

## VILLAGE OF GRAFTON

### SUSTAINABLE GRAFTON AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 17, 2009

The Sustainable Grafton Ad-Hoc Committee meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m. by Chair Rick Flood.

Members present: Rick Flood, Paul Van de Sand, Ginny Plumeau, Laura Weber, Pamela Atterberry, Jim Brunnuquell and Roger Kirgues (4:17 p.m.)

Members absent: John Gassert

Staff/Officials present: Village Administrator Darrell Hofland, Village President Jim Brunnuquell, Director of Public Works/Village Engineer Dave Murphy, and Village Clerk Teri Dylak.

#### HEAR PERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD

None.

#### MINUTES

Motion by Laura Weber, seconded by Pam Atterberry, to approve the May 20, 2009 Sustainable Grafton Ad Hoc Committee meeting minutes, as corrected. Approved unanimously.

#### OLD BUSINESS

##### One-2-Five Energy Management Assessment

Chair Rick Flood stated that the previous recommendation was for the assessment to move forward to the Village Board; however, it was determined that the best route was to coordinate the assessment with Village staff. Committee members will be updated as the process proceeds.

The program assesses current business programs and does a global comparison in at least five areas to help determine where a company can make improvements that will assist in saving energy. The assessment takes approximately 2.5 hours to complete. Ad-Hoc Committee members were invited to attend a session if their schedules allowed. More information on the assessment time and date will be forthcoming.

##### Sustainability Guide Plan.

Chair Flood indicated that the Committee reviewed the Sustainability Guide Plan at last month's meeting. Members were given an assignment to review the plan and determine which section they would like to be responsible for to determine strategies and implementation activities.

Chair Flood indicated that he will review the “Development and Redevelopment” section as well as the “Operations and Maintenance” section.

Roger Kirgues and Paul Van de Sand identified that they would work on the “Energy” section.

Laura Weber and Pam Atterberry will work on the “Education” component of the plan.

Based upon past discussions, John Gassert was assigned the “Transportation” section.

Ginny Plumeau identified that she will tackle “Storm Water Management” and the “Invasive Species Management” sections.

Chair Flood suggested that members be prepared for presentations at the July meeting. Ms. Plumeau stated that she will not be ready to present until August.

Laura Weber stated that she would like to obtain an inventory on what the Village has already completed and the sustainable policies that are currently in place.

Paul Van de Sand briefly reviewed a press release regarding the Village of Bayside being named the “Green Community of the Year”. Bayside was selected for this award based on its progressive efforts in “green” initiatives to enhance the energy efficiency of its facilities and operations, promotion of environmental stewardships in the community, and providing leadership in enhancing environmental friendliness. The criteria include six main focus areas: building, Village operation and procedures, infrastructure, community, regulation and communications. Mr. Van de Sand commented that the work being done by the Village of Grafton in sustainability may position the community to be eligible for this award next year.

Director of Public Works/Village Engineer Dave Murphy informed the Committee that his Department will compile a listing of sustainable items already in place. He also commented that the contractor for the new Municipal Services Facility is looking at LEED criteria. Eligible points and the cost of the LEED certification are being reviewed. It is hoped that the facility be eligible for a Silver certification. Unfortunately, the cost of commissioning a facility is expensive with a potential cost of between \$80,000 and \$120,000.

Mr. Van de Sand suggested that staff shop around for a firm that provides facility review for LEED commissioning. Mr. Murphy responded that three estimates were received regarding the commissioning of the new Municipal Services Facility.

Chair Floor commented that in order for Village staff to compile information regarding sustainable practices, without staff time constraints, perhaps a short e-mail from Administrator Hofland requesting three things from each department so that a listing can be started.

Mr. Murphy responded that a significant number of the items outlined in the press release have either been completed or are in process. Mr. Murphy also informed the members that recycling has increased with the use of the new container system. The Village has also begun the process of changing existing lighting in municipal buildings to a more energy efficient type of lighting.

Chair Flood commented that the Village of Bayside established specific “green” goals which facilitated the ability to meet the requirements for the “Green Community of the Year” award. He suggested that Grafton do the same.

Village Administrator Hofland responded that staff is already in the process of getting goals established. In addition, monthly benchmark measurements are provided to various Boards/Committees by each Department showing yearly comparables.

The members briefly discussed the award program and the possibility of the Village participating in the process next year. Mr. Van de Sand stated that the application is available if the members would like to review the components of the program.

Chair Flood stated that he is meeting with branding consultant Todd Sprenger and EDGE President Todd Luft on Thursday, to discuss options for coordinating the Village of Grafton’s branding and sustainability efforts.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Restriction on use of herbicides on municipal owned properties

Mr. Murphy informed the members that he has received a number of complaints from residents regarding dandelions in municipal parks, the cemetery, medians and all public grounds. He stated that the DPW has not utilized any broadleaf herbicides to control dandelions or other weeds this season.

Administrator Hofland stated that, in the past, the DPW has been able to do weed control spraying; however, new regulations require that herbicides be applied by a licensed individual.

The members discussed options available to the Village regarding weed control. Mr. Murphy stated that keeping the grass at 3 inches or longer reduces weeds. Pam Atterberry commented that the less we disturb the environment the less weeds that will infiltrate to other locations.

Mr. Murphy informed the members that last year, DPW treated the STH 60 and First Avenue medians, as well as the grass area of Village Hall and the Grafton Police Department due to their high visibility.

Discussion centered on options for weed control. Ms. Atterberry suggested the use of decorative grasses and “natural vegetation”. Ms. Plumeau suggested perennial flower mixes. President Brunquell stated it is beneficial to control weeds in the high traffic areas to maintain the clean and green perception as you enter the community.

The inclusion of a village-wide survey, regarding the use of weed control herbicides, on the Village website was discussed.

Village Administrator Hofland stated that there are alternatives to herbicides; however, these options are not cost effective. One application at the cemetery would cost more than mowing the area for the entire season. Unfortunately, people are used to finely groomed weed-free lawns and landscapes. It will take some time and education for people to accept an alternative.

President Brunnuell suggested that staff check with the local co-op for better prices on herbicides and alternate weed control items.

Chair Flood indicated that the Village needs to prepare a plan to provide better resident education on weed control for next year's growing season. In addition, notification to the public of which areas will be treated for weed control and what type of chemicals will be utilized would be beneficial.

Mr. Murphy stated that another option is to begin the cutting process earlier in the season. He suggested that beginning in mid-May, when the dandelions are in their bloom, would eliminate some of the problems with not only aesthetics but would cut-back on the invasion of spores to adjacent properties.

Mr. Van de Sand suggested the use of a milorganite base product. Mr. Murphy responded that milorganite products are considered pre-emergent products. Mr. Van de Sand will research if this type of product would be a viable option.

The Committee discussed the perception within the community of what Sustainability entails. It is about lessening the use of chemicals and maintaining green space not about being a purist.

Chair Flood informed the members that he has not used lawn chemicals for the past 10-years. He needed to control the ground ivy that was taking over his yard and utilized some chemicals this year. There has to be balance between the purist attitude that chemicals should never be used and cutting on back on the use of chemicals to protect the environment.

Mr. Van de Sand questioned if the chemical that was utilized to spray for the gypsy moth was a non-threatening chemical. Ms. Plumeau responded that it was supposed to be harmless to humans and pets.

The members discussed several resident awards for sustainable efforts. Possible awards for the best natural lawn, rain garden, or other sustainable efforts were discussed. Possible venues for award presentation were: the annual Arbor Day program, the annual Keep Grafton Clean Day event or Village festivals/events such as the bike race, Pumpkin Fest and the Paramount Blues Festival.

Ms. Weber also suggested the award program include multiple categories including business/commercial and government, along with the residential component.

The possibility of an award program will be placed on a future agenda for discussion and possible recommendation to the Village Board. Ms. Weber will put together possible program criteria for review.

#### Miscellaneous Items

Mr. Van de Sand stated that We Energies can complete energy star benchmarking for Village commercial and government buildings. The facility cannot be certified but the data can be provided for review of energy use.

Ms. Plumeau stated that she spoke with representatives of Crispell Snyder regarding partnering with Riveredge for an energy conference next year. Due to funding and sponsorship problems, the program that was to be held this year will not occur. She suggested that the Village consider utilizing the services of Crispell Snyder in the future.

President Brunnuell commented that the Grafton Area Chamber of Commerce is willing to host a breakfast forum for a presentation. Both We Energies and Crispell Snyder could be included as presenters.

Mr. Murphy also indicated that Bonestroo is also willing to make a presentation on environmental topics. The presentation would be at no cost.

Village Administrator Hofland informed the members that the Green Bay Road detention pond is in process and will include signage regarding the purpose of the pond. The pond is located across from Lime Kiln Park and will include a nature walk path.

Village Administrator Hofland also informed the members that the Grafton Water Utility has applied for a water rate increase. He stated that the Village of Grafton currently provides a cost break when consumers utilize more water. The Village is now looking at a straight rate system with no increase or decrease based on usage.

Chair Flood questioned the rate increase process. Mr. Hofland responded that a draft of the water rate increase proposal will be presented to the Board of Public Works in July or August. The Public Service Commission (PSC) will hold a public hearing on the proposal and ultimately determine if the rate increase is viable. The Village Board will then take action on the increase. Mr. Hofland stated that comprehensive water rate evaluations are only considered every 4-5 years because of the considerable expense to present the matter to the PSC.

Chair Flood stated that the presentation option at a Chamber meeting is ideal; however, the presentation will need to be brief. The We Energies portion can also include business energy assistance options. He suggested that a presentation on the mission of the

Sustainable Grafton Ad-Hoc Committee and what is being proposed would be a great addition to the meeting.

President Brunnquell agreed and indicated that would be a great venue to announce what the Village is going and how residents can get involved. He suggested that the sustainable portion of the program be first and then the We Energies presentation.

Mr. Van de Sand will have a sample of the We Energies presentation available for review at the next meeting. Chair Flood will also have materials for review at the next meeting and will contact Chamber Executive Director Nancy Hundt to coordinate a presentation, possibly in early fall.

**ADJOURN**

Motion by Paul Van de Sand, seconded Ginny Plumeau, to adjourn at 5:07 p.m. Approved unanimously.