



Buffalo Environmental Management Commission

MINUTES

Meeting of Wednesday, September 23, 2009

The meeting started at 8:10 AM and was held in Room 920 City Hall.

Commissioners Attending: Charles Grieco, Joseph Gardella, Frank Armento, David Hahn-Baker and John Bauda.

Not Attending: Art Robinson, John Hackney

Others Attending: Dennis Sutton (staff), Andrew Goldstein (Public Works), Julie O'Neil (BN Riverkeepers), Brendan Mehaffy (Assistant Corporation Counsel)

Minutes: the notes for the April 2009 meeting were taken by J. Gardella and not yet transcribed into minutes. The July 2009 minutes were approved.

TIP Sheet

July's TIP SHEET featured information about Cook County, Illinois rain barrel program. Mailing list included Common Council members and Mayor's office.

Julie O'Neil of the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeepers presented information on rain barrels available through their organization. Ms O'Neil also gave an overview of other BN Riverkeeper mission and activities. She discussed other measures that could be used to mitigate and prevent treatment of storm runoff. These included: rain gardens, green roofs, downspout disconnect, impervious paving. There was a general discussion regarding BNRiverkeeper projects, including: Niagara Street Greenway, Buffalo River Greenway, Buffalo River cleanup and the Scajaquada Creek.

SEQRA/Sustainable Development

Brendan Mehaffy was present to discuss the City SEQRA Ordinance. It was agreed that Mr. Mehaffy and Dr. Gardella would hold a discussion regarding SEQRA issues prior to the next meeting.

Recycling

Andrew Goldstein presented information on the City's recycling efforts and the proposed legislation drafted by Jim Brem. Mr. Goldstein solicited comments from the commission regarding the legislation regarding pros and cons for apartment buildings, costs and mandatory enforcement. There was a general discussion regarding disposal costs, trucking costs, collection efficiency, and enforcement.

It was BEMC's position that the commission generally encourages expanding the recycling efforts if a cost increase is not overly burdensome. Economic data was required to more fully assess the impact of the proposed legislation. The subject to a regional approach to recycling was discussed.

Mr. Goldstein mentioned that the City was about to issue an RFP for recycling activities in the City. The program would include the use of 65-gallon totes to be used instead of the now used recycling boxes.

David Hahn-Baker talked about composting efforts and asked Mr. Goldstein about expanding composting in the City. Mr. Goldstein replied that some composting was being done for commercial operations but that residential composting was very challenging to start up and was not an activity that the City was initiating in the near future.

The BEMC indicated to Mr. Goldstein that they would be willing to review any proposal that was received regarding recycling efforts and would support the effort if it was found to be acceptable.

Mr. Goldstein explained that the grant that funded the City's Recycling Coordinator position was due to run out by the end of the year and would appreciate the Commissions support to make the case that the position should be established on a permanent basis.

Community Gardening

There was some discussion regarding a proposed composting facility and a blueberry farm.

LED Streetlights – no discussion this meeting

Brownfields Update

An update was given regarding progress of 90 Hopkins and 1318 Niagara Street projects.

Pest Management Board – no discussion this meeting

Green House Gas Inventory and Report - No report this meeting

Other

Membership

Awaiting paperwork regarding appointment of Art Robinson and John Bauda

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM. Next scheduled meeting is to be October 21, 2009.