

**Detroit Green Task Force
Green Building Policy
Sub-Committee Meeting**

May 27, 2010

-Minutes-

Meeting was called order at 8:30 a.m. by Kenneth V. Cockrel, Jr., in the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Office of the Auditor General, 2nd Floor – Room 208 Conference Room.

Introductions – Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

Discussion – Is a Green Building Policy for Detroit a Good Idea?

It was suggested that a Green Building Policy for Detroit would be a good idea and that it is the right time. This also goes beyond the City of Detroit, due to limited building currently occurring in the city.

We need a policy that:

- That focuses on sustainability
- Has a global approach
- Enforces the standards that are set
- Has a group in place to work on sustainability issues
- Guides the city and sets an example

We have a draft of Sustainable Development Policies and Guidelines; the goal of the document is to promote sustainability in the City of Detroit by supporting a healthy livable built environment for current and future generations.

The objectives are to:

- Develop a Sustainable & Energy Efficient Action Plan for the City with specific goals and benchmarks
- Promote sustainable development and green practices in land use practices, site planning, green building design, new construction, demolition, operation and maintenance.
- Promote water conservation, pollution prevention, and water reuse strategies through sustainable storm water management and other practices
- Advance a holistic, integrated, multi-disciplinary approach for design of high performance and energy efficient new buildings, as well as retro-fit for existing buildings
- Advance a holistic, integrated, multi-disciplinary approach for neighborhood stabilization and redevelopment

- Promote historic preservation and innovative green building practices for historic structure
- Promote protection and restoration of natural habitat and open space in all development projects
- Advance practices to improve indoor environmental and air quality, particularly in structures for vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly and the handicapped
- Advance development that incorporates alternative transportation and non-motorized options
- Develop City of Detroit incentives to encourage and facilitate green building and sustainable development practices
- Promote Public Health program and pollution prevention practices
- Promote energy conservation and reduce reliance on fossil fuel
- Reduce and reuse waste

Review of Existing Policies That Might Impact such a Policy – Karla Henderson, BS & E

One of the current problems is that businesses are being charged for upgrades and there are no incentives for these upgrades. The Young Detroit Builders are involved in deconstruction in Detroit, but they cannot handle all of the work. The need for deconstruction is huge, but how can we justify the premiums of deconstruction?

Do all structures need to come down? How do we handle the deconstruction? Can we avoid all deconstruction going to the landfills? It is hard to use deconstruction materials in new construction. It takes skilled workers to do this; we need more knowledge on how to properly use deconstruction materials. The Architectural Salvage Warehouse of Detroit has a proposal for the people to bring their deconstruction materials directly to them.

Best Approach – Carrot vs. Stick

Most agree that incentives are the best way to go; we currently have a bank of incentives. We need a cost benefit analysis.

Impediments of construction, it's not just financial but the administrative side as well. There are new permits needed for green construction, over and above what is normally necessary, this causes extra costs. Vacant land in Detroit should be a great opportunity but LEED Certification is becoming more cumbersome and so demanding that this may become a problem. LEED problems:

- Demanding
- Expensive
- Bureaucratic

We need someone to help get things done and push things along in 2 weeks instead of taking 2 months.

Should there be incentives and/or tax credits? On-line permits will be available within the next 12 months.

Green incentives need to be carried through, most people are not aware of all of the incentives that are out there. Contractors and property owners need to be in attendance at meetings so that they are aware of any and all new policies.

Any new land sold and/or construction built should have to be LEED Certified. 189.1 is a standard not a label as Energy Star is. We can adopt a code system by looking at other cities policies, no need to reinvent the wheel.

A building can be green but if it is operated improperly it will not show the advantages. We need to make sure that people are trained in all aspects of Green Maintenance, such as green housekeeping – using all eco-friendly products to clean.

As we save energy, we save money. Detroit needs to lead by example and make a big deal about it so that people are aware of what is being done and we can change the mind set of the city. Things already green can encourage more green movement; so we need to have policies that involve and affect everyday people; they need to see these incentives for themselves.

Statements were made regarding Residential Energy Conservation Ordinances and Mandatory Energy Disclosure and the importance of such a policy for the rental market in Detroit, and to protect the average citizen from high energy bills. Ken Cockrel Jr. also agreed that this would strengthen the rental market to promote good landlord practices, and veer renters towards those rental homes. This ordinance would also work to reduce the amount of energy consumption in the city, saving money, saves energy and vice versa.

Comparative Analysis of Existing Municipal Policies

Looking at other cities policies can help us with our policy; we may take bits and pieces from other cities and make them our own. More comparative studies need to be done on this issue.

Does the City of Detroit need a green website to show its green initiatives? The Detroit Green Task Force initiatives and meeting minutes are currently listed on GreeningDetroit.com's website, in the Metro Communities section, under Government – Detroit.

The next Green Task Force Sub-Committee meeting is scheduled for June 17th, 8:30am. Location to be determined at a later date.