



**SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**  
City Hall—Shared Vision Room, 3989 Central Ave NE  
Tuesday, June 11, 2024  
6:00 PM

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**DRAFT/UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ahmadvand at 6:03 p.m.

Members present: Commissioners Ahmadvand, Evenson, Finkelson, Groseth, Johnson, LaPlante, Kurek, Leoni-Helbacka

Staff present: Andrew Boucher, City Planner  
Liam Genter, Urban Forestry Specialist  
Sulmaan Khan, Interim City Engineer

Council Liaison: Connie Buesgens

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Ahmadvand, seconded by Groseth to approve the minutes of May 14, 2024 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**3. Sustainable Purchasing Policy Update**

The City's existing purchasing policy was examined in relation to the proposed draft policy by city staff as well as the Commission and it was expressed that instead of creating a new policy that the proposed draft be incorporated into the existing policy. Interim City Engineer, Sulmaan Khan states that he intends to solicit initial comments from City Division Heads on the proposed policy and will incorporate those comments into the first round of wording of the document.

**4. Complete Streets Policy Update**

Complete Streets policy draft was discussed prior to the June meeting between Interim City Engineer Sulmaan Khan, City Planner Andrew Boucher, and Commissioner Finkelson in preparation for a future workshop with Nissa Tupper, Transportation and Public Health Planning Director at MNDOT. The group achieved consensus that the policy had been discussed enough for staff to prepare the item for a future work session after the meeting with MNDOT. Citywide transportation safety plan and Safe Streets for All were discussed.

**5. Partners in Energy Update**

City Planner, Andrew Boucher provided an update on the recruitment of individuals interested in participating on the Energy Action Team as part of Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy program. It was

desired to include a member of the City Council (Councilmember Buesgens as the Sustainability Liaison) as well as members of the other boards and commissions; Planning Commission, Sustainability Commission, Parks and Recreation, Economic Development Authority, etc. Commissioner Leoni-Helbacka and Chair Ahmadvand expressed interest in participating on the Energy Action Team. Other community groups and organizations such as HeightsNext, the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee, Columbia Heights School District, SACA, and places of worship were identified as potential stakeholders along with homeowners, landlords, and businessowners. The Sustainability Commission involvement in promotional and marketing material was discussed.

#### **6. Sustainable Collaborations Sub-Committee Update and Sustainability Commission Newsletter Submission**

The City e-newsletter was discussed with a deadline of June 27, 2024 for submissions for the July edition to be received by. The fall newsletter was mentioned and has a deadline of July 22, 2024.

#### **NEW BUUSINESS**

#### **7. Deeproot Green Infrastructure Presentation by Nicole Peterson**

Urban Forestry Specialist, Liam Genter introduced former Parks and Recreation Commissioner and licensed landscape architect Nicole Peterson to discuss the important of soil volume in fully developed cities and present on behalf of her employer, Deeproot, in relation to their Silva Cell product, which is designed to accommodate health, mature tree growth by allowing for greater amounts of space beneath pavement. Examples of these products in other cities were demonstrated including at the City of Shakopee, MN.

#### **8. Xcel Energy Upper Midwest Energy Plan Public Meeting and Comment Period (Midwest Energy Plan | Xcel Energy)**

Commissioner Kurek informed the Commission and staff of Xcel Energy's clean energy plan for the Upper Midwest and encouraged people to participate in the public engagement in-person or virtually as well as a discussed submitting written comments.

#### **9. Round Robin**

Future City events such as the Arts and Info Fair and the Jamboree were discussed as potential opportunities for tabling if interested or desired.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Ahmadvand, seconded by LaPlante to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Boucher,  
City Planner