

Environmental Stewardship Committee Meeting Summary

March 3, 2022, 3:00 - 5:00 PM



Attendance

Present: Anthony Martin, Randy Olsen, Mac Martin, Tasha Johnson, Mia Hocking, Simon Christensen, Tony Varela, Naim Ferris, Jeff Pazdalski, Vinod Singh, Tina Bailey, Laura Trunk, Hannah Cruz, Kieran Sikdar, Troy Gagliano, Nina Carlson, Allison Puch Cahuich, and staff: Peter Brandom, Dacia Bakkum, Jason Robertson.

Absent: Audrey O'Brien, Fawn Bergen, Tina Chang, Justin Green, Makena Krause, Matthew Barnett, Steve Callaway, Tom Arnold

Guest Presenters: Lacey Townsend, Briita Pajunas

Welcome + Council Updates

Councilor Martin, Chair provided updates on recent Council discussions and activities. Highlights:

- Council-adopted priorities include supporting HESC actions/environmental stewardship
- City to partner with Washington County on a new, local transit study
- Created state's first youth apprenticeship program
- Used ARPA funds for supportive employment for cleanup work for formerly houseless sites
- Refined federal spending plan for \$18M that was granted to City related to COVID relief
- New TSP was passed in first reading
- Approved Nueva Esperanza on NE 53rd Ave
- ~150 acres new residential area concept plan for South Witch Hazel area

Marin also introduced new HESC members Naim Ferris (Youth Advisory Council) and Simon Christensen (City of Hillsboro) and led a round of introductions.

Member Spotlight: Tualatin Soil + Water Conservation District

Lacey Townsend and Briita Pajunas provided an overview of the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District, including origins, role and key initiatives, including those connected to Hillsboro Environmental Stewardship goals. Highlights:

- US States were directed to allow formation of local districts in 1937, as a strategy to prevent and respond to events like the Oklahoma “dust bowl” immediately preceding; Tualatin was formed in 1955; water conservation was added to district responsibilities 1973
- Aim is to conserve resources on private lands
- Used to be Washington County district, one of 45 in Oregon
- Operates as Special District but also part of State Government
- Tech, financial assistance and education programs
- Programs: rural, forestry, urban, habitat, invasive species, conservation education
- Priority areas: clean & abundant water, healthy soil, food & farms, thriving habitats, invasive species management, resilient forests
- Backyard habitat certification program: updated statistics for Hillsboro are 67 site assessments, 21 certifications and 38 rain gardens since we began in 2020
- Example of yard transformation from bamboo and pavement to rain garden
- Described Glencoe Swale, which was enrolled into urban habitat restoration program
- Grants and funding program: TWIG (smaller, more flexible); TREE (larger and longer term, with 25% match); conservation education grant; one other
- Example TWIG grant with Devape, a nonprofit, removed large hardscape area at local organization
- Brookwood Crossing HOA doing water reclamation/use reduction project
- A Hillsboro now, getting TREE grant for downtown and JB Wetlands restoration and tree planting
- Lots of webinars and virtual workshops tualatinswcd.org
- Also presented about new Watershed website, can bring back to this group when it’s launched

City Natural Resources Update

Peter Brandom reviewed City progress on several environmental stewardship fronts, including:

- Pollinators/Bee City USA
- NWF Monarch Pledge
- Tree City USA
- Natural Resource Baseline and Peer Capacity Review

Additional details are included in the attached PPT presentation.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Goal Setting

Brandom outlined the need to establish Hillsboro GHG reduction targets and outlined peer community/state/organization goals. He said the main sources of GHGs in the US and Oregon are related to transportation fuels, electricity generation and industrial processes. Recent data suggest climate change impacts are occurring faster and more harmfully than previously imagined. However, there is still time to stave off the worst outcomes if we act now. Additional details are provided in the attached PPT presentation.

Notable GHG reduction targets adopted by peer entities:

- State of Oregon: Reduce by 80% by 2080
- OCPP: Reduce by 80% by 2050
- Hillsboro Internal Operations: Reduce by 80% by 2030 (and try to get the rest through offsets)
- Beaverton: Reduce by 100% by 2050

Current Hillsboro recommendations:

Consider reducing by 80% or 100% by 2050, BUT include interim targets to focus action/make corrections

Feedback:

- Yes to interim targets. Good to set long-term goal, but need to focus on action NOW.
- We need to explain what “producing ‘x’ pounds of GHG “means” – people need to understand how their behaviors/decisions have direct impacts on our future
- How do we calculate pass-through traffic (i.e., people that don’t live here, but drive through/emit)?
- How do we measure/regulate/educate about consumption (energy use-related impacts)?
- Consider tracking transit ridership rather than vehicle emissions for progress.
- If replacing City fleet with electric or low-emission vehicles creates GHG through production process, consider re-purposing City vehicles and donating to low-income to offset impact.
- Focus on housing/commercial and require new construction to be environmentally-friendly while also investing in retrofits.

Member Announcements/Public Comment

- Jason Robertson said the Annual Hillsboro 2035 Partner Survey will run April 04 through May 02, 2022. He previewed the online form and offered to copy/paste responses for those pressed for time. He reminded the Committee that the survey is the primary vehicle for capturing and reporting progress to the broader public.
- Peter Brandom noted that it may be possible to hold the next HESC meeting in-person given policy change in mask mandates. Doodle Poll to follow.