

**DRAFT March Meeting Minutes**

<b>SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION</b>	<b>HYBRID MEETING</b>
<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>STAFF CONFERENCE ROOM</b>
<b>March 28, 2024</b>	<b>AND MICROSOFT TEAMS</b>
	<b>211 WEST ASPEN AVENUE</b>
	<b>4:30 P.M.</b>

**Vision:** The City of Flagstaff is a culture and community that thrives in response to the Climate Crisis.

**Mission:** To advise Sustainability Division Staff on matters related to climate and sustainability, support community projects through Neighborhood Sustainability Grants, and provide feedback to the City Council on sustainability issues.

Members of the public may join the meeting online, via Microsoft Teams.

**1. Call to Order**

- A. The Chair position was vacant for this meeting, therefore Tia Hatton, Staff Commission Liaison, called the meeting to order at 4:33.

**2. ROLL CALL**

*NOTE: One or more Commissioner may be in attendance through other technological means.*

Commissioner Noah Baker	Commissioner Mary Ellen Metzger – Present
Commissioner Priscilla Boateng – Present	Vice Chair Amy Wolkowinsky – Present
Commissioner Kristen Konkell – Present	Commissioner Tom Lammie – Present
	Commissioner Rodger Scurlock – Present

Others present: *Jim McCarthy (City Council), Vice Mayor/Council Liaison Austin Aslan, Sustainability Director Nicole Antonopoulos, Steve Thompson (Sustainability Supervisor), Tia Hatton (Staff Commission Liaison and Sustainability Coordinator), Sanoma Boynton (Stream Stewards Coordinator), Kallie Klein (Climate Communication and Engagement Coordinator), Genevieve Pearthree (Climate Analyst), Marisa Miller (Administrative Specialist), Michelle McNulty (Planning Director), Professional Energy Auditor with Cozy Home (Public)*

**3. Land Acknowledgment**

The Sustainability Commission humbly acknowledges the ancestral homelands of this area's Indigenous nations and original stewards. These lands, still inhabited by Native descendants, border mountains sacred to Indigenous peoples. We honor them, their legacies, their traditions, and their continued contributions. We celebrate their past, present, and future generations who will forever know this place as home.

#### **4. Public Comment**

At this time, any member of the public may address the Commission on any subject within their jurisdiction that is not scheduled before the Commission on that day. Due to Open Meeting Laws, the Commission cannot discuss or act on items presented during this portion of the agenda. To address the Commission on an item that is on the agenda, please use the Teams Chat function: simply type in "public comment" to indicate to the Chair that you would like to comment. The Chair will then recognize you when it is time for public comment, and staff will unmute your microphone if needed.

- A. Councilmember Jim McCarthy stopped in briefly to thank everyone on behalf of the Council for the good, important work the Commission and Staff do.
- B. Steven Thompson, Sustainability Supervisor, provided information about the Division's signature annual Earth Day event, taking place at Bushmaster Park on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M. He invited Commissioners to attend or get involved: either by highlighting the work the Commission does or by taking part in other volunteer opportunities. He also said that staff will ensure there is a posted potential quorum.

#### **5. Approval of Minutes (February)**

- A. Commissioner Metzger moved and Commissioner Konkell seconded to approve the February minutes. Approved by vote: 5-0

#### **6. Business**

Commissioner Metzger moved and Commissioner Wolkowinsky seconded a motion to move Agenda Item 6e to 6a because Director Antonopoulos was available only for the beginning of the meeting. Approved, motion passes with no objection.

A. Update/Recap on the Petition to Revise the Carbon Neutrality Plan, Sustainability Staff Informational

- Director Antonopoulos was in the process of submitting a large EPA grant and was unavailable to stay for the rest of the meeting. Commissioner Metzger asked that the EPA grant be added as a future agenda item and Ms. Hatton stated she would send a recap of the EPA grant to Commission members.
- At the City Council meeting earlier that week, the Director presented the staff recommendation not to reprioritize the Climate Neutrality Plan (CNP) to address wildfire flooding and drought, and instead to let the 15 other formal plans/projects approved by Council continue to focus on those issues.
  - Commissioner Konkell stated that Ms. Antonopoulos did a great job at Council, that she was poised and answered their questions well.

B. Introductions - Commissioners and Staff

- New Commissioners Lammie and Scurlock, Commissioners Boateng, Konkell, Metzger, and Wolkowinsky, and staff members Tia Hatton, Marisa Miller, and Genevieve Pearthree introduced themselves.

C. Land Availability Suitability Study/Code Analysis Update and Q&A, presented by Michelle McNulty, City of Flagstaff Planning Director

- The purpose of the study is to assess what is working and what is not, to address planning and resilience needs, to deliver data in order to "right-size" code changes and provide a forum for coordination between state divisions.
- Commissioner Metzger asked questions regarding the tree coverage requirement (residential commercial industrial projects are required to retain 30% of their tree coverage). Director McNulty clarified that:
  - Designated buildable areas may be constrained by environmental factors such as tree retention requirements, excessive slope, etc.

- For regional roads, any trees in the way of a new roadway being built do not count towards the percentage of tree coverage retention required, but for smaller roads they do count those trees in the total for that development.
- Regarding housing, identified “opportunity sites” were evaluated by the readiness of the site and its potential for significant residential yield. Only about seven sites are high opportunity and already have a high infrastructure level. In response to Commissioners’ questions, Director McNulty answered the following:
  - Annexation is not off the table, but the City would need to extend its service boundaries, systems already need to be upgraded, and the goal is to be efficient with the land the City has now.
  - The Housing Plan specifies 8000 units (bedrooms) as the target number to add for density purposes.
  - In terms of the economic structure of housing, the Housing Plan policy is that all types of housing shall be spread across the community/developments.
  - Infill is typically a developed area with vacant lots that are rebuilt/repurposed, for example with new housing.
- Some housing issues include the need to rezone some Rural Residential/Estate zones to higher density, to create individual lots in unsubdivided areas, to ensure rezoning meets housing and climate goals, and to keep in mind households vulnerable to displacement if housing capacity does not keep up with community needs. Sustainable building and affordable housing incentives have not been very economically compelling for community members to pursue; how can we better incentivize? Some sustainable building incentives include water resource protection and electric vehicle (EV) charging, as well as all-electric buildings.
- Director McNulty requested any comments by the 16th so they may be included when her team presents them to City Council.

D. Introduction to Flagstaff Sustainability Office Equity Work and Equity Assessment Tool, presented by Jenna Ortega, Climate Engagement Analyst

- The Sustainability Office is developing a plan to ensure equity is actively being integrated into all its work. In the Flagstaff Climate Neutrality Plan (CNP), one overarching goal is to address climate change in a way that prioritizes those most impacted and to ensure the cost and benefits of adaptation and mitigation are equitably distributed across the community. The Flagstaff Sustainability Office (FSO) Equity Plan, including the FSO Equity Assessment, was created for the Division to evaluate all its programs. At a future Commission meeting, the Equity Assessment will be applied to the Neighborhood Sustainability Grants program. In response to Commissioner questions:
  - Genevieve Pearthree, Climate Analyst, said that because Flagstaff is a small community, the usefulness of census and other survey data is a limited tool to determine which groups are represented in the City; our community partners are another tool used to determine demographic data.

- Ms. Hatton is compiling information for the next meeting, perhaps a list of all individuals that received the Neighborhood Sustainability Grant in the last 5 years, a project-by-neighborhood map. Commissioner Metzger said we need to see the demographics relative to those neighborhoods as well to assess equity in the community to write rubrics that support good outcomes with these grants. Staff said the assessment tool is designed to get a baseline of the populations we are currently serving and to determine what the FSO is doing well and what needs improvement.
- Staff heard suggestions to add transparency (what the Office is requesting and how it distributes funding) into the accountability category, to possibly reward extra points for those applications that support underserved communities, and to look at the distribution of funding across types of projects to ensure equity (possibly rewarding more points to categories where there are not as many applicants). Outreach was identified by staff as an area with room for improvement.

E. Regional Plan & the Sustainability Commission: Update and Next Steps, presented by Genevieve Pearthree, Climate Analyst, and Tia Hatton, Staff Commission Liaison

- Climate Analyst Genevieve Pearthree presented information about the Region Plan. The current Regional Plan 2030, guiding Flagstaff's growth with regard to land use and transportation, is being updated to the 2045 planning horizon. A Regional Plan Committee is reviewing the chapters (water and energy are the upcoming chapters), and there are opportunities for public input.
- In an answer to Commissioner questions, Ms. Pearthree explained that the Plan is not meant to be prescriptive but instead serves as a guide for growth. Divisions refer to the Plan whenever a parcel comes in to be rezoned.
- The Sustainability Commission has been asked to review the Energy and Growth and Land Use chapters and send a representative to the April 10<sup>th</sup> Regional Plan Committee meeting (6 P.M. to 8 P.M.). A subcommittee can speak on behalf of the Sustainability Commission. There was discussion regarding the formality of the subcommittee and Ms. Hatton said she will research the legal requirements for subcommittee meetings, but that it is probably subject to open meeting laws.
- Commissioner Scurlock motioned and Commissioner Metzger seconded the motion to appoint a subcommittee consisting of Commissioners Lammie, Metzger, and Wolkowinsky to work on Regional Plan update chapters as they come out, specifically those for energy and land use and growth. No objections, motion adopted.
- Update: In subsequent discussions with city staff, it came to light the Commission will be asked to provide feedback during a future public comment period and this subcommittee/working group will be dissolved.

F. Announce Chair Elections, presented by Tia Hatton, Commission Staff Liaison

- The Commission Chair sets meeting agendas, is the presiding officer that runs Commission meetings, and announces motions and the outcomes of motions. The Commission terms are for 2 years.
- Ms. Hatton requested that anyone interested in serving as the Commission Chair send her an email prior to the next Commission meeting.

**7. To and From**

- A. Ms. Hatton announced that time had run out for this item and mentioned the Earth Day Celebration on April 20, 2024 at Bushmaster Park from 11:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

**8. Future Agenda Item Requests**

- A. Ms. Hatton announced that time had run out for this item and mentioned Commissioner Metzger's request to add an update on the EPA grant.

**9. Adjournment**

**Tia Hatton adjourned the meeting at 6:34 P.M.**