

City Of Birmingham
Regular Meeting Of The Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee Planning
Board¹

Monday, June 12, 2023
Conference Rooms 202 & 203
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee Planning Board² held on June 12, 2023. The meeting was convened at 6:00 p.m.

1) Roll Call

Present: Harvey Bell, Lois DeBacker, Lara Edwards, Rachna Gulati, Debra Horner, Joe Mercurio, Jess Newman, Danielle Todd, Dani Torcolacci

Absent: None

Staff: City Planner Blizinski; Planning Director Dupuis, Parks and Recreation Manager Laird

2) Review of the Agenda

3) Approval of the AHESC Minutes of May 15, 2023

It was determined that the minutes of May 15, 2023 would be voted on at the next meeting.

4) Study Session

A. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

CP Blizinski summarized the item. Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

AHESC members' comments were as follows:

- The AHESC should, at the outset, determine the level of specificity desired for its final deliverable since that would shape the process of producing the deliverable;
- The higher the benefit to the City's sustainability goals, the more an intervention should be prioritized;
- It would be helpful to know the approximate cost of the interventions since less expensive interventions could be implemented more immediately than more expensive interventions;
- The City should aim to have its report more resemble Ann Arbor's than San Francisco's, since more specificity would allow for more implementation;
- It would be useful to determine which actions would be the purview of the City, which would be the purview of the residents, and which could only be done in conjunction with neighboring municipalities; and,
- Some of the actions would require interdepartmental cooperation.

1. US Community Protocol

¹ As amended at the August 21, 2023 meeting.

² As amended at the August 21, 2023 meeting.

B. Sustainability and Climate Action Plan

CP Blizinski and PD Dupuis presented the item. Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

1. Project Timeline

AHESC members' comments were as follows:

- While greenhouse gas inventory is an important aspect of making sustainable changes, topics like climate resiliency, adaptation, and quality of life issues are more likely to resonate with residents;
- It would be helpful to gather any air quality data, stormwater performance data, and climate risk analysis data that might be available in addition to greenhouse gas inventory;
- Air quality improvements within public buildings to mitigate issues like wildfire smoke should be considered;
- Michigan and SEMCOG has data on these issues and the Board might be able to conduct some of the research on these topics;
- Climate change and sustainability are different topics, and it would be appropriate to discuss both and how they relate; and,
- The Board would benefit from establishing its mission and framework before engaging with the community.

It was determined that the Board would hold a study session in July on some of the topics raised.

2. Engage Birmingham

PD Dupuis presented the item. Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

AHESC members' comments were as follows:

- It would be worthwhile to differentiate between the survey responses from residents of Birmingham and the responses from people working in Birmingham;
- It would be worthwhile to do outreach to the business community on these topics;
- The survey could provide respondents with opportunities for further engagement;
- It might be worthwhile to ask respondents for household income and whether there are children in the home;
- Stormwater quality could be grouped in with 'water quality' as an available option;
- Some option to raise concerns about wildlife, habitat, or biodiversity would be appropriate;
- Environmental justice might better describe equity, accessibility, and community health considerations;
- Health should be listed in some way as an option;
- It might be worthwhile to make two separate questions, one addressing community concerns and one addressing community solutions and opportunities;
- It should be noted that the Commission declared a climate emergency;
- Climate change should be woven into the prompts in a balanced way;

- Since climate change can be a contentious topic, sometimes the best way to communicate about it is to discuss the specific, observable impacts without naming climate change as the overarching concern;
- It might be worthwhile to determine whether there would be more support for meeting or exceeding Michigan's climate goals; and,
- It would be worthwhile to include an option for individuals to indicate if they do not have any sustainability-related concerns.

5) Open to the Public for Items Not on the Agenda

6) Miscellaneous Communications

CP Blizinski provided an overview of the Sustainability Google Drive. Staff answered informational questions from the AHESC.

PD Dupuis asked if any Board members would be interested in giving a brief, virtual talk on Birmingham's sustainability efforts to an audience in East Timor on June 14, 2023.

7) Draft Agenda

8) Adjournment

No further business being evident, the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.



Leah Blizinski, City Planner



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist