

SAS STEERING COMMITTEE

Minutes

September 5, 2023

Call to Order: 5:33 pm

ATTENDANCE:

Steering Committee Members: Chair Larry Luton, Council Sustainability Initiative Manager Kelly Thomas, Esther Angell, Sarah Burruss, Dave Garegnani, Brian Henning, Matt Hollon, Michelle Howard, Mindy Howard, Staci Maier, Rowena Pineda, Pragya Rai, Naghmana Sherazi

Not Present: Jennifer Thomas

Staff: Council Sustainability Initiatives Manager Kelly Thomas, Legislative Assistant Mark Carlos

Public: Kerry Brooks

Agenda Items

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of August 1 were approved with no corrections.

Chair's Report: Chair Larry Luton gave a summary of the summer's workgroup activity. The Health and Wellbeing Workgroup has been reconstructed and there are multiple new members. They will need another month or so to be able to present a report of their workgroup priorities to the Steering Committee. The Buildings & Energy Workgroup is ready to make a presentation and will do so at the September 20 study session. Finally, in December, we are scheduled for officer elections. Two of the officers are up for election (Chair, and one of the Co-Vice Chair positions, which are currently one-year terms). The 3rd officer position is the other Co-Vice Chair, which is a two-year term currently being held by Rowena. We may want to talk about what kind of terms there should be for each of these officer positions.

Technical: The link to join the meetings has been problematic for some. Not always able to click on it, and it has to be copied and pasted. Kelly will investigate this.

WORKSHOPS:

Discussion of Letter of Support for GFC Charges: The draft of the GFC support letter was discussed. Comments and feedback included that it looked great, it was well-written, it

made a good argument and captured what the Steering Committee collectively agreed upon.

Discussion of Equity & Justice Presentation: What expectations do we want to include in our process? Brian Henning felt we should workshop this a little bit. Other comments: It may make more sense if the Equity Subcommittee is in a better position to connect with. The EJEW is still a good lens to capture the environmental justice/equity perspective specifically. Michelle Howard asked when we would be doing this kind of review, and whether we wanted to address these perspectives *before* we identify our workgroup priorities. There was continued discussion on how this could and would be addressed on multiple levels. Some felt we may or may not have the expertise level to be looking at this. The City could take the Steering Committee's recommendations and apply them with their own level of expertise, such as through the Equity Subcommittee. Rowena noted that she realizes this analysis should have happened before we asked the workgroups to identify their priorities. But there wasn't a framework given to do so. She gave the South Logan TOD as an example to ask important, consistent questions for each project that should be asked every time: who is this impacting? Who is it benefiting? Larry summarized: we will ask these questions for each project, every time. The answers should be part of the Steering Committee's conversation.

Roundtable Discussion of Workgroup Priorities and Next Steps: Larry asked each Steering Committee member to answer two questions: 1) Do you have 1-3 actions or spinoffs of those actions that you'd like the Steering Committee to keep on their list? 2) Are there any specific actions that you'd like to champion? There was some clarification needed about how to identify priorities before we'd heard from all the workgroups (Buildings & Energy and Health & Wellbeing still need to present to the Steering Committee), and what the value was of going through this exercise tonight. Larry clarified that he just wanted to get the conversation started; didn't want to get too far away from the previous workgroup presentations, and to get a sense where we are currently. There would be no decisions or votes tonight; we won't make any decisions until we have a public hearing.

- **Larry:**

1. People-Oriented Communities as identified by the Transportation & Land Use Workgroup. Incentivize mixed-use development along corridors; i.e., 1st story should be commercial use, and 2+ story should be apts/condos.
2. Tree Canopy as identified by the Natural Environment Workgroup. Incentivize for both public and private trees. This was also one of Priority Spokane's four identified priorities, as championed by Naghmana.
3. Waste Reduction Programs for all City Events. Example, Expo+50 planning. All events using City property, like the parks, must include a meaningful waste reduction program.

- **Matt:**

1. Extreme Heat Mitigation, particularly from the environmental justice standpoint. Efforts to preserve and expand greening in areas of the City.

Wants to prioritize initiatives that address urban heat islands like tree canopy, and supports the formation of a “green corps.”

2. People-Oriented Communities as identified by the Transportation & Land Use Workgroup. Infrastructure that supports walking and biking, close food sources as a “win-win.”
3. Community Gardening

- **Michelle:**

1. Will pass for now as she wants to think more about how priorities will impact low-income communities, and wants to hear from Buildings & Energy as they are a big part of this work.

- **Sarah:**

1. Protect River Flow – from Water & Climate, priority #2
2. Build Out Bike Network – from Transportation & Land Use, priority #3
3. Increase Urban Canopy to 40% by 2030, from Natural Environment Group

- **Mindy:**

1. Forest Canopy and Pollinator Gardens, which will provide biodiversity and pollination from *any* type of native pollinators. “Postage Stamp” forests as well.
2. Reduce Pumping from the Aquifer; a tribal liaison will be important.
3. Reduction of Food Waste from the Waste Stream – reallocating food waste and diverting from the waste stream to not just compost but also find ways to feed people.

- **Brian:**

1. Extreme Heat Resilience Research & Planning (with administration)
2. Wildfire Smoke Resilience Research & Planning (with administration)

- **Naghmana:**

1. (has concerns about the \$20 million deficit at the City and how to pay for some of these programs, and how realistic it is that they will come to fruition because of that)
2. SpoCanopy for its biodiversity, mental health and clean air benefits, as well as pollinator and storm gardens.
3. Language Access & Justice – recent evacuation information for the wildfires was sorely lacking in any language except for English and, at the County level, some Spanish. Feels that we failed our non-English speaking citizens as this is *life-saving information*, that is actually mandated and required to be translated.
4. Building Decarbonization – will enable us to meet our GHG emission reduction goals.
5. Electric/Solar/Hybrid Light Rail System ‘beltway’ that will loop around the City needs to be put in now, before the City grows so that traveling from one point to the next around the City will take less time and reduce commute times and will allow the City to expand instead of becoming gentrified.

Naghmana is willing to champion Language Justice & Access and Tree Canopy expansions, especially in low urban canopy cover areas.

- **Pragya:**
 1. Tree Canopy, on both public and private land
 2. Reduce Pumping from the Aquifer, including language access for the technical details of this
 3. Extended Producer Responsibility to reduce microplastic/plastic pollution
 4. Reducing Food Waste
 5. More Transportation Options
- **Stacy:**
 1. Wants to take more time and hear from the Buildings & Energy Workgroup. Is interested in the tree canopy ideas and wants to coordinate with Priority Spokane on this.
- **Esther:**
 1. Would also like more time; loves the tree canopy and pollinator garden ideas.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

PREPARED BY:

Kelly Thomas

APPROVED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ron Annear". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Ron" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Annear" follows in a similar but slightly smaller script. The signature is contained within a white rectangular box.