

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
City of New Port Richey
Minutes
Wednesday - January 13, 2020 - 6:00 p.m.





ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

City of New Port Richey

The Environmental Committee of the City of New Port Richey develops and endorses environmental events in the City, renders annual and special reports as members may deem advisable, and explores new environmental initiatives for the City. The ECCNPR was established in 1989 and recreated in 2011.

Meeting Minutes

New Port Richey Library

Monday - January 13, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

ANY PERSON DESIRING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION, WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT ANY MEETING OR HEARING, WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, WHICH INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. THE LAW DOES NOT REQUIRE TRANSCRIBED VERBATIM MINUTES; THEREFORE, THE APPLICANT MUST MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH A PRIVATE REPORTER (OR PRIVATE REPORTING FIRM) AND BEAR THE RESULTING EXPENSE. (F.S.286.0105)

Welcome and Roll Call Present: Dell DeChant, Committee Chair; Rose Mohr, Vice-Chair; Barret Doe, Staff Liaison; Penelope Anderson, Member; Barbara Sullo, Member; John Kane, Alternate Member; Linda Blake, Recorder; Jon Tietz, Don Blake and Noah Denny in attendance.

Absent (with excuse) Rex Phelps

Vox Pop (3 minutes for members of the audience – on items not on the agenda) Don Blake mentioned that Lennar Homes is planning a housing development that includes some space for agriculture, an “agrihood,” out in Land O’Lakes. Dell called attention to his comments on the project in the *Tampa Bay Times*

Approval of Minutes/"summary of actions" – December 9, 2019 – Motion to approve, approved unanimously.

Approval of Agenda and request for additional items

Liaison Officer Report: Barret Doe, City Liaison told the committee that he will pursue his Arborist certification.

Note: Advice from City Liaison is requested on all items before the committee

Special Items: none

Business of Committee – On-Going Projects and Events

Vox Pop (VP) for items in this section

Update on Committee Membership, and City Policies (Barret and Dell)

Committee Membership Considerations update on committee actions and proposals (Dell)

Following up on committee proposals at last two meetings: (1) request for non-city residents to service (note: two city committees allow for two (2) non-City residents to serve.) (2) request to allow members of the same family to serve. Chair has requested update on Council action on requests.

Penelope shared with the committee the written opinion of the Florida State Attorney General that there is no legal basis for restricting members of the same family from serving on the same committee. Dell explained that he has emailed this to representatives of the City of New Port Richey. He recommended that this information come before the City Council. There has been no response on the issue to date.

Green City Initiative: Update and Note of submission status (Barret) – Update: Barret met with Robert and Samantha. This initiative will be worked on this week, and Barret will meet with Samantha again this week.

Update on inclusion of City Property in Community Garden Ordinance (from annual report/proposals over several years) (Dell) City Manager reports action forthcoming - specifically documents related to use of propriety Frances Ave Park. No action since last meeting. Dell has a meeting with the City Manager this week.

Urban Agriculture Program: (Dell) It is going strong. The Collard Greens Festival was a great success, well attended and enthusiastically received. We had visitors from around the state of Florida and the Florida Permaculture Society took a tour of local community gardens and were impressed. Applications for spaces at the community gardens were received. .

Library Seed Lending Program: Update on the program (Dell) - Library employee in charge of the program is Stephanie Jones. Penelope will package up some milkweed seeds for the Library

Fruit Tree Peninsula: (Penelope, and Barret) Managing and maintaining the planter. Penelope continues to contribute to maintenance.

Tampa Bay Resiliency Collation (Dell & Barret) See: <http://www.tbrpc.org/resiliency-current-members/>

See also: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WCcEYJVA9NKBdCQORCJ3NnPbw4fM2IsJ/view>

- Routine update on City's participation in this committee of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and any new developments since last meeting. Note: Mayor reported at January 7 CC meeting on topics at recent meeting of the TBRC. It appears that the TBRC focuses largely (if not exclusively) on sea level rise related to global heating. Additional material may be shared. Dell mentioned that resiliency is about more than sea level rise. It's also about local food production, water quality, etc. Discussion ensued, and it was mentioned that Live Oak is the best carbon-sequestering tree for our region. Penelope will provide the Committee with some information in a future meeting about a kind of concrete that is helpful to slowing climate change.

Business of Committee – New Projects (and projects of limited duration, including annual events)

VP for items in this section

Arbor Day Event: January 17, 2020 Arbor Day, 31th annual (3rd Friday in January) (Host ENV COM). Planning discussion. Thanks to Barb, Dell, and Marilynn deChant for coordinated this event. Committee is asked for input on this year's event. Nomination of committee member to Chair planning committee for 2021 event. We'll bring it up again at the next meeting. Thanks to Judy Meyers for making a very nice flyer. Milkweed seeds and seedlings will be shared at the event.

Earth Day Event (see also this item in proposals in annual report): The mayor has asked the committee to consider hosting an Earth Day Event in the City, this being the 50th anniversary of the first Earth Day. We are also aware of the UN's IPCC report that we now have less than 11 years to begin reduction of atmospheric carbon dioxide or face eco-cultural collapse. Earth Day is April 22. Update from Linda Blake on meeting with Andrea Figart for planning. Chair offers some options (which could be mix-and-match):

1) A program with four units:

Where we've been – something on background on environmentalism in the US

Where we are now – Summary of the various ecological challenges we face

Where we are doing – The forecasts: crisis and opportunity

What is to be done – Practical actions for governments, businesses, and individuals

2) Lecture(s) on Environmental Issues followed by round table discussion

3) An article reading-&-discussion session

4) A film (or films) followed by discussion.

Linda Blake is the Chair of the Earth Day Committee. In the works is the King Tide Photo Exhibit, possibly to be on display in several locations in the City.

Review of Alleys in the city: Review & Proposal approved at November meeting sent to City Manager, City Clerk, Mayor, with copy of ENV COM liaison. Mayor acknowledges receipt. No further action reported. Chair has requested update from mayor and CM. We don't yet know if it will be on the City Council agenda.

Review of Pets (Dogs) at Grey Preserve: Review & Proposal approved at November meeting sent to City Manager, City Clerk, Mayor, with copy of ENV COM liaison. Mayor acknowledges receipt. No further action reported. Chair has requested update from mayor and CM. We don't yet know if it will be on the City Council agenda.

Review of Accessory Parking (2019-2164) (John Kane) Review & Proposal approved at December meeting sent to City Manager, City Clerk, Mayor, with copy of ENV COM liaison. Mayor acknowledges receipt. No further action reported. Mayor requested subsequent report on "the net effect of the proposal." Chair responded to Mayor (and copied John Kane for further detail, if desired). Chair has requested update from mayor and CM. See: Addendum for Chair's report to Mayor on "net effect of the proposal."

Review of Revised Proposal on Straws, Plastic, and Styrofoam: Included in annual report and proposals. (Noah) Discussion on how the Committee wants to proceed – A ban on straws? Incentives for using biodegradable straws? Jon mentioned that there are high school organizations that would be willing to do fund raising for signs that allow businesses to brag that they don't use plastic straws. John Kane suggested that businesses that volunteer to eliminate plastic straws will get the endorsement of the Environmental Committee, which amounts to free advertising at our events. There are going to be modifications to the Annual Report.

Monarch Butterfly City: (Dell & Barret) - Application status requested (from Barret) Barret communicated with Russ, and it will cost \$800 to get the signs signaling that NPR is a Monarch City. This was on the City Council agenda, and it was proclaimed that the City supports that ideals of the Monarch City project.

* Links <http://monarchcityusa.com/>

* <http://monarchcityusa.com/members>

Floating planter Project: (Penelope and Barret) No update.

Adopt a Trail Project: (Barret) No update.

Annual Report and Proposals to Council: Brief planning session.

Status Report on follow-ups to the annual report (presented to City Council September 4, 2018)

Individual members have been tasked with following up proposals. Updates given here

- City to *pursue* 100% renewable power by 2030 (Barbara)
- Establish position of a PT Garden Facilitator (Dell)
- Create an Arborist position (Dell * note: Barret will not be pursuing this)
- City to revise building code to allow for small/tiny houses (150-300 sq feet) (M.J.)
- City to become a nontoxic community – with timetable target

Annual Report (for 2018-2019) - date of presentation, February 18, 2020

Topics approved. Content approved. Additional assignments given.

City Work Sessions on Projects of Relevance to Committee (Barret) – none given

Events

Seasonal Events (Information only) - Note: All events supported and endorsed by Environmental Committee.

Calendar 2020 - 2021:

January 17, 2020 Arbor Day, 31th annual (3rd Friday in January) (Host ENV COM)

March 21, 2020 The Florida Loquat Festival, 7th annual (Host Ecology Florida)

August 17, 2020 - Okra Occasion, 5th annual (5:00 – 8:00) (Host ENV COM)

January 16, 2021 - Collards Festival at Grand Gardens*, 6th annual (Host Grand Gardens/New Port Richey FarmNet)

Meeting Schedule for 2020

"The environmental committee shall meet once every ninety (90) days unless it determines to meet more frequently."

* Committee has determined it is best to meet monthly - 2nd Monday, at 6:00 p.m.

** Library is not available for our meetings in February and March.

Next Meeting will be at Public Works on Monday, February 10 at 6:00 p.m.

Addendum

Message sent to Mayor:

Summary of net effects of the Accessory Parking recommendations, from "Recommendations" section of Environmental Committee review of *Accessory Parking* ordinances.

* Specifies location of accessory parking space (parallel to driveway)

* Specifies allowable surface materials and details pervious materials (crushed stone, crushed rock, gravel, shell or organic mulch)

* Requires approval and permit from building department only for impervious materials.

* Removes criteria for driveways (since in LDC)

* Clarifies that criteria for driveways not be applied for accessory parking and removes any language requiring accessory parking to require a building permit.

* Removal of figures and language noted in "Further Considerations."