



GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

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Sustainability Committee
Monday, August 1, 2016
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. Attendees
 - i. Wendy Ogilvie, GVMC
 - ii. Bonnie Broadwater, GVMC
 - iii. Jamie Vaughan, TU
 - iv. Dennis Cole, P.E., OCRWC
 - v. Rachell Nagorsen, Walker
 - vi. Michael Staal, P.E., Grand Rapids
 - vii. Carrie Rivette, P.E., Grand Rapids
 - viii. Rob Pettit, ECT
 - ix. Nurya Parish, Plainsong Farm
 - x. Dan Schoonmaker, WMSBF
 - xi. Jerry Miller, KCD
2. Purpose of Committee
 - a. Addressing issues of sustainability in urban and agricultural land uses
 - i. Wendy reviewed the goals of the Committee and summarized the past meeting's minutes.
3. Activities of the Committees
 - a. Wendy discussed options and ideas for getting this committee together in other settings to be able to talk to each other and our partners while learning more about the issues.
 - i. To promote regional green infrastructure, a bus tour was suggested to go to some of the hubs and corridors that illustrate natural connections. This could possibly be coordinated with a MAEAP tour, which is being considered by KCD. Sustainable agricultural practices could also be highlighted on the tour. Jerry will look into when this tour might be organized and will report back to the Committee.
 - ii. "Coffee Conversations" could be held at Field & Fire on Monroe (opening in September) at which speakers could be invited or just experts in the field to be available for informal interactions. Wendy will follow up with the owners of the business to gauge their interest and will get back to the Committee.
4. Natural Connections Map – Green Infrastructure
 - a. Wendy restated the role of the Sustainability Committee as to implement components of the regional green infrastructure, building on the Natural Connections Map
 - b. GVMC is currently creating a Single Source Map that will integrate transportation, land use, and environmental concerns into an interactive map available to the public on

REGIS. Wendy will work with REGIS to create layers of interest to this committee, and then share the information at the next meeting to be reviewed and make recommendations.

- c. Suggestions for other partners to include in the meetings were the Sustainable Research Group, Urban Municipal Mayors and Managers, MDEQ, League of Conservation Voters, US Green Building Council, Land Conservancy of West Michigan, Ducks Unlimited, US Fish and Wildlife Service, WM Trails & Greenways, Kent County Parks Foundation, MDNR, and the Michigan Natural Features Inventory staff.
 - d. Rob Pettit suggested that we relate the regional green infrastructure to the environmental services it provides, in term of habitat, social interaction, or economic resource, for example. As the map is updated, the Committee will incorporate this into the narrative of the plan for its implementation.
5. Sustainable Agriculture
- a. Wendy restated the role of the Sustainability Committee as to coordinate existing programs and efforts to increase best practice implementation on farms.
 - b. KCD and NRCS are critical partners in this effort and are eager to work together with this committee to expand their services and expertise. Jerry explained some of the work that the KCD is doing that complements this Committee and will share information from those programs as it applies to the work being done by the Committee. Nurya owns Plainsong Farm and has a vision for the farm to be an educational center in the future.
 - c. The members discussed this Committee's role in Farmland Preservation. A small committee, led by Bert Bleke and Patty Birkholz, is working with the Kent County Ag Working Group on reviewing the County's report and making recommendations. The Healthy Waters, Working Farms initiative (<http://potawatomi-rcd.org/projects.html#hwwf>) is being run by the Potawatomi RC&D, but not much activity on that has taken place. The members agreed to the idea of working in parallel with the Farmland Preservation efforts, but not fully taking on that work.
 - d. LGROW and ECT submitted an application to the RCPP program for funding the Grand River in-stream restoration efforts downstream from the Sixth Street Dam; wetland restoration and cover crops in the Rogue River Watershed; and riparian buffer strips and cover crops in the Indian Mill Creek Watershed. Wendy announced that NRCS extended an invitation for us to submit a full proposal, and others were asked to participate if interested in helping complete that proposal, which is due September 19, 2016
6. Adjourn
- a. The next meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2016, at 1:30 – 2:30 pm at GVMC. Wendy will send out the minutes with a meeting appointment to all members.