



**New Albany Sustainability Advisory Board  
August 9, 2023 Minutes**

The Sustainability Advisory Board met for the Board’s regularly scheduled session at the New Albany Village Hall, 99 W. Main St, and was called to order by Mr. Schumacher at 6:35 PM.

Those answering roll call:

Mr. Brian Filiatraut, Chair	Absent
Mr. Charles Schumacher, Vice-Chair	Present
Ms. Catherine Duffy, Secretary	Present
Mr. Peter Barnes	Present
Ms. Laura Gallo	Present
Mr. Steven Conway	Absent
Mr. Scott Harrold	Absent
Ms. Lily McGraw (Student Member)	Present
Mr. Kasey Kist (Council Liaison)	Present

Staff members present: Mike Barker, Director of Public Service; Marylou Hoessle, City Forester; and Anna van der Zwaag, Planner II.

Mr. Schumacher asked if there were any corrections to the June 14, 2023 Sustainability Advisory Board meeting minutes.

No corrections were noted.

Ms. Duffy moved to approve the June 14, 2023 Sustainability Advisory Board meeting minutes. Seconded by Ms. Gallo and the Sustainability Advisory Board voted with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 0 abstention to approve the minutes.

Mr. Schumacher asked if there were any additions or corrections to the agenda.

Mr. Schumacher requested to move the other business items before the work plan on the agenda. No objections were noted.

Mr. Schumacher asked if there were any visitors wishing to speak on items not on the agenda.

Director of Public Service, Mike Barker, introduced visitors from Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District (FCSW), including Jennifer Fish and Josh Garver.

Ms. Fish stated one of her goals is to connect with more sustainability groups around central Ohio because stormwater programs and stormwater management is sustainability.

Ms. Fish stated FCSW is the hub of natural resource conservation in Franklin County. A lot of their programs are focused on stormwater, but more broadly natural resources as a whole.

Ms. Fish provided examples of work they do, including providing education from schools and youth to adult community backyards programs.

Ms. Fish stated the FCSW agreement with New Albany includes the community backyards program, and if residents participate, they can receive a \$100 rebate for native plants, compost bins, or rain barrels by participating in the Community Backyards program. Residents can also receive up to a \$250 rebate for a rain garden.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated there is a Community Backyards Workshop scheduled for September 27 at 6 PM at the Heit Center.

Ms. Fish stated they also have a program to encourage people to pick up pet waste.

Ms. Fish encouraged New Albany to utilize FCSW resources and educational materials.

Ms. Duffy asked how FCSW works with municipalities.

Ms. Fish stated New Albany is one of their bigger partners and their goal is to help the city reach all of the requirements for the stormwater permit. This includes training for the public service department, assisting with construction sites, and other permit compliance points.

Ms. Duffy asked if there are ways to work together to do more than meet the minimum requirements.

Ms. Fish stated that New Albany is currently going above and beyond the minimum requirements, but there are always opportunities to do more and FCSW are always willing to do more.

Mr. Schumacher stated the Board has discussed opportunities for native plant offerings and could be a good connection to work with FCSW.

## **Other Business**

### ***Upper Arlington Curbside Compost Pilot***

Ms. van der Zwaag provided information on the participation, funding, and feedback for the Upper Arlington Curbside Compost Pilot Program, as requested by the Board at June's meeting. Information was provided by Katy Rees at Upper Arlington.

Councilmember Kist asked who operates the Upper Arlington program.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated GoZERO currently collects Upper Arlington's compost. They also have a drop-off program they still collect as well.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated Bexley also has a curbside program and utilizes Earth Peak Organics. Bexley currently charges residents via a combined refuse rate to offset the cost of this program.

Mr. Barnes asked why Upper Arlington would keep a drop-off program at the same time they started the curbside program.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated that was because the city was phasing in the curbside program by neighborhood, and their grant did not cover the cost for city-wide services.

Ms. Duffy asked if Upper Arlington residents have noted any issues with the compost trucks coming through the neighborhoods.

Ms. Joly stated she has not noticed that as a resident. She hasn't noticed or heard anyone mention that.

Mr. Barnes asked if there was a way to calculate the cost to expand to a curbside program and the group discussed the possible cost differences between the two programs.

Ms. Duffy pointed out that logistically changing over to a pickup food waste program for New Albany would only make sense if the change would result in additional participants above the current 324 households participating.

There was some discussion on gathering more information through a survey of registered households to determine their interest in curbside compost pickup and willingness to pay for it. Further exploration of options with the waste pickup provider was also suggested. The next steps will be discussed in upcoming meetings.

