

## **DETROIT CITY COUNCIL MEETING/DETROIT GREEN TASK FORCE**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, Oct 30, 2014 @ 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

3408 Woodward Ave. Detroit, MI Michigan State University Detroit Center

Attendees: Councilman Scott Benson, Kathleen Klein, Sandra Yu, Melissa Damaschke, Sal Stabile, Sarah Hoogferp, Tiffany Newbis, Jeffrey Jones, Kathryn Underwood, Todd Scott, Miriam Blanks-Smart, Peter Benz, Aimee Lalonde-Norman, Robert Leonerd, Chris Cynard, LaReina Wheeler, Patrick Smithbauer, Khalil Ligion, Donna Stallings, Tim Westerdale, Robert E. Mattler, Sandra Turner-Handy, Ahmina Maxey, Eric Candela, Julio Bateau, Andrew Sokoly.

Minutes recorded by Sr. Correspondent/Robert Mattler, Esq. LEED AP BD&C ([www.GreeningDetroit.com](http://www.GreeningDetroit.com))

Meeting not captured on audio-tape or film.

Meeting lead by: Councilman Scott Benson

### **I. Welcome**

### **II. General Introductions**

### **III Zero Waste Detroit Presentation-Sandra Turner-Handy, Ahmina Maxey**

ZWD is a coalition of over 20 organizations who have been a watchdog of the Detroit Incinerator Plant, among others, advocating for recycling instead of incineration. ZWD motivated city council to move toward recycling by initiating 2 pilot programs. ZWD holds the Detroit Incinerator Plant accountable to the community.

3 Focuses on their mission:

1. Focus on recycling opportunities in Detroit; 2. Do work around environmental justice and 3. reduce impact of climate change.

ZWD advocated for 7 yrs. to increase recycling opportunities and pushed for a citywide curbside recycling program, which just now is coming to fruition.

Much conversation centered around Southwest Detroit and all the plants that are emitting foul odors and are major contributors to air pollution.

ZWD very involved and works with Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition

ZWD involved and participates on Detroit Climate Action Collaborative;

ZWD involved and participates on Detroit Environmental Agenda;

ZWD involved and participates - Governor's Recycling Stakeholder Group

\*\*Detroit has the lowest rate of recycling than anywhere else in the state.

What Can You Do?

Enroll in the city's "Detroit Recycles";

Encourage your organization members to enroll in the Det. recycling program;

Volunteer to host an event and have ZWD speak at the event;

Become an advocate for ZWD and help get the message out of a cleaner Detroit.

[www.detroitrecycles.org](http://www.detroitrecycles.org)    [www.zerowastedetroit.org](http://www.zerowastedetroit.org)

Councilman Benson: Likes pain point associated with holding up tax credits to these companies for them to conduct certain activities in order to get funds released. ZWD has held up access of tax credit for Detroit's incinerator plant unless they resolve the violations issues. Financial pain promotes compliance. Lots of leverage there as agreed upon by some members of the audience. This same strategy needs to be implemented by ZWD and their coalition members in southwestern part of the city.

Action Item: Create bi-lingual advocacy collateral marketing piece for residents to call MDEQ if they smell foul odors, have other complaints with air quality, etc.; Also need to implement program to teach residents to call in SW Detroit when they see, smell or hear about odors or other forms of pollution. Finally, ZWD and their coalition needs to educate MDEQ how to respond to complaints from non-English speaking residents and to create a program in which to be more responsive to the area residents.

Request for Councilman Benson to reach out to Councilmember Raquel Castañeda-López, who represents the residents in that part of Detroit. Helpful if letter comes from Councilman Benson's office to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) about the request for a more responsive agency to the Southwestern Detroit community at large.

ZWD will be proactive on this front and come back next month to the Green Task Force to talk and provide an update on any progress.

