



MINUTES

City of Ypsilanti SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MEETING Virtual Meeting held via Zoom

Monday, May 10, 2021
7:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:01 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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|-------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Keith Michalowski | Present | - Washtenaw County, Ypsilanti City |
| Nancy Heine | Present | - Washtenaw County, Ypsilanti City |
| Julia Bayha | Present | - Washtenaw County, Ypsilanti City |
| Bryan Foley | Present | - Washtenaw County, Ypsilanti City |
| Katy Greenwald | Present | - Washtenaw County, Superior Township |
| Beth Gibbons | Present | - Washtenaw County, Ypsilanti Township |
| Takunia Collins | Present | - Washtenaw County, Pittsfield Township |
| Desirae Simmons | Present (*late arrival) | - Washtenaw County, Ypsilanti City |

Also Present: Council Liaison Steve Wilcoxon
Staff Liaison Ron Akers, Public Services Director
Commission Recording Secretary, Nancy Hare-Dickerson

Additional Staff Present: Bonnie Wessler, Public Services Project Manager (Zoom Meeting Host)

III. PUBLIC COMMENT – none

IV. AGENDA APPROVAL

Heine (Second: Gibbons) moved to approve the Agenda as submitted.

Roll Call Vote – Ayes: Commissioners Michalowski, Heine, Bayha, Foley, Greenwald, Gibbons
Collins

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Simmons*

Motion Carried.

V. INTRODUCTIONS

Commissioner Michalowski asked the new U of M Resilience Hub team members in attendance to say hello and introduce themselves – Taylor Antal, Jessica Miller and Bryce Frohlich [not present]. The new second group of U of M Resilience Hub team members will be taking over the project and working with the Sustainability Commission this year.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

1. Front Porch Farming

Caylen Cole-Hazel, an Ypsilanti City resident, explained that her front porch farming idea came out of a concern for food sovereignty in the area and a concern for renters and apartment dwellers that do not have access to garden areas. She shared her vision and goals for the further

development and implementation of a front porch farming pilot project and asked the Commission for feedback and possible support. *[Commissioner query and comment followed]*

2. Composting with Commissioner Collins

Commissioner Collins presented a Power Point slide presentation instructing how to compost indoors in an easy, convenient and affordable way. *[Commissioner query and comment followed]*

3. Storm Water Awareness

Commissioner Collins presented a Power Point slide presentation explaining the importance of our storm drains and the damage that can be caused when those drains are clogged and excess rain and groundwater cannot be diverted properly. He explained the Adopt-A-Storm Drain concept where individuals or groups can get involved and assist in keeping storm drains functioning optimally, which is a simple way to help keep our waterways clean. He also spoke on the value of storm drain art which helps to decrease vandalism and graffiti and adds aesthetic beauty to the neighborhood. *[Commissioner query and comment followed, including discussion re: steps to gain City approval to allow storm drain art]*

4. MAJIC and THRIVE

Commissioner Simmons introduced Rei Fielder, who is the campaign manager for the Michigan Alliance for Justice in Climate (MAJIC), which is a newly formed state-wide coalition. Rei Fielder presented a Power Point slide presentation and explained that MAJIC came out of a need to support BIPOP communities and BIPOP leadership in the work of environmental justice and conversations about the climate crisis. Information regarding the new federal THRIVE agenda for economic recovery and climate action, recently unveiled in Congress, was also presented. Opportunities for the Sustainability Commission and Ypsilanti community members to be able to support the work and to also have access to funds to do some of the work was discussed as well. *[Commissioner query and comment followed]*

At or about 8:55pm, Bayha (Second: Simmons) moved to extend the meeting time to approximately 9:15pm.

Roll Call Vote – Ayes: Commissioners Michalowski, Heine, Bayha, Foley, Greenwald, Gibbons Collins, Simmons

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of February 8, 2021 minutes

2. Approval of April 12, 2021 minutes

Simmons (Second: Bayha) moved to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted.

Roll Call Vote – Ayes: Commissioners Michalowski, Heine, Bayha, Foley, Greenwald, Gibbons Collins, Simmons

Nays: None

Absent: None
Motion Carried.

VIII. WORK SESSIONS – none

IX. RESOLUTIONS/MOTIONS/DISCUSSIONS

1. Michigan Bottle Bill

Commissioner Heine introduced an article from Crain’s Business which discussed how poorly Michigan is doing on its recycling of bottle and can returnables. She initiated discussion as to the idea of the City investing in upgrading the recycling containers currently in use by using some of the American Rescue Act federal stimulus money which was received. Staff Liaison Akers addressed some proposals already in mind.

2. Washington Street Green Space Proposal

Commissioner Bayha spoke as to the time urgency in regards to weather for Ypsilanti businesses. Commissioner Michalowski explained that City Council has already previously approved the closure of Washington Street for the summer but that he will place it on the agenda for future discussion.

3. Sustainability Action Plan – What can I do?

Commissioner Michalowski asked that commissioners review the Plan, choose a topic that they would like to work with and make some headway on over the year, and then contact him regarding their decision and/or questions they may have.

X. COMMISSIONER REPORTS – none

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT – none

XII. PROPOSED BUSINESS – none

XIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

Monday, June 14, 2021

XIV. ADJOURNMENT: 9:20 p.m.

Heine (Second: Collins) moved to adjourn the meeting of the Sustainability Commission.

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Carried