

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT
June 6, 2016

After determining that a quorum of the Committee of the Environment of the Denton City Council was present, the Environmental Committee thereafter convened into an Open Meeting on Monday, June 6, 2016 at 2:02pm in the City Council Work Session Room, 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas.

Present: Council Member Dalton Gregory, Council Member Joey Hawkins and Council Member Keely Briggs

Also Present: Howard Martin, ACM; Kenneth Banks, Director; Deborah Viera, Environmental Compliance Coordinator; Stephanie Corley, Environmental Services Sustainability & Grant Coordinator; Kathy Jack, Conservation Program Coordinator; Brent Heath, Exec Mgr of Energy Delivery; Jerry Fielder, Engineering Division Mgr; Brad Watts, Line Superintendent; and Kim Mankin, Administrative Supervisor

1. REGULAR MEETING:

A. COE16-008 - Consider approval of the Mobility Committee meeting minutes of April 4, 2016.

Approved as circulated.

B. COE16-011 – Receive a report, view presentation, and hold discussion on the possible use and status of LEDs for thoroughfare and street lighting. Provide a report on the status of LED thoroughfare lighting and the actions being taken by Denton Municipal Electric to consider use and viability within the City of Denton.

Brent Heath started the presentation and introduced Brad Watts and Jerry Fielder. Heath gave an update from a November 2008 presentation. Over the past decade staff has converted all the older mercury vapor street lights to high pressure sodium street lights. Also purchased only ‘dark sky’ compliant cut off fixtures on the cobra heads. Checks and audits on the street counts are completed monthly.

Gregory asked Heath to talk about the ‘dark sky’ factor, he has received letters from citizens. Heath elaborated (IDA International Dark sky Association) stating that DME uses ‘dark sky’ fixtures to cut down the light pollution. Gregory asked the percentage of street lights that are ‘dark sky’. Heath said all new change outs or installations since 2002.

In 2005 there was a meeting regarding how to save money. Many new type technologies have been researched for this savings.

Jerry Fielder then came to give a presentation regarding street lights. DME currently has three different standards street lights. The street light count is 7218 total. There 172 that are TxDOT street lights. Fielder then went over the monthly rate for those lights and billing.

Briggs asked about the TxDOT lights that DME maintains. Fielder answered there are lights on TxDOT roads (Loop 288) that DME maintains. The City of Denton has exceeded the population limits of this contract, DME will meet with TxDOT in the near future to discuss this contract and have them take those lights back.

Martin added the internal streets that are TxDOT roadways, DME maintains. Watts added those are normal street lights.

The Street Lighting Standards that DME follows was read by Fielder. He pointed out the portion that stated the lights would not be more than 300 feet intervals. The roadway classifications were shown as well.

The high, medium and low pedestrian conflict areas was talked about which is usage by pedestrians. This was talked about because of two roads that were treated the same but have very different usage; Western Blvd and Heritage Trail. There needs to be consideration in the future that the rules be changed in areas where there will be lots of population.

The detailed information for spacing and lighting was reported by Fielder. A study was requested of our light vendor for the amount of light that hits the ground with variations.

Gregory asked if there is a study for lights per lane mile instead of lights per capita. Fielder will find the answer.

There are several LED pilot projects, they were shown on a map.

DME is prepared for an LED demo project. This study will be about two to three years long. All the details and scope of work was discussed.

30.34 3, 4, 5

Gregory suggested DME staff let planning know there are new improvements and standards in lighting that will come soon so they can let the developers know.

Fielder then talked about the pros and cons of LED lighting.

Pros: Technology has improved over the years
Provides energy cost savings and extended life (reduced operating cost)
Light is more “aimable”
Cities are implementing or investigating conversion to LEDs

Cons: Initial costs are still 2-3 X higher (few years 4-4.5X)
Color temperature is “cold”
No uniform standards for LED manufacturing
May require a closer pole spacing to achieve same results as HPS
Must adopt rate tariff

Fielder then talked about the resources that DME has and uses.

Next Steps include: Execute 2-3 year testing and evaluation project
Choose vendor(s) whose product(s) meet or exceed requirements
Develop plan and gain approval for full implementation
Execute plan

Hawkins asked if the vendors would donate the lights to participate in the test. Fielder answered yes.

Briggs ask if the cost will be even better than what they are now. Fielder answered yes they will be better.

The Committee wants DME to forward, send executive summary for all City Council members.

C. COE16-010 - Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding Denton Development Code Subchapter 17 Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).

Deborah Viera gave the presentation. The City of Denton provides protection to four different types of ESA's that include; undeveloped floodplains, riparian buffers, water related habitats and upland habitats.

The ESA regulations not only needs to be updated, it needs to be enforced. Any revisions may require changes to other subchapters of the Denton Development Code (DDC).

Staff is looking to update DDC Subchapter 17 because since its inception in 2002 has not been updated. Many other changes have been made to the DDC. Better wording and phrasing could be used to make the code more understandable. In 2002 there was a vision in the DDC, has that changed or is the vision the same.

Hawkins asked if there is on a state level or federal level that helps regulate ESA's. Viera answered there are examples to go by. The FEMA 100 year flood plain has limits established that we go by. Denton tries to stay within a footprint that has been provided as not to cause additional problems. Martin added that there are regulations behind all the ESA's with the exception of Upland Habitat.

Viera went on to say that many of the flood plains in the City of Denton are unstudied. The maps are good approximation that FEMA has about the limits. If your property is within 200 feet of what FEMA has on the map for flood plains, there needs to be a study to assume fully developed conditions. This will help know how much the water will rise in the event of a flood.

Martin added that the development that was allowed prior to the establishment of the DDC in 2002 is now creating problems in terms of flooding.

Viera then went over some of the types of code revisions necessary; corrections, clarifications, additions and changes.

Next steps include bringing code revisions back to this Committee (COE) for consideration. Once the draft codes revisions are approved by the COE and reviewed by the Legal Department revisions will be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission. After obtaining a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission, staff will present to City Council for adoption.

Gregory clarified that the reasoning for proposing the next steps are to make it more possible for staff to implement our goal which is to protect environmentally sensitive areas. We are lacking certain rules in our current development code that give the tools to accomplish this. Viera agreed.

The committee's consensus was to move forward.

Briggs would like the paperwork red-lined to easily see the changes.

Gregory asked when this comes back to this committee, please remind them what the ESA functions are what they mean.

D. COE16-009 - ACM Update:

1. Traffic Signal Light Emitting Diode Update
2. Matrix

No change in the matrix

2. CONCLUDING ITEMS

A. Under Section 551.042 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, respond to inquiries from the Committee on the Environment or the public with specific factual information or recitation of policy, or accept a proposal to place the matter on the agenda for an upcoming meeting AND Under Section 551.0415 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, provide reports about items of community interest regarding which no action will be taken, to include: expressions of thanks, congratulations, or condolence; information regarding holiday schedules; an honorary or salutary recognition of a public official, public employee, or other citizen; a reminder about an upcoming event organized or sponsored by the governing body; information regarding a social, ceremonial, or community event organized or sponsored by an entity other than the governing body that was attended or is scheduled to be attended by a member of the governing body or an official or employee of the municipality; or an announcement involving an imminent threat to the public health and safety of people in the municipality that has arisen after the posting of the agenda.

Briggs – Green sense rebate update

Gregory – Tree canopy 1960 compared to now

Katherine - Bee City USA will go to City Council in Friday packet

Gregory - Clear Creek Natural Heritage Update

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:25 p.m.