

APPROVED MINUTES

EDEN PRAIRIE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

TUESDAY, JULY 9, 2019

**7:00 PM—CITY CENTER
Prairie Room, 8080 Mitchell Road**

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Anna Anderson (Chair), Jeanne DeSanctis, Aaron Pooock, JoAnn McGuire, Debjyoti Dwivedy, Cindy Hoffman, Kate Lohnes, Daniel Katzenberger, Priya Senthilkkumar

CITY STAFF:

Senior Planner Beth Novak-Krebs, Planning Division, Kristin Harley, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Absent were commissioners Dwivedy and Lohnes.

Carol Lundgren, Sustainability Specialist, and Nicole Mosteller, Sustainability Intern, Ron Case, Eden Prairie Mayor, and resident Becky Copper joined the meeting.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Katzenberger moved, seconded by Hoffman to approve the agenda, with the change of omitting “7:30 and 8:00” under reports from staff for the Mayor’s presentation. **Motion carried 7-0.**

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 11 MEETING

MOTION: Katzenberger moved, seconded by Senthilkkumar to approve the minutes of June 11, 2019 Conservation Commission meeting. **Motion carried 6-0** with one abstention (McGuire).

IV. REPORTS

A. REPORTS FROM STAFF

1. DISCUSS EXO-EXHIBIT AT STATE FAIR

Mosteller stated the deadline for submission to the Department of Commerce was Monday, July 15. She and Lundgren would set up and staff the booth.

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Lundgren stated the sign-up for volunteering to staff the booth was in an email sent to the commission members. One person was needed for at least one time slot, and the Department of Commerce would reply via email with information and training videos. There would be a bingo card to win an LED light bulb. Discussion followed on signing up for slots.

2. DISCUSS CITYWIDE OPEN HOUSE

Novak-Krebs stated the commission would not have a booth this year. It would only involve Fire and Police in 2019, but in 2020 all departments would have a booth presence.

3. DISCUSS CENTERPOINT ENERGY OUTREACH

Lundgren stated she received an email informing her that CenterPoint Energy would begin multi-family residential outreach, which dovetailed with the commission's focus. This outreach would promote all of CenterPoint Energy's programs. Anderson asked how the commission could partner with this and communicate this to the City Council. Lundgren offered to reach out to CenterPoint for information on their tactics, which the commission could learn from and apply. Senthilkumar asked if CenterPoint's programs would address all the issues and gaps the commission wanted to address. Discussion followed on coordinating with CenterPoint Energy's efforts.

4. MAYOR VISIT

Mayor Case thanked the commission members for welcoming him and for their work. He stated he ran his election campaign on environmental, ecological, global climate change issues and considered his election a mandate on these fronts. He stated he was sure his grandparents worried for the livelihoods of their grandchildren and he also thought about what the present generation would bequeath his grandchildren's grandchildren. He stated he believed every nation on earth should commit to mitigating global climate change. He set the year of 2050 for the goal of making Eden Prairie carbon-neutral and 2030 for having every Eden Prairie vehicle electric or battery-run. Mayor Case asked the commission members for help in "scaffolding" the goals toward this and also had a conversation with John Swanson of the school district regarding this as well. He summarized his partnership building and branding concepts toward complete conservation.

He summarized his participation in the conference of mayors of cities of over 30,000 residents. There he learned about electric school buses and their greater speed and efficiency plus lower maintenance needs, and

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mentioned these to Swanson. He was interested in also having police cars and dump trucks, Southwest Transit buses, et cetera, moved to alternative fuels. He asked the commission members for data and information specific to Eden Prairie rather than vague positions on larger national issues to secure the support of the City Council. He stated he also met with the School Board twice a year and wanted to involve it as well by stressing facts.

Katzenberger asked for and received clarification the 2030 alternative fuels for vehicles goal was the Mayor's goal but also the Council's decision. McGuire asked if Mayor Case saw global climate change as the greatest threat to the future, considering the burning of fossil fuels might not be as much as an issue for Eden Prairie. Katzenberger replied heating houses and running cars did utilize fossil fuels and the City could control this via incentivizing solar, wind, and other alternatives. Case added Robert Ellis found that 99 percent of all greenhouse gases produced in Eden Prairie were from building energy, transportation, and solid waste. McGuire asked at what point sacrifice would enter into the conversation and when would this communication come. Mayor Case agreed this was important, but as a 25-year veteran of politics he understood one could win a battle but lose the war. Case found "pushing too hard" was less preferable than modeling and incentivizing. Katzenberger added there was enough renewable energy to maintain our comfortable lifestyle if only society made the choice to transition the economy. DeSanctis asked what needed to be changed in the building codes to require charging stations, solar panels, et cetera. Mayor Case replied he wished to get ideas for this transition from the commission members in a way that would ease the transition. "Solar panel-ready" homes were an example, even though they did not have solar panels installed immediately. Building trust was more important than mandates. He believed a majority of residents were concerned with global climate change.

Anderson asked how the commission would quantify steps in a way that could guarantee carbon neutrality by 2050; she did not think the commission could get this granular with scientific data, information and specific actions. Mayor Case replied he was looking for trends toward the goal, and benchmarks and standards that would indicate the City was on the right track. He suggested pulling from the Aspire 2040 Plan for inspiration, and suggested the energy piece would have the greatest impact. Katzenberger stated this commission had the expertise and the information to do this. The State of Minnesota had a 2030 and 2050 goal and had fallen behind; it spurred conversation as to how to get back on track. Mayor Case emphasized he was not asking the commission members to solve national or global problems, but to suggest ideas for change.

The Mayor once again thanked the Commission for their work and left at approximately 7:38 pm.

5. **DISCUSS CLIMATE ACTION RESEARCH FOR COUNCIL**

Katzenberger urged choosing science-based targets and Anderson agreed the commission should set specific goals and timelines. Katzenberger suggested hiring a consultant to set a baseline. High school and college students could collaborate. Lundgren displayed and summarized Robert Ellis's Climate Action Plan outline, which Mayor Case had mentioned in his talk. Eden Prairie participated in a Regional Indicators Initiative (regionalindicatorsmn.com) since 2007 which provided an online "Wedge Tool" which helped cities create an energy action plan and to forecast future emissions. Discussion followed on how to extrapolate benchmarks and standards and next steps from the Plan.

Mosteller explained the current fleet of electric vehicles at Eden Prairie. Hoffman stated it was difficult to set specific benchmarks and they would have to be more general. Lundgren agreed and stated City staff would do the research, guided by the commission. McGuire stated if any city was ahead of Eden Prairie that could be used as a success story and a model; however it would be difficult to mandate all vehicles be electric rather than hybrid. Lundgren replied this was not necessarily the case and the Wedge Tool would aid the commission in sorting out the possibilities and in making decisions. Anderson reiterated her key question: how the commission could best support City staff in its goals? She asked Lundgren where the commission should focus its efforts. Lundgren suggested the commission revisit this question after she met with the consultant. The commission's presentation would be in October, 2019 and it need not achieve the level of granularity of the St. Louis Park's plan. Senthilkumar noted the number of "behavioral changes" in the Climate Action Plan, which the commission had already suggested and could build on. Discussion followed on ways to survey the public on ideas on how to achieve these goals and what their challenges were. McGuire suggested reminding the public it was free to attend these meetings. Lundgren reminded the commission members the City would still have Sustainable Eden Prairie and the Energy Action Plan would probably go away in favor of the Climate Action Plan. Discussion followed on ways for the commission members to "push" for the changes that motivated their joining this commission.

6. **PARTNERING WITH AEON FOR OCEAN FOR SCREENING KID FRIENDLY FILM**

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Novak-Krebs stated the award winner Aeon for Ocean was looking for a space to use and a partner for a kid-friendly film. Novak-Krebs suggested providing one of the Heritage Rooms on the lower level. Anderson asked for a one-page proposal from the organization outlining its audience, needs, timeline, content, copyright issues, and other information to see if this was a proper fit for the commission. McGuire offered to reach out to a member of the organization she knew and email the proposal to Novak-Krebs.

B. REPORTS FROM CHAIR

C. REPORTS FROM COMMISSION

1. WATER UPDATE

2. WASTE UPDATE

3. LANDSCAPE/POLLINATOR UPDATE

4. ENERGY UPDATE

DeSanctis stated she discovered a website that assisted residents in calculating their carbon footprint via computers provided in a public place such as a mall (footprintnetwork.org).

Discussion followed on the appropriateness and trade-offs involved with the Oak Point Elementary School Variance #2018-02 recently approved (July 8, 2019) by the Planning Commission.

D. REPORTS FROM STUDENTS

V. OTHER BUSINESS

VI. UPCOMING EVENTS

VII. NEXT MEETING

The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held Tuesday, August 13, 2019, 7:00 p.m. in Prairie Rooms A & B.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Katzenberg moved, seconded by Poock to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION CARRIED 7-0.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.