

# Environment & Energy Commission

City of Columbia & Boone County  
Daniel Boone Building, Third Floor Conference Room

Minutes of Tuesday, February 26, 2008

**Present:** Frank Cunningham, John Miles, Alyce Turner, Jean Sax, Barbara Buffaloe, Kip Kendrick, Dan Goldstein, Teresa Hunter

**Absent:** Ted Dyer, Bob Walters, David Brodsky

**Guests:** John Weleck, Vista Home Development; Travis Rehagen, Rehagen Heating and Cooling; Brenda Rehagen, Rehagen Heating and Cooling; Kay Hunvald, League of Women Voters; Dick Parker, Power Supply Task Force

**City Staff Liaison:** Stephanie Brown

Mr. Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

## AGENDA

The agenda was approved with changes.

## MINUTES

The minutes for January 22, 2008 were approved with changes.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, VISTA

Mr. Miles introduced his guest speaker, John Weleck, the contractor for the Vista Home Developments. Mr. Weleck said he has been building homes for 15 years and Vista was his first major development. Every unit in the development uses geothermal energy which uses water from an underground well source to either heat the water or the air of the unit. Brenda Rehagen of Rehagen Heating & Cooling presented the commissioners with a DVD explaining how a water furnace works and a comparison of natural gas furnaces and standard A/C to a geothermal system. The report included the system costs, savings, and time of return on investment. Mr. Weleck and the Rehagens said they are willing to educate people on the benefits of using geothermal energy. The Vista development is believed to be the only development that has a geothermal system installed in every unit in Columbia. Mr. Weleck said all the homes also use fluorescent lighting. Mr. Weleck said this development is a starting point for the City. It was suggested to have the City offer a list of green developers.

## LAND DISTURBANCE AND TREE ORDINANCE ISSUES

Guest speaker Lou Phemister, the City Arborist, discussed the tree ordinance and the development of an urban forest master plan. Mr. Phemister said he has been in Columbia for six months and has been an Urban Forester. He has looked at other U.S cities' guidelines for tree preservation and evaluated Columbia against them. With Columbia's growth and size, he believes Columbia is ready for an urban forestry master plan. He said the master plan would need to include the goals and targets for tree coverage, shading and staking along with the land use and age of the property. Ms. Buffaloe said this is one of the goals listed in the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Plan. Mr. Phemister

said the Public Works department is in the process of becoming accredited with the American Public Works Association and developing a master plan is one of its requirements. He said this process will cost approximately \$30,000 in consultant fees. Consultants would provide information and research as well as organizing public meetings for community input. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources could provide a grant of \$10,000 toward the consultant fees. Lou suggested that he write a report providing an overview of the current status of the City's urban forest and recommending the development of an urban forest master plan. A Tree Ordinance could later be developed from the master plan. Xeriscaping issues would be included in the master plan. The issue would be in convincing the City to spend the money for the consultant. This will be a partial solution for the land disturbance issues as well. Mr. Cunningham will draft a letter supporting Mr. Phemister's report to the Council. Mr. Cunningham also asked that any examples from other cities that Mr. Phemister comes across in his research be directed to the commission as well.

April or May was suggested for the public meeting as well as the Earth Day Festival. Ms. Sax suggested displaying pictorials of the GIS tracking system at the EEC booth at the Earth Day Festival.

Mr. Goldstein will invite John Fleck, GIS Coordinator for the City to speak at the next meeting regarding the GIS tracking topography system the City is using to keep inventory of the natural resources. He also recommended notifying the City Council that the EEC is still pursuing this topic.

#### STREET LIGHTING

Mr. Goldstein said John Glascock, Interim Water and Light Director, presented a proposed lighting ordinance at the last Council work session that made no reference to the EEC participation. Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Goldstein will work together on this topic and have more information at a later date.

#### PROVIDING UTILITY BILL FEEDBACK

Mr. Goldstein found some utilities that do include the degree heating days on their bills. He said several variables are involved in comparing homes, i.e. the year, size, and number of occupants. Mr. Cunningham provided a report of his own utility bill as an example comparison. He said he spoke to Jay Hasheider of Water and Light about getting access to utility data and comparing it to the county records of the house size. The suggestion was made to possibly have this available online. Dan Dasho tried to get this accomplished a few years ago, but the Finance Department didn't approve. Ms. Buffaloe said there is a website that allows you to do this. She will email to it everyone. She also suggested that the EEC assemble suggestions for the City.

#### REPORT CARD

Ms. Buffaloe will continue to research other examples and possibilities.

#### CLIMATE PROTECTION PANEL FOLLOW UP

The Commission congratulated Ms. Buffaloe and Mr. Cunningham on a job well done as panelists at the Climate Protection Forum.

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY REPORT

The draft of the Renewable Energy Report was sent to the commissioners by Water and Light for review. Ms. Brown said a memo to the City Council will have a first read on March 17, 2008 and a public hearing on April 7, 2008. Comments should be sent to the City Council before then.

#### COMMENTS

Ms. Sax suggested having Columbia Water and Light work with Boone Electric on establishing more incentives for energy management to county residents.

#### UPCOMING MEETING ITEMS

1. John Fleck, GIS Coordinator – Dan Goldstein
2. Street Lighting – Ted Dyer
3. Providing Utility Bill Feedback – John Miles, Dan Goldstein
4. Renewable Energy Report – Stephanie Brown
5. Report Card – Barbara Buffaloe

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Stephanie Brown, City Staff Liaison