

Environment & Energy Commission

City of Columbia & Boone County

Daniel Boone Building, Third Floor Conference Room

Minutes of Tuesday, June 23, 2009

Present: Barbara Buffaloe, Alyce Turner, Dick Parker, Tom O'Connor, Jean Sax, Bob Walters, Dan Goldstein, Dillon Wyatt, Michael Merkle, Lawrence Lile

Absent: David Brodsky

Guests: Annie Pope, Home Builders Association; Kay Hunvald, League of Women Voters; Ben Hanson, Missourian

City Support Staff: Stephanie Brown

AGENDA

The agenda was approved with no changes.

MINUTES

The May 26, 2009 minutes were approved as modified.

INTRODUCTION

Ms. Buffaloe opened the meeting with introductions of the commissioners.

GUEST SPEAKER ANNIE POPE, HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

Ms. Buffaloe said in reference to the Building Codes measures recommended by the City's energy Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), she invited Annie Pope, CEO of the Home Builders Association (HBA) to present their view on energy efficiency Building Codes regulations. She said she would like the HBA to provide suggestions for the regulations.

Ms. Pope said the HBA is for incentives over regulations. Ms. Pope felt that if energy conservation measures are concentrated on new construction this will create unintentional problems for existing construction. She said regulating these measures instead of incentivizing will create other problems such as the appraisers not including the energy conservation costs in the value of the home and the bank not covering those expenses, causing them to be out-of-pocket expenses. Ms. Buffaloe mentioned the Block Grant incentives for the Building Codes and added that retrofits are a big part of the proposed pilot project. Ms. Pope said for every \$5,000 of energy conservation added to the cost of a home, three percent of families looking to buy homes are eliminated. Ms. Pope said John Glascock said his department would support incentives and permit fee reductions. She said the HBA likes to work with the department that regulates the Building Codes. Ms. Pope suggested that the City provide statistics showing payback to customers. She said that education on these topics is needed as well.

Mr. Lile felt that something needs to be done regarding the appraisal issues within energy efficiency improvements and Mr. Walters agreed that it is a big problem. Ms. Pope said the New Construction Energy Star Home program is not popular with builders because of the low rebates. Ms. Turner said voluntary incentives are a good start and in few years the government regulations will push the responsibility on homeowners. Ms. Pope stressed that when the mortgage crisis hit, it affected the number of willing participants. Mr. Lile said there needs to be more incentives for the landlords. Ms. Pope said Tina Worley made a presentation to the HBA in hopes that the builders would promote energy conservation upgrades to remodeling clients, but many of the builders found it difficult to sell extra items outside of the desired requests. Mr. Goldstein said it may be a budget item for the city. If owners cannot afford the new homes they may move to retrofitting. He recommended that Mr. Glascock speak to the EEC. Mr. Parker said the energy conservation measures need to be built into the homes now so that there is no need for retrofits later. He said it is reality that it will cost more.

WATER ISSUES

Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Parker prepared a draft letter for the water issues. Mr. O'Connor said the letter's goal was to identify the problem and identify the action items. He said the City needs to learn from past studies and determine what is causing the problems. Mr. Parker felt that the river is causing the rise in Trihalomethanes (THM). He said the cause is not entirely wastewater related. Mr. Wyatt said an expert opinion is needed before presenting the letter to the City Council. Ms. Buffaloe said the letter needs to mention the water meeting, expressed concerns, why the EEC disagrees with the findings of the water meeting and what needs to be done. Mr. Goldstein said the letter should provide action items so that it is clear to the City Council. He said to make the suggested motion clear. Ms. Sax said the letter should be clear and straight to the point. Mr. Parker felt that the new well sites should be located more north and has requested a map of the proposed well sites. Ms. Buffaloe asked that Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Parker send the revised draft to the commissioners before the next meeting.

Mr. O'Connor announced that he would be speaking at the forum given by the Show-Me Science Alliance on Wednesday, June 24, 2009 regarding water issues. He said John Betz would also be speaking.

ANNUAL REPORT

Ms. Sax asked the commission to review the draft of the annual report that Ms. Buffaloe will sign and submit to the City Council and the Boone County Commission. Mr. Walters suggested adding the dates. Mr. Walters moved to submit the annual report as amended and Mr. O'Connor seconded.

RECYCLING

Tabled until July.

PLANNING TOPICS FOR NEXT YEAR

Tabled until July.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Brown will send a new roster to the commissioners.

UPCOMING MEETING ITEMS

Building Codes

Water Issues Letter

Recycling

Planning Topics for Next Year

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Prepared by: Stephanie Brown, City Support Staff