

FINAL

CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD
CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE – 1ST FLOOR
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33301
July 22, 2013 – 6:30 PM

			Cumulative Attendance 1/2013 through 12/2013	
MEMBERS	APPT BY	ATTENDANCE	PRESENT	ABSENT
1. Valerie Amor, Chair	M	P	6	1
2. Alena Alberani, Vice Chair	II	P	7	0
3. Daniel Ayers	M	P	3	1
4. Steven Cook	I	A	5	2
5. Vicki Eckels	IV	P	6	1
6. Darin Lentner	IV	P	6	1
7. Jim Moyer	III	P	7	0
8. Mate Thitisawat	C	P	6	1
9. Jim Hetzel	I	A	3	1
10. Barbara Walker	II	Resigned	1	3
11. Cheryl Whitfield	III	P	3	0

Also Present

Joshua Nichols, Staff Liaison – Office of Sustainability
Heather Steyn – Office of Sustainability
Citizens interested in the Agriculture Ordinance

1. Call of Order/Roll Call

Chair Amor called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm, roll was called, and it was determined a quorum was present. It was noted that Barbara Walker has resigned from the Board due to other commitments. Jim Moyer arrived at 6:43pm.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 2013

Motion made by Ms. Eckels and seconded by Ms. Alberani to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2013 meeting. There was a minor correction to the minutes – Frehenly does not have a “d” in its name. **Motion** made to accept the minutes by Ms. Eckels and seconded by Mr. Ayers. In a voice vote, the Board motion passed unanimously.

3. Staff Liaison Report– Presented by Joshua Nichols

President’s Climate Action Plan

President released a climate action plan that has several action points including energy reduction goals, greenhouse gas emissions, fuel savings in federal fleet, better buildings challenge. Office of

Sustainability will be putting together a document for Commission and the various departments with bullet points to summarize the plan.

PACE

PACE is scheduled for the August 20, 2013 Commission meeting as a Conference Agenda item.

Single Stream Recycling Materials Accepted

The City has a new recycling contract and we will be able to cross off another item on the Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) in that the recycling firm will now accept plastic plant containers (listed as #6 on the #1 through #7 range of plastic materials). The City will be printing new recycling handouts with the updated list of recyclables.

LED Lighting in City Hall

LED lights have been retrofitted and installed in various parts of City Hall. They have been installed in the Commission Chambers. The Mayor will announce the change in the August 20, 2013 meeting.

4. New Business

Agriculture Ordinance Workshop

The original Agriculture ordinance was passed in July 2012. Chair Amor gave her support of it at the time with the caveat that one year later she would get to rework it and the Commission and Mayor agreed to that stipulation that she could conduct a workshop to reexamine it. Today's workshop discusses potential additions/changes to the ordinance. SAB will listen to recommendations and make a decision on what will be presented to Commission. In attendance are: Anthony Olivieri (FHEED), Chad Scott (Flagler Community Gardens), Gwenna Cotchak, Wendy Klepner, Melissa Klepner (Frehenly), Michael Madfis (Fort Lauderdale Vegetables), and John Albee (The Urban Farmer/Urban Farming Institute).

Scott Strawbridge from the Fort Lauderdale Housing Authority wrote to Chair Amor urging that the City rescind the existing ordinance and replace it with a broad and inclusive policy that recognizes the right to grow food plants the same as any other landscape material and limit this broad policy to one paragraph or less. Gary Rogers from the City of Lauderdale Lakes had noted that they have started a community garden to market garden and they have had issues since the start. He notes that their City's focus is to rewrite the B3 zoning to allow fresh food sales on commercial land. It is noted by Michael Madfis (?? Or John Albee) that the City of Fort Lauderdale requires you to get an occupational license if you want to sell your produce. This occupational license is not required by the State. The State's cottage industry law exempts them from getting occupational licenses (State preemption) and it's a tricky situation in Fort Lauderdale since they require such license. It's easier to just get the license than try to have the City change this requirement. John Albee notes that Pompano Beach is partnering with his group to build an urban farm and they are aware of this State statute and have applied for the agriculture exemption. Michael Madfis notes that it took a long time by the City to approve his application.

They discuss the issue of Bees. Mr. Albee said that the State controls (as of June 2012) this bees and beehives and states that according to the State statute you can put a beehive anywhere in on your

property. The State makes requirements for a beehive including letting the State know where the hive is located and register it so that it can be inspected. Since the State allows it, there should be some mention in the ordinance that Bees are regulated by State statute. Mr. Scott represents Flagler Community Garden and they are in the process of getting City of Fort Lauderdale site plan approval. They would be interested in having bees on their site. They weren't aware of the State statute and had not added bees to their initial plan.

Mr. Olivieri states that the ordinance should not have been passed prior to a policy being in place – similar to what Scott Strawbridge had suggested. Ms. Eckels feels that to correct what was done a year ago, the policy should be developed and in order to make the existing ordinance better we need to define actions such as A, B, and C. Mr. Ayers asks that if the existing ordinance were rescinded, how would that adversely impact the City? Mr. Madfis suggests there be a suspension of any restrictions for 2 years and then evaluate what farms and gardens develop during that time frame. Ms. