

Environment & Energy Commission

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

Minutes of Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Present: Frank Cunningham, John Miles, Jean Sax, Kip Kendrick, Dan Goldstein, Barbara Buffaloe, Ted Dyer, Alyce Turner, Bob Walters

Absent: Teresa Hunter, David Brodsky

Guests: John Fleck, GIS Coordinator; Dick Parker, Power Supply Task Force; Cindy Dyer

City Staff Liaison: Stephanie Brown

Mr. Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

MINUTES

The minutes for April 1, 2008 were approved without changes.

LAND DISTURBANCE AND TREE ORDINANCE ISSUES

Guest speaker John Fleck, Senior Planner/GIS Coordinator for the City of Columbia, explained that he has been working on the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) project. The NRI project will use digital high-resolution color aerial photography to map vegetation, land cover, and forested areas in and around Columbia. He said with this system the city will be able to map the area to determine significant slopes and acreage amounts. He said the purpose of the NRI is to provide a method for data analysis and quantification as well as policy analysis. It can assist with ordinance conflicts and help create better regulations. With this project you can click on a property and view all that relates to that property, i.e. surrounding businesses, etc. The University of Missouri is working with the city on the NRI project. They will place images on the website for viewing and printing. He said property lines are not included on the city maps because Boone County owns the property lines. Ms. Buffaloe asked if the NRI will have archive abilities. Mr. Fleck said it will use 2003 as a baseline which is also when the last aerial photography was done. The inventory will be used to compare images from previous years to pinpoint changes. Mr. Fleck said the idea for the software came from the military where it was used to indicate changes from the sky in particular locations on the ground.

Mr. Fleck said there was no tree preservation measure until 1992 or 1993. It derived from a response to the construction of the Colonies in which old Oak Hickory trees were cleared. A citizen task force was assembled to write a tree ordinance which was ineffective because the people who were to enforce the ordinance were not directly involved with the creation of the ordinance.

Sax explained that Barbara Hoppe of the City Council wanted a solution to the "loopholes" developers were using to be able to get around the tree preservation

regulations. The Crosscreek development, for example, followed the regulations, which raises the question of what is missing within the regulations.

Mr. Fleck explained that two entities are in place to cover tree preservation issues: engineering considerations that cover compaction and fill of stable buildings and storm water erosion and water quality control. He felt that all areas of land disturbance are covered under these entities. The EEC needs to establish what areas of land disturbance and tree preservation are not covered. Mr. Cunningham wondered if enough is being done by engineering to handle these issues.

Mr. Fleck said the issue of land preservation is included in the city's Metro 2020 plan which treats grading as an amenity, not as an engineering issue. He explained that the Metro 2020 plan consisted of dividing the city into 5 districts: downtown, neighborhoods, employment, commercial, and green belts. He said Columbia has a green belt plan that is based on flood plains. Mr. Goldstein said currently there is no tree preservation so the land can be divided. Mr. Kendrick asked if land could be preserved within the green belt.

Mr. Goldstein noted that all of the examples sent to Mr. Cunningham by Mr. Glascock included steep slopes because the City Manager feels that in the future many areas in Boone County that contain steep slopes will be annexed by the City. Mr. Fleck said there are not very many steep slopes over 25% in the city limits.

Mr. Fleck said there is no tie between land disturbance and planned zoning. Planned zoning requires the approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council, while opened zoning does not.

Mr. Fleck said the visioning group wanted to create a group to purchase land for preservation. He felt that land disturbance should fall under preservation and amenities.

Mr. Dyer suggested referring to the Smart Code approach to using "transects" to define land disturbance parameters. Smart Code is a unified land development ordinance template for planning and urban design that Mr. Dyer feels might provide some helpful background.

Mr. Fleck said the EEC needs to decide what in the land disturbance issue has not been addressed. He suggested establishing the goal for the mission of the EEC in regards to the land disturbance and tree preservation.

Mr. Cunningham discussed the report on land disturbance that Mr. Watkins wanted for the Council retreat. Ms. Sax suggested mentioning tree preservation in the report. Mr. Fleck said the EEC needs to decide what needs to be accomplished. He also said the NRI project will be the primary focus of the Council retreat. Mr. Cunningham provided some questions as a starter for the report. Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Sax, Mr. Kendrick, Mr. Goldstein, and Ms. Turner will meet on Saturday at noon at the Cherry St. Artisan to discuss the land disturbance report. Others may e-mail suggestions. The report will be discussed at the May 27th meeting and is due to the City Manager's office by noon on May 28 to be included on the Council retreat agenda.

STREET LIGHTING

Mr. Dyer said he responded to Mr. Glascock's email regarding the EEC involvement in the street lighting issue. He said he has not received a response regarding a meeting with the staff of Water and Light. Ms. Sax suggested informing the City Council of their efforts.

FY08/09 PROGRAM OF WORK COUNCIL QUESTIONNAIRE

Mr. Cunningham asked the commissioners to review the questionnaire and send any comments to him. The questionnaire is due Wednesday, April 30, 2008.

FOLLOW-UP TO JOHN WELEK'S PRESENTATION

Ms. Sax provided a draft letter for the City Council regarding the Welek development. It was recommended to include John Welek's name in the letter. Mr. Dyer said to state that Mr. Welek's responsible for the Vista's Home Development. Ms. Turner suggested adding a line to the letter stating that the City should encourage the installation of energy conservation tools such as ground source heat pump systems. Mr. Kendrick said Terry Freeman of Water and Light will have links available on the city website referencing green developers in Columbia. Ms. Sax will add the additional comments to the letter.

EARTH DAY EVENT TABLE

Mr. Cunningham thanked the commissioners involved with Earth Day for their participation. Mr. Walters felt that the booth should be more interactive. Mr. Goldstein will keep the list of contacts for future use. Mr. Cunningham said to book the booth location as early as January next year to request the desired booth location. Ms. Buffaloe will remind the Commissioners for the next Earth Day. The commission expressed gratitude for Tim Pohlman's help.

APRIL 4, 2008 MEETING WITH COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mr. Cunningham and Ms. Buffaloe attended the meeting with the Columbia Public Schools administration to discuss the new school designs. Members of the school board were not present, only staff. The school board will not pursue LEED certification but will follow some of the guidelines. There will be a meeting on Thursday with Columbia Public Schools that Ms. Buffaloe will attend.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Miles said his term ends in May and he will not be reapplying. He's been with the commission for six years.

Dick Parker said the school board needs to be told to push energy efficiency with the new school buildings.

Mr. Goldstein volunteered to attend the May 1st sub area plan meeting with the Columbia Housing Authority.

UPCOMING MEETING ITEMS

1. Elections of officers
2. Annual Report
3. New school design