

CITY OF DUBUQUE - COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

GOVERNMENTAL BODY: Resilient Community Advisory Commission (RCAC)

DATE: December 7, 2023

TIME: 5:00 pm

LOCATION: Jule Operations and Training Center (JOTC) Circle Conference Room, 949 Kerper Blvd.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Katharine Connolly, Steven Drahozal, Adam Hoffman, Dean Boles, Lalith Jayawickrama, Sandra Evans, Josh Chamberland

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jake Kohlhaas, Robin Kennicker

STAFF PRESENT: Amanda Lewis

Commissioner Hoffman called the meeting to order at 5:01pm.

TEST AGENDA

MINUTES APPROVAL: Boles motioned to approve the November minutes. Connolly seconded. Motion carried. Chamberland abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

NEW BUSINESS

1. Urban Ag Guide – Feedback from Public Health and Planning Departments

Jason Duba – Assistant City Planner

For zoning code purposes, if it's not listed in the code in one district, it is not permitted in that district.

There is a special provision for keeping hens for egg production. Livestock are only permitted in the agriculture district.

Zoning code defines livestock and as a permitted use in an agricultural district.

Bee keeping is not defined in the code.

The urban ag guide can also include recommendations for residents.

Mary Rose Corrigan – public Health Director

When problems arise, City staff doesn't have a lot of authority to control or enforce issues if they are not written in the code.

McKinzie Flanagan – Animal Control for City of Dubuque.

Concerning hens and ducks, avian flu is ramping up and suggests checking the DNR about avian flu for wording related to that.

Many people keep rabbits as pets rather than for agricultural purposes.

Question: Why are goats prohibited?

Answer: Lots of complaints from neighbors and if it gets loose, it is hard for animal control to trap. There not a code that currently exists to allow people to have goats or other livestock.

Question: Do you deal with zoonotic issues?

Answer: City does not deal with this. Animal control officers are in charge of domestic pets, but not other livestock or animals.

Question: Do chickens need to be registered?

Answer: There is no current regulation on registering chickens.

Follow up: Chamberland, Evans, and Kohlhaas will edit document to have staff review it again.

2. Update from GIS on Street Trees – Jacob Ironside, GIS Department

Ironside showed maps with comparison of tree canopy from 2008 using LiDAR data. In 2016, data began to document Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). In 2019 and 2022, comparison maps show how tree canopy is progressing. By overlaying data, maps can demonstrate show missing tree canopy from EAB.

Branching Out Dubuque initiative will be tracked in GIS where people will be able to document trees. This information can be used to see species, type, and photos as far as maintenance, trimming, etc. There will also be a dashboard to include how many trees have been planted and where there is still space available to plant trees. This information can be tailored to specific departments' needs.

The Branching Out Dubuque Project is looking at specific census tracks 1, 13, 5, and 12. Track 12 shows more of a commercial district and tree losses are coming from construction in this area. Tracks 1, 3, and 5 are located more on the north end of Dubuque, with a mix of residential and commercial land uses.

Students with the University of Iowa working on a project potentially using AI to calculate how much space there is along streets to figure out what type of trees can be planted.

GIS can derive the existence of over 7,200 trees based on existing city records maintained by Parks, Engineering, and Public Works. However, that does not necessarily include information about what kinds of trees.

Question: Is there a positive change map that show an increase in tree canopy?

Answer: Do not have a positive change map because within 10 years, the map probably wouldn't show much.

Question: Does the City view an area that is mostly commercial as an area where trees cannot be planted?

Answer: No, but there is more limited space to plant trees.

Question: Do you track what percentage of tree canopy has increased or decreased in Dubuque?

Answer: It is unclear at this point because the data hasn't been tracked for a long enough period.

Question: What is the percentage of trees in Dubuque that die each year?

Answer: The forestry department would have to answer that.

3. CAP update – Amanda Lewis, Sustainability Department

Lewis presented and discussed Climate Action Plan actions that are in progress, including a small commercial building pilot, tracking energy bills for City-owned buildings, receiving the Iowa Initiatives for Sustainable Communities Grant, and writing the RFP for the greenhouse gas inventory.

Question: Can we get data on the amount of money the City spends on energy bills?

Answer: No because our department is not tracking all the energy bills in the city, only specific buildings.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Facilities and Recycling – written responses from City Staff

Since each of these are managed facilities GRC, Imon Arena, FF are private mgmt. we cannot tell them what to do as our current agreements do not outline that as a requirement. I know that GRC and FF typically do have both containers in rooms I am in. I am not sure at the Imon Arena. If the Resiliency Commission wishes to meet with the managers of the facilities to encourage the activity, consider this or go further steps, they are welcome to. Jared can get you or whomever the contact info for each GM. Marie Ware, Director of Leisure Services

All the downtown city facilities already pair recycling with trash receptacles all the way down to the level of individual workspaces. Custodial staff also sorts mismatched items into the appropriate containers as part of their trash concierge service. I can't speak for other city buildings and do not know if there is an official city AP that addresses recycling containers. Justin Hogan, Facilities Manager

There might be opportunities to use a grant through DMASWA to pair recycling containers as long as they are standard colors.

Question: Is it worth the money to spend money on colored containers?

Answer: Want to have colored containers, pictures of items that belong in each one, etc. to avoid contamination. There is grant money available for this.

Follow up: Bell will ask Marie Ware if General Managers can come to RCAC to have a discussion with Ken Miller about colored containers for recycling, trash, etc. and to let her know that grant funding is available.

2. Policy Work – Review ordinances and policies as they relate to Climate Action Plan and determine subcommittees and where to focus plane height, urban agriculture, and tree canopy.

- Reports from Commissioners regarding Climate Action Plan (CAP) activities:

HOW DID I SHOW UP? COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

Boles Community Development Advisory Commission approved 2 grants: one to improve group housing and another grant to buy land to build a 46-unit apartment building using CDBG funding.

Chamberland reached out to City to ask about crosswalk on University Avenue and City staff there will be further review of this area.

Hoffmann presented at a solar panel presentation with opportunities related to solar.

Lewis introduced new Green Iowa AmeriCorps member.

Motion to adjourn by all.

NEXT MEETING: The next commission meeting will occur on January 4, 2023, at 5pm at the Jule Operations and Training Center (JOTC) in the Circle Conference Room, 949 Kerper Blvd.

ADJOURNMENT: The Commission adjourned at 6:40pm.

Minutes approved by: 
Jacob Kohlhaas, Commission Chair

Prepared by: _e./Amanda L. Lewis _____
Amanda Lewis, Climate Action Coordinator