



**Sustainability Committee Minutes**

**Thursday March 10, 2022**

**8:00 A.M.**

**Via Zoom Pursuant to Ordinance No. 22-02  
and Resolution No. 22-03, enacted January 10, 2022.**

Members Present: Nancy Moore, Committee Chair, Council Member  
Sean P. Malone, Council Member  
Anne Williams, Council Member  
Shanna Keown, Citizen Member  
Julia Larouche, Citizen Member  
Norman Robbins, Citizen Member  
Jeff Isaacs, Ex Officio, Shaker Heights City School Board

Others Present: David E. Weiss, Mayor  
Jeri E. Chaikin, Chief Administrative Officer  
Michael Peters, Sustainability Coordinator  
William Ondrey Gruber, Law Director  
Patricia Speese, Director of Public Works  
Christian Maier, Department of Public Works  
Kyle Krewson, Director of Building & Housing  
Kim Brewster Shefelton, Chagrin River Watershed Partners  
Joe Ciuni, GPD  
Jessica Looper, GPD  
Ivan Valentic, GPD  
Jonathon Keller, Shaker Heights Public Library  
Barbara Bradley, League of Women Voters  
Matt Burkhart, Stormwater & Green Space Subcommittee Member

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Nancy Moore at 8:00 A.M.

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**Approval of the February 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

It was moved by Anne Williams and seconded by Sean Malone that the minutes of the February 10, 2022 meeting be approved as recorded; unanimously passed.

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**Recommendation for Energized Community Grant Agreement**

The City is eligible for a grant from the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) in the amount of \$36,258 as part of NOPEC’s Energized Community Grant program. The City has received this grant for the past several years and relates to our participation in the electricity Community Choice

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Aggregation program. The amount is based on the number of accounts enrolled in the program. The proceeds of the grant are to be used for an energy efficiency program benefiting the City. The proceeds of this grant is being allocated to the new systems in City Hall supporting the former Fire Station space that is now the home of the Building & Housing Department.

To be eligible for the grant, a grant agreement is required and the Committee was asked to recommend to City Council approval to enter into it.

Questions included a clarification on the implications of entering into the agreement and how projects are chosen as the beneficiary of the grant. The projects are recommended by Public Works who identifies an applicable energy efficiency project. Another question was about the timing for completion of City Hall renovations (May for Building & Housing and Economic Development) and this was addressed by Director Speese.

The motion to recommend that the City enter into the grant agreement was made by Anne Williams, seconded by Sean Malone, and unanimously passed.

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### **Stormwater Code Revisions - Presentation**

The Sustainability Committee was joined by members of the City's Public Works Department, the City Engineer and his GPD colleagues, and a representative of the Chagrin River Watershed Partners for a presentation on updates to the City's Stormwater Code. The presentation (which can be accessed on the City Agenda Center) discussed the context for the changes, the history of the code, and the suggested changes.

The importance of these revisions was outlined by Committee Chair Nancy Moore who provided an overview of the City's location within the Doan Brook Watershed, the critical aspects of protecting Lake Erie, and the changes in the environment – such as impervious surfaces – that impact water quality. The code revisions describe how the City will protect, preserve, and restore the watershed.

Law Director William Gruber provided context for the presentation, including the process for review and approval of the revisions. Thanks were extended to the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership and Chagrin River Watershed Partners for their review and guidance. The City Departments of Public Works and Building and Housing have worked with the City's engineering firm, GPD, on the process. Director Gruber noted that stormwater is not processed in a facility but is directed into the Doan Brook and through other means into Lake Erie, underscoring the importance of this code. The process started in 2017 with ongoing meetings among the collaborators and incorporating updates from the Ohio EPA.

The GPD team shared a presentation that included background, permit requirements, and a comparison of existing and proposed ordinances. There are two permits: general construction and general discharge permit. These are typically updated every five years. The General Construction Permit controls discharges associated with construction projects – generally sites over 1 acre of disturbance (as regulated by the EPA and Clean Water Act). The contractor sends a Notice of Intent at the start of a project and a Notice of Termination at the end of the project. Water Quality Volume calculations have changed, along with some of the Best Management Practices. Changes also include

GIS mapping (coordinated with Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District) and post-construction requirements.

The changes from the existing to the proposed ordinances include a change in definition from Land Disturbing Activities to Soil Disturbing Activities (including clearing and stump removal, changes in Earth's surface, filling of wetlands), moving from one to three separate sets of regulation, commercial and industrial sites of any size are included (residential over 1 acre), and riparian and wetland setbacks.

Next steps include a final review by GPD, the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership, Chagrin River Watershed Partners, the Safety and Public Works Committee, and City Council. Once approved the Director of Public Works issues the new regulations.

Questions included the timeline for next steps (April), why small parcels are not required to get permits (Director's discretion, they still have to follow erosion and sediment control), additional time for review by Council (work session to be scheduled), and how climate change impacts were incorporated into the process (calculation factors, requirements can be changed without requiring a new ordinance).

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### **Subcommittee Updates**

Stormwater & Greenspace (Julia Larouche)

- Grow Not Mow – Site 1 (Courtland and South Park Blvds) will have a community planting day on April 30<sup>th</sup> from 10am until 1pm; grants have been pursued for Site 2 (Lee Road and South Park Blvd) for future planning. Sites 3 and 4 were presented by Matt Burkhart:
  - Site 3 is an area around a heritage tree (a White Oak estimated at 200+ years) along the southern shore of Lower Lake; the plan is to eliminate mowing around the tree to reduce damage to surface roots, reduce soil compaction, and allow insects to complete their lifecycle over the seasons. Future planting could help to delineate the protected area with understory shrubs.
  - Site 4 is a parcel across from the Middle School along Shaker Boulevard; in planning stages with current request to reduce the frequency of mowing. This will reduce emissions, labor costs, and soil compaction.
- Looking into methods to encourage the transition from gas to electric landscaping equipment.

Renewable Energy (Norman Robbins)

- Planning for solar home tour over the summer, with marketing at events throughout the summer to drive interest.
- Dominion has agreed to provide a code for Shaker Heights residents for the Dominion home energy audit; working on ways to encourage smart thermostat option (\$75) as part of this program, potentially through a reimbursement
- Looking at energy conservation messaging around driving a gasoline vehicle – avoiding jack rabbit starts, going 5 mph less – these can add up to 30 percent savings; difficult as it is a behavioral change.

Shaker Youth LEEDs / High School Advisory Group (Shanna Keown)

- EcoChallenge starts April 1st - following up on the successful EcoChallenge from last year, the subcommittee is working with local businesses and partners
- Sharing social media posts is very helpful, working on a newsletter that can be shared

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**Old/New Business**

- The RFP for the Community Choice Electric Aggregation program was distributed February 23<sup>rd</sup> with responses requested March 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Earth Day coming up in April – Drive Electric Earth Day is April 23<sup>rd</sup> (this is not Touch a Truck as reported, it is September 24<sup>th</sup>)
- April 6<sup>th</sup> presentation on climate change by Shaker Heights High School graduate David Pogue to present in collaboration with the Shaker Heights Public Library (location is Shaker Heights Middle School)

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 A.M. The next meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2022 at 8:00am.



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Michael Peters  
Sustainability Coordinator