals will possibly include other roads and routes. C. Hurley stated that Evanston is still in active conversation with state and local officials regarding Divvy as well as applications for grants. There has been no full commitment as of yet to locations. Linda Y. stated that her concern was that people could ride to the train station. S. Robinson concurred and stated that talks were not resistant to this idea in any way. Tom C. supported this point as well as also supported the creation of alternate routes.

H. Bartling asked that the board look over the attachments regarding bike parking developments and ordinances further and raised the issue that bicyclists could not park bikes in Downtown Evanston or near businesses. S. Robinson stated that restrictions are only at where signs are posted in business areas and not all areas in the downtown area have such signage. Places such as Noyes and Howard Street don’t have signs. She stated that the question is not about banning bike parking or development in this area, but if sidewalk biking will be restricted. Robinson also stated that there are a number of community officials, individuals and businesses looking to create harmonious solutions for all modes of travel. T. Schwier inquired if there will be a final decision regarding these issues in June. S. Robinson reports that there will be a presentation of survey results and data regarding preferences and corridor options. T. Schwier raised a concern regarding how feedback will be generated. S. Robinson informed the board that there is a two week window for the survey and up to 500 respondents did the original survey and will receive a link to the new survey when it is ready to be presented. Also, a press release will be sent out as well as I-Pad surveys.

VIII. EEB RESPONSIBILITIES/TRANSPORTATION INPUT
S. Robinson directed the board’s attention to the board’s current responsibilities. S. Robinson will work with Alderman Wynne on how to go about creating a framework for issues going to either the Parking & Transportation Committee or the Environment Board. S. Robinson informed the board that the Parking & Transportation Committee is seeking new members. C. Hurley also informed the board that it was possible for the board to keep biking issues within the framework of the Environment Board or send it to Parking & Transportation. H. Bartling suggested that perhaps moving a member from EEB to Parking & Transportation could possibly work. However, he stated his concern would be about what the impact would be. S. Robinson stated that the Parking & Transportation Committee is currently asking for more transportation topics and issues. She also stated that the board could take on more transportation issues that affect the environment.
She asked the board if they would like to take on these issues rather than take on the issue of bike parking. H. Bartling commented that his concern was that the Parking & Transportation Committee was automobile focused, and they could use a more multi-modal approach to transportation. He also stated that because of this issue, it would be beneficial for someone from the board to also have a seat in that committee as well. Linda Y. asked if there was any opportunity for both committees and boards to interact. C. Hurley commented that she would keep the board apprised of updates and opportunities to interact. T. Schwier stated that he felt the biking issues should stay with the board with updates. The board will move to discuss this issue at a later date.

IX. SOLID WASTE SURVEY FOR COMMERCIAL FRANCHISE
Board moved to discuss this issue at the next meeting due to time constraints.

X. ROUNDTABLE
There were no items for discussion.

XI. ADJOURNMENT
T. Schwier MOTION to adjourn. T. Clark seconded. All in Favor.

NEXT MEETING – June 12, 2014