

Sustainability Committee

January 8, 2025

Present: Bob Fennell, Cindy Dienemann Hekking, Nancy Spitler, Eunice Lehmacher, Reeta Singh, Andrew Evans

Absent: Elaine Richardson (excused), Mary Hendrix

Chair Reeta Singh called the meeting to order.

City: Tony Tidwell, Chris White

Approval of Previous Minutes

Eunice Lehmacher made the motion and Andrew seconded to approved the minutes from the last meeting; unanimous approval.

Committee Housekeeping

Andrew Evans made a motion to accept Mary Hendrix's resignation; Eunice Lehmacher seconded; unanimous approval.

With Mary leaving the committee, the position of secretary is open. Reeta nominated Nancy Spitler as secretary; Bob Fennell seconded; unanimous approval.

Subcommittee reports and discussion

NWF Wildlife Certification: Cindy Hekking, Nancy Spitler, Andrew Evans, Chris White. The subcommittee had a Zoom meeting on 12/18, brainstorming about how to interest homeowners in getting their yards certified. Chris White is working on a Facebook page and working with Clemson Downs. Cindy Hekking is gathering contact info for neighborhood HOAs and service organizations. Also looking at getting some of the city parks certified. Andrew Evans suggested scheduling a walk, possibly Green Crescent Trail, and promoting certification. Chris has submitted administrative portions for certification points.

Energy Efficiency: Cindy Hekking, Bob Fennell, Rita Singh and Eunice. Eunice Lehmacher has reached out to some state agencies about possible sources of funding to follow up on the sustainability audit of city buildings.

Tree Preservation: Andrew Evans spoke with folks in forestry and developers and would like to explore changing our tree preservation policy to be more in line with Charleston. Andrew would like to bring back a proposed draft for the March meeting. There is a tree fund that includes money from developers who are not able to save trees or replace trees on their development. We're planning on asking Nathan Woods to provide a flyer on how homeowners can protect their trees in perpetuity. Cindy Hekking to draft an email to go to neighborhoods and other citizens.

Staff Report

Tony Tidwell highlighted a few things on the goals and accomplishments: Cathy Robinson's work with native plants; work on Berkeley Orchard and using that space as a demonstration space for what sustainable landscapes can be. Also, Tony complimented his staff for getting training this year in areas that will be very beneficial to the city. There were 1088 trees added to tree inventory this year; almost all planted by volunteers and students. Crew collected 2032 lbs. of litter off of green spaces, right of ways,

parks. 2300 lbs last year, 2800 lbs. the year before. 423 volunteers participated in Friends of the Parks in 2024. Most of those volunteers are students.

Tony also highlighted Twelve Mile Park, which is its own department. Scout Troop 235 is coming to install a trail around the crown of the hill. Will include signage identifying species. This is an Eagle Scout project.

Open Discussion/New Business

Reeta suggested committee members look at the Greenville sustainability report.

Eunice heard from Chad Carson (Green Crescent Trails) that city and university are undertaking a study, "Safe streets for all." Forming a committee; looking for broad representation.

Eunice wanted to discuss having every other meeting on Zoom as a sustainability initiative (not currently allowed by City).

Request to put Green Crescent trail projects on the agenda next month. GreenCrescentTrail.com.

Eunice would like to, at some point in the future, get all the various sustainability groups in Clemson get together and share goals and objectives.

Suggestion for agenda items for February:

Tree ordinance

Green Crescent

Zoom meeting

Gathering with other sustainability groups.

Eunice made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Cindy. Unanimous vote in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.