



**New Albany Sustainability Advisory Board
November 8, 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. Filiatraut at 6:31 PM.

Those answering roll call:

Mr. Brian Filiatraut, Chair	Present
Mr. Charles Schumacher, Vice-Chair	Present
Ms. Catherine Duffy, Secretary	Present
Mr. Peter Barnes	Present
Ms. Laura Gallo	Present
Mr. Steven Conway	Present
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. Filiatraut asked if there were any corrections to the October 11, 2023 Sustainability Advisory Board meeting minutes.

No corrections were noted.

Mr. Schumacher moved to approve the October 11, 2023 Sustainability Advisory Board meeting minutes. Seconded by Ms. Gallo and the Sustainability Advisory Board voted with 6 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 0 abstention to approve the minutes.

Mr. Filiatraut asked if there were any additions or corrections to the agenda. None were noted.

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

Mr. Joe Laszlo (6813 Summersweet Dr) spoke to the Sustainability Advisory Board about his concerns that his yard waste was not being composted by Rumpke.

Mr. Barker explained how the yard waste and other waste programs are operated in New Albany. Mr. Barker emphasized that, in terms of recycling, all materials placed at the curb for recycling are being taken to Rumpke’s recycling facility. He explained that the leaves collected by the city during the fall leaf collection is taken to McCullough’s Landscaping for composting. Mr. Barker stated to the best of his knowledge, all city yard waste pickup is composted.

Ms. Duffy thanked Mr. Laszlo for attending and voicing his concerns. She suggested a first step for action is reaching out to Rumpke to verify what is happening with the yard waste.

Councilmember Kist asked for clarification on what is stated on the website.

Mr. Laszlo stated the website implies the yard waste is being composted; however, the Rumpke employees operating the truck on collection day say the waste is not being composted. He stated all waste is removed via one truck.

There was some discussion on the number of trucks that residents see. Councilmember Kist stated his neighborhood sees three trucks – one for trash, one for recycling, and one for yard waste. Mr. Laszlo stated his neighborhood has only seen two trucks.

Mr. Barker confirmed he will reach out to Rumpke and follow up with Mr. Laszlo directly.

Mr. Filiatraut asked if there were other members of the public who wanted to speak.

Ms. Jennifer Lopez (4289 Vaux Link) spoke about her concerns about tree clearings and the need for tree preservation. She expressed her desire to have more people show support for tree preservation and requested more information on city requirements on when it is okay to remove trees.

Councilmember Kist thanked Ms. Lopez for coming and sharing her concerns. He stated he does know that the city has some policies in place regarding tree preservation and that developers often are asked to increase their setbacks if there is an existing tree stand on the edge of the property. He stated the city could do a better job at communicating the tree preservation work that is ongoing.

Mr. Barker summarized the tree impacts related to the Market Street Extension project, which Ms. Lopez had expressed concerns about. He stated there is a very robust planting plan for the area surrounding the new regional stormwater basin, including 232 trees ranging in size from 3-8” caliper. 166 new trees will also be planted at the pickleball facility at the public service facility. Mr. Barker stated that the forester team has made tremendous progress over the last few years with street tree maintenance, which is extremely important. He stated in 2022, the forestry team pruned just under 1900 street trees, while to-date in 2023, the city has pruned just under 2700 street trees. This will help reduce factors that might lead to these trees needing to be cut down in the future.

Ms. Hoessle stated the city does have tree protection zones that are enforced. When a resident wants to remove trees in those zones, Ms. Hoessle does a site visit and makes sure the tree is experiencing certain criteria before it can be removed (dead, dying, or dangerous hazard).

Mr. Schumacher asked about HOA requirements.

Mr. Barker stated any deed restrictions established by HOAs related to tree removal/replacement are in addition to any city code.

Mr. Barnes asked about streams and if there are regulations regarding stream protection.

Mr. Barker explained the process for identifying streams on a property that someone wants to develop, including the determination of if the stream is a jurisdictional waterway. The city highly regulates a stream corridor protection zone.

Educational Moment

The Board discussed the article from the Columbus Dispatch called “Food Waste Problem is Growing Worse.”

Ms. van der Zwaag stated the article was aligned with a recent meeting she attended hosted by SWACO to update the regional Food Waste Action Plan. She mentioned connecting with Sara Gallagher from the Worthington Green Team who might make a great speaker in the coming months.

Mr. Filiatraut stated the Residents for a More Sustainable Ohio group might also be a good forum to become involved in seeing what other communities are doing.

Councilmember Kist stated the article pointed out that 40% of the food waste comes from households, but the other 60% comes from businesses. That's another reason to focus on the business side of things going forward. He asked if GoZERO does compost pickup for commercial entities.

Ms. Duffy stated GoZERO does have some larger nationwide contracts.

Ms. Duffy suggested looking into SWACO's waste reduction grants this year to help create a pilot food waste compost program for a few businesses.

Business

Student Leaders in Sustainability Pilot Grant

Ms. van der Zwaag began the items of business by welcoming those present to discuss their projects.

Ms. McGraw introduced the project from the New Albany High School Environmental Club, who wants to spread awareness on the issue of idling. Their plan is to post signs around campus where idling is most common.

Other members of the NAHS Environmental Club stated they also want to create smaller posters for around the school, as well as digital content. They want all members of the club to help create signs, which can be more artistic and include drawings they designed. Other club members stated they don't think students realize the impact that idling has and so this project could make a big difference.

Ms. Duffy thanked the students for coming. She asked if the project would be limited to the high school.

The Environmental Club responded that it will be all over the campus.

Ms. Duffy asked more about the student survey questions and if there would be a pre- and post-project survey that indicates if there was behavior change. She also asked if they had considered reaching out to parents, as well.

The Environmental Club students stated parents would be made aware via the parent newsletter, and they will be in the parent pickup line as well.

Mr. Schumacher asked if they are attempting to measure quantitatively before and after the project is implemented.

Students stated the plan was more outreach and education oriented.

Mr. Conway stated it might be worth reaching out to the transportation department to determine if busses are idling or if they shut off the engine.

Mr. Schumacher stated he wants to challenge them to think of other ways to measure the success of the program.

Ms. McGraw asked more about other ways to quantify the success.

Ms. Duffy stated before and after surveys would be a great way to obtain a rough estimate of time spent idling that was reduced by their efforts.

Mr. Filiatraut agreed and stated someone else could do a rough estimate of the number of cars waiting in the pickup line and extrapolate from there.

Mr. Barnes stated he thinks it's a great idea and the most important part will be the signage and advertising. He thinks it will be a meaningful project coming from students. He stated a video could be another great way to push out the information.

The Board expressed their excitement to see what could come out of this project.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated the other project application that was received was from Noelle Griffith and Noelle Foreman who are focusing on increasing the understanding of and engagement in composting in New Albany. Ms. van der Zwaag asked Mr. Barnes to provide his comments since he is a mentor for the project.

Mr. Barnes summarized the project as he understands it and stated he thinks the applicants are organized and responsive.

Ms. Duffy asked if there is a differentiation between signing up through this project compared to signing up normally on the city's website.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated that is a logistical consideration they will think through.

Ms. Gallo asked if they are going to educate the kids prior to sending materials home to the parents.

Mr. Barnes stated he believes that is their plan. He also encouraged them to find ways to reduce other waste such as using reusable snack bags or containers.

Mr. Schumacher moved to approve the application submitted by Noelle Foreman and Noelle Griffith for funding through the Student Leaders in Sustainability Pilot Grant. Seconded by Mr. Filiatraut and the Sustainability Advisory Board voted with 5 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 abstention to approve the application. Mr. Barnes abstained.

Mr. Schumacher moved to approve the application submitted by the NAHS Environmental Club for funding through the Student Leaders in Sustainability Pilot Grant. Seconded by Ms. Gallo and the Sustainability Advisory Board voted with 6 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 0 abstentions to approve the application.

Invasive Species Trade-In Program Update

Ms. van der Zwaag updated the Board on the Invasive Plant Trade-In Program. She stated city staff met with Franklin Soil & Water Conservation District (FSWCD) to discuss the partnership. She stated FSWCD thought this could be a good integration with the existing Community Backyards Program.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated residents would submit their photo with details on the plant being pulled, which can be one from a list provided by the city. City staff and/or FSWCD can vet the submission and issue the \$100 rebate for use at any store. FSWCD suggested keeping it to \$100 to be consistent with the other rebates issued via the Community Backyards Program.

Regarding timeline, Ms. van der Zwaag stated the program could be launched early Spring 2024 and FSWCD are interested in helping to promote and create materials for promotion.

Mr. Schumacher stated he would like to approach the HOAs and larger yard care companies so they are all on the same page as the city.

Mr. Barnes asked if there is a limit to the number of rebates. Ms. van der Zwaag stated FSWCD suggested \$100 rebate per season.

Household Hazardous Waste Recap

Ms. van der Zwaag summarized the household hazardous waste event. Over 200 cars drove through, recycling about 3000 cans of paint, gallons of pesticides, insecticides, oil, and aerosols.

Ms. van der Zwaag reported the consultant for the event thought it was well done for a first-time event.

Mr. Conway stated the consultant also mentioned that an earlier/warmer date in the year might help with increasing attendance.

Councilmember Kist asked if the city could combine this event with the e-waste drive. This will be dependent on public service's capacity.

MORPC Summit on Sustainability

Mr. Barnes and Mr. Filiatraut provided a recap on the Summit on Sustainability, highlighting various speakers including the sustainability speaker from Intel and a speaker on developing parks in New York City. Over 650 people attended the event, which could mean growth in future years.

Working Groups

Ms. van der Zwaag stated the city attorney advised that the working groups would need to include less than 3 board members and be created with a specific purpose and timeline in mind. A board member will also need to report back at each SAB meeting.

The Board discussed what the working group creation would look like, including promoting the group to residents so they have the opportunity to participate.

Mr. Barnes asked if they pursued the recycling ideas discussed by Sam Malek previously would be a separate working group or if there is one larger umbrella.

Mr. Schumacher stated he thought this would be breaking down the larger Board into smaller tasks and working groups and compost would be separate from recycling.

Ms. van der Zwaag suggested sending out a survey to collect feedback on interest, availability, and topics of interest.

Mr. Schumacher suggested that there should be a minimum of two board members on a working group.

Councilmember Kist asked if these meetings would need to be open to the public.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated no, they do not.

Councilmember Kist stated the meetings could then be held virtually or at another location.

Other Business

Ms. van der Zwaag asked if the Board wanted to move forward with a December meeting, as the only agenda item was to vote on the Student Leaders in Sustainability Pilot Grant. Board agreed no meeting was necessary due to a lack of agenda items.

Poll Members for Comment

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

Mr. Schumacher asked if the city can obtain quarterly reports from Rumpke to determine if the compost is resulting in any reduction in waste going to the landfill.

Mr. Barker stated yes, those can be obtained.

Ms. van der Zwaag asked if the schools want to participate in the city's composting dashboard.

Mr. Barnes answered in the affirmative.

Councilmember Kist stated he had a meeting with Craig Moore from the New Albany Community Foundation. They are currently working with a consultant, Bluestone, to create a sustainability plan from both a business park standpoint and also a community standpoint. He stated he will continue to update the Board going forward.

Adjournment

Mr. Filiatraut motioned to adjourn the meeting with a second from Ms. Gallo. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.