#### **IV. Subcommittee Update and Discussion**

##### **Subcommittee: Incorporating Resiliency, Sustainability & Environmental Justice into Detroit's Master Plan**

##### **Sandra Yu, Sr. Mgr. for Strategic Initiatives, Detroiters Working For Environmental Justice**

Looking at what other cities have done. Looking at concepts, some already captured into Detroit Future City's Master Plan. We will be refining the list over next couple of meetings. Talked how master plan can be used in the city for guiding capital improvement budgets, assessing Detroit development, economic development strategy .... All this can be guided by our master plan. Opportunity to improve on a policy tool to be used more effectively in the city.

Next meeting: Nov. 19th (3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. of November)

##### **Subcommittee: Blue/Green Infrastructure Subcommittee Report**

##### **Melissa Damaschke, Great Lakes Program Director, Sierra Club**

Meeting format changed for the group recently; More hands on learning about existing/proposed projects.

Sam Lovell, FROG Project Ford Rouge project. Includes some blue-green infrastructure in the design phase of project.

Mapping of green infrastructure projects. No tool to understand where the green infrastructure projects are located or their function. Talking about mapping them into a central database. Our community needs to celebrate we are doing a lot of good things in this area. Work with these groups that already exist. Thanks to Council member Benson we presented the Water Agenda in front of the Detroit City Council. Discussed the specific work and specific conversation on stormwater (sw).

The subcommittee sees 2 barriers now: SW standards not there yet; 2<sup>nd</sup> barrier is that green infrastructure seen as the exception and not the norm. Tetra Tech has contract with DWSD to implement their green infrastructure program. Reviewing city codes and ordinances regarding SW and green infrastructure. Hope to have Tetra Tech come to our November subcommittee meeting to present their review and possibly in front of full GTF meeting in January 2015.

Took tour of green infrastructure sites in the city recently. Mostly in mid-town and north end area to see what businesses and residential groups have done with green infrastructure projects thus far. Next meeting after that was a virtual tour with video and pictures for those not at the live tour earlier in the month.

Detroit Future City: Received grant for open space network. The subcommittee hopes blue-green infrastructure is included in the plan. Follow-up meeting to discuss and see what's involved with the grant.

MOU: DWSD & Building, Safety, Engineering & Environmental Department (BSEED) on SW Detroit coordination. Exciting to see cross collaboration between different departments begin to work together on this idea.

Members of the subcommittee will be speaking to engineering firms on the water agenda.

Next Mtg. Tues Nov 18, 2014 1-3 pm. Gary Wozniak from Recovery Park will present on some green infrastructure projects on the east side.

**V. Remaining 2014 Meetings:** Nov 20<sup>th</sup> 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm (Sal Stabile will chair the last meeting of the year).

#### **VI. Good of the Order –**

- No recycling service started on the east side. Only 200 residents signed up so far. Rizzo's status response to Benson: Waiting for public works dept. to get the word out.

- Benson ask: ZWD to get in front of community groups for a Nov. tour
- Melissa: Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> workshop Use less water in home. 2727 Second Ave. 6-7:30 pm
- Regional BSEED- Received Job Force Work Force Grant. Lead abatement and asbestos abatement program for workers to get jobs on blight removal.
- Councilman Benson had a chance to go to New Orleans with Walker Energy and learn about New Orleans' efforts on stormwater, green infrastructure, energy savings and the like. They are close to a new stormwater ordinance. They are far ahead of us but also started out in dire straits.
- Councilman Benson spoke to Tom Lewand about GTF Water Agenda and MOU with City of Detroit and he's going to be moving it forward again. Committed to start working through it and get a resolution from City Council. Councilman Benson will be working on this moving forward.
- Go to Facebook page, use and keep it up. Let's post Water Agenda to the Green Task Force Facebook page. Andrew the admin for now so send him info. to post.

**\*\* NO Meeting in December \*\***

**NEXT MEETING: Thursday, Nov 20th 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm - MSU  
Detroit Center, 3408 Woodward Ave. Detroit MI 48201 (313) 578-9700**

\*\*\*\*\* **END** \*\*\*\*\*