## **Business**

### ***2024 Priorities Discussion***

Ms. van der Zwaag thanked all Board members for completing the survey and expressed appreciation for their valuable feedback. The survey was organized based on the five broad recommendations outlined in the strategic plan.

Ms. van der Zwaag summarized the feedback received from the survey and presented a draft work plan based on the survey results, categorizing actions into core activities, ongoing programs, and new programs. They invited feedback from the attendees.

- **Core Activities:** These include ongoing initiatives such as compost program, seasonal recycling or compost events, and Earth Day to Arbor Day planning.
- **Ongoing Programs:** The board will continue its work on these initiatives throughout the remainder of 2023 and into 2024. These include the Student Leaders in Sustainability Pilot Grant, the invasive species trade-in program, a native landscaping grant, Sustainable2050, and a presence at the Farmers Market.
- **New Programs:** These programs have emerged from the survey feedback or previous Board meetings, including native landscaping education, compost program expansion, goals for alternative fuel vehicles or electric vehicles, a sustainability webpage, and relationship building with HOAs.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated there is a household hazardous waste event scheduled for October 21, 2023 from 8 am to 12 pm.

Ms. van der Zwaag asked for feedback on the draft work plan.

Mr. Schumacher stated it feels like there is a nice blend of work. He stated he thinks it would be beneficial to have smaller work groups to keep traction moving on things.

Councilmember Kist stated he thinks that's how the IDEA Panel meets.

Ms. Joly stated in practice, that hasn't worked out as it was planned for the IDEA Panel. She stated staff can explore this option and there could not be a quorum present at those meetings. She suggested every other month having a more focused work session.

Mr. Schumacher stated there are some subjects that people are more interested in working on and can be more helpful and contribute to that work.

Ms. Duffy stated she likes that question and is interested in doing more work to get these things done too, especially on the topic of commercial compost program. She does not want to meet monthly with no work and progress being made between meetings.

Ms. Joly stated she thinks that could be a good option for larger projects like expanding the compost program. If there are Board members that are available to meet during the day to help progress these projects.

Mr. Barnes stated he thinks the next step is to determine how to progress the Board's work to the next level. He would be willing to be part of a subgroup or come to extra meetings if needed. The commercial compost program idea stood out to him. He suggested picking 2-3 other projects beyond the ongoing items that the Board aims to work on in the next year. He also likes the idea of the invasive tree/shrub trade-in program.

There was a discussion on the logistics of creating a work plan for 2024 and the budget process.

Ms. Joly stated it seems like the commercial compost program is something the Board is interested in pursuing next year and it will likely

The Board discussed the need for a placeholder initiative in the budget to allocate funds, even if the specific program is not finalized yet.

Ms. Joly stated next month staff will provide an update on the 2023 budget.

It was suggested to consider reaching out to professionals who specialize in commercial composting for guidance. If there would be a working group or subcommittee established for the commercial composting program, it would probably be important to identify case studies, set up Teams meetings, and identify what they have done and who they have worked with.

Mr. Barnes stated he likes the idea of a native landscaping demonstration project that would include an educational component where people could come see it.

Mr. Schumacher suggested having the public service department overlap with the intent of the SAB and have the SAB coordinate more with existing city operations.

Based on the conversation, it was summarized that in addition to the core and ongoing programs, the priorities for 2024 would include expanding the compost program and native landscaping as the two overarching goals.

The Board discussed the importance of educational moments during meetings. It was agreed that educational moments should not be limited to external speakers; board members could also share their expertise. These educational moments should be kept to 10-15 minutes and not an hour or longer.

The Board expressed interest in exploring a variety of sustainability topics beyond their primary focus areas with these educational moments.

The Student Leaders in Sustainability Pilot Grant timeline was discussed and it will be opened for applications in the beginning of the school year.

The Board also discussed the remaining items on the 2023 work plan, which includes the sustainable or native landscaping grant and an invasive tree/shrub trade-in program.

It was mentioned that the native landscaping grant could be used to support local organizations in starting pilot projects related to native landscaping. The timeline for launching the grant was discussed.

The Board considered the trade-in program and discussed the possibility of partnering with a local organization like FCSW. The trade-in program is more feasible in the time remaining in 2023 to implement this program. The launch of the trade-in program could coincide with the FCSW community backyards workshop in New Albany later in September.

There was a suggestion to offer vouchers instead of live plants to offer flexibility for planting season.

The Board discussed two upcoming events: the household hazardous waste event on October 21 and the MORPC Summit on Sustainability on October 26.

### **Poll Members for Comment**

Mr. Schumacher asked if there were any other comments from the Board.

Ms. Gallo stated the compost program at their school is starting with the school year.

Mr. Schumacher motioned to adjourn the meeting with a second from Ms. Gallo. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.