

ONEONTA, NEW YORK - MARCH 14, 2012 - 7:00 P.M.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD PG. 1

PRESENT: Chair David Hutchison
Commissioner Tracy Allen
Commissioner Richard Denicore
Commissioner Dale Burrington
Commissioner George Palladino

ABSENT: Commissioner Dan Rorick
Commissioner Lucille Wiggin
Council Member Larry Malone

Chair Hutchison called the regular meeting to order and called the roll.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Without benefit of a motion, the board approved the minutes of the regular meeting held February 8, 2012, as written.

PETITIONERS (limited to comment)

Chair Hutchison recognized Mr. Jonathan Gell and said he may want to join in the discussion later on under New or Old Business.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Hutchison reported on various correspondence regarding upcoming meetings and events, and would make them available for review. He said one of the e-mails received indicated that the city's Finance/Administration Committee discussed and approved a vendor for tree planting and would be sent to the March 20th Common Council meeting for action.

The board held a brief discussion on the proposed project by Mr. Ranieri of a parking lot on East Street that had been approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Chair Hutchison stated if any members of the board would be interested, Sustainable Otsego was trying to get reoriented to where they were before the gas drilling threats and get back into alternative energy in the county. He said there would be a conference on May 5th and he would like to invite somebody from the City of Oneonta to talk about how the city was dealing with retrofitting a lot of its buildings. He said the board was aware that had been happening although the board had not been heavily involved with it. He said the Mayor and the Facilities/Technology/Operations Committee had been involved with it. He asked if there was anybody who wanted to address that group on May 5th.

Commissioner Palladino suggested that Commissioner Rorick be asked to do that because he had brought the hemp issue before the board and that was actually a sustainable issue.

Chair Hutchison stated he may attend the May 5th meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Creek Program [Allen-spring –odd years only]
Tree Program [Hutchison]
Watershed Protection District [Hutchison]
Sustainability Working Group [Allen]

Creek Program [Allen-spring –odd years only]

No report at this time.

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(Report of Officers, etc) continued

Tree Program [Hutchison]

Chair Hutchison recognized Commissioner Denicore for an update.

Commissioner Denicore stated that to date there were about 14 acceptable responses from property owners for the planting of a tree on their property. He said the Chair and he had identified about 12 or 14 median sites for tree plantings and some additional sites for private plantings that letters needed to be sent out for a response.

Chair Hutchison stated there had been about a 30 percent response from property owners and there were a lot of people who did not respond either way. He said they may knock on doors or send follow-up letters and have a notice placed in The Daily Star about the 2nd round of invitations to have a tree planted.

Chair Hutchison stated three proposals were received from independents to do the tree plantings and on March 20th the Common Council would be approving one of the contracts submitted.

Chair Hutchison recognized Commissioner Palladino to update the board on what he had been working on with tree plantings in the Dietz Street parking lot.

Commissioner Palladino stated that Rehab Building Specialist House, a landscape contractor and he walked the Dietz Street parking lot and looked at sites for plantings. He said he used the Google map of the parking lot that Commissioner Denicore sent him. He said conversation was that they should be able to get 8 to 12 trees in the lot and about 5 beds with ornamental grasses although the landscape contractor thought there could be about 20 trees, which was what the illustration showed. He said the city was going to be doing one-third of the lot that runs from Dietz Street to Ford Avenue. He said there was no reason why all the plantings could not be done and milled around them when the lot gets down. He said he believed the money was already approved but not the plan yet.

Commissioner Burrington stated it appeared to him that the city would experience a loss of some parking spaces with these plantings.

Commissioner Palladino stated the illustration showed the parking spaces and the last statement he sent out in an e-mail to the board said no parking places would be eliminated although some would be shortened. He said his idea in the grand scheme of things would be to make those shortened parking spaces electrical. He suggested that when the city does the lot it run electric to those spaces for use by electric cars and have a fee for use of the electricity. He said that would be ideal for the city to be environmentally-friendly. He said that was a city issue separate from the tree plantings but something should be sent to Engineering about it. He said he would like to forward to Engineering Mr. Gell's e-mail to him about it.

The board held a brief discussion on the matter.

Commissioner Palladino stated the illustrated map showing the plan for plantings needed to be sent to Engineering and to the Common Council. He said if the Council needed a presentation on the plan he would be glad to give it to them.

Chair Hutchison stated if the board was in agreement of the plan he said he thought Commissioner Palladino should definitely attend the March 20th Common Council meeting to discuss it if necessary. He said he thought the map should be sent to the Council Members.

Commissioner Palladino stated he thought if 20 trees could be planted in the Dietz Street parking lot he would have solved a major issue for the city.

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Tree Program [Hutchison] continued

The board held a brief discussion on the trees and money for the tree planting program and the parking lot plantings, maintenance and the vendor.

MOTION, made by Commissioner Palladino and seconded by Commissioner Burrington, that the Environmental Board recommends that the City Engineering Department coordinate plantings to improve the Dietz Street lot in accordance with the plan suggested by the board. (Plan attached).

Voting Ayes: Chair Hutchison
Commissioner Allen
Commissioner Burrington
Commissioner Palladino
Commissioner Denicore

Noes: None

Absent: Commissioner Rorick
Commissioner Wiggin

MOTION CARRIED

Chair Hutchison suggested that the motion be sent to the Common Council along with the colored plan indicating the plantings and beds.

Watershed Protection District [Hutchison]

Chair Hutchison stated he had nothing new to report. He said he had sent out the document with the attachment of the map of the watershed to the board from Town Code Enforcement Officer Paul Neske a couple weeks ago. He said he had made several typo corrections in the document and suggestions to Code Enforcement Officer Neske. He said he recently went to that part of the watershed where the city was doing logging which was located north of the reservoir, turn right on Hole Road and at the top of the hill. He said he found a lot of trash including 6 to 8 10-gallon cans of latex paint, quart containers of motor oil and some rusted tires. He said he sent an e-mail to the Mayor, Public Service Supervisor Harrison and Engineering Technician Burton suggesting cleanup.

Sustainability Working Group [Allen]

Commissioner Allen stated he would contact Mark Davies or Donna Vogler of that group to get an update and then he would report to the board.

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Chair Hutchison stated there were none.

UNFINISHED/OLD BUSINESS

Chair Hutchison indicated there was none.

NEW BUSINESS

•Report on Meeting with NYSEDA (NY State Energy Research and Development Authority) looking at programs for homeowners and small businesses/not-for-profit (including Churches) Energy Efficient Financing Program and free energy audits. - Hutchison and Palladino

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(Report on NYSERDA meeting) continued

Chair Hutchison stated Commissioner Palladino and he attended the meeting with NYSERDA along with Engineering Technician Burton and Adrian Kuzminski of Sustainable Otsego who called the meeting as part of Sustainable Otsego. He said he thought it was a fairly useful meeting. He said at the same time of that meeting the city's Engineer was attending a NYSERDA meeting in Albany about solar panels. He said the Engineer would also be talking to NYSERDA about turning methane gas from the Wastewater Treatment Plant to power.

Chair Hutchison suggested that for the April agenda under "Unfinished Business" place the topic of a discussion with churches about energy audits and energy efficient financing program.

Commissioner Allen questioned if that was similarly true for homeowners.

Chair Hutchison responded yes but NYSERDA said that may not be available forever. He said homeowners could call NYSERDA. He said he e-mailed NYSERDA asking for some informational packets but had not received them yet.

Commissioner Palladino stated he would be contacting the Oneonta School District about an energy audit.

•Report on meeting with API American Petroleum Institute - NYS Petroleum Council Workshop on "Hydraulic Fracturing Recommended Practices"- Hutchison

Chair Hutchison stated he attended the NYS Petroleum Council Workshop at the API American Petroleum Institute on recommended practices for hydraulic fracturing. He said the workshop was very informative. He said he found that the people from American Petroleum seemed quite helpful and genuinely interested in looking for correct ways of doing drilling. He said they talked about casings and cement and a lot of technical things that he was interested in.

There being no further business to come before the board, Chair Hutchison adjourned the regular meeting at 8:10 p.m.

JAMES R. KOURY, City Clerk

JRK/pab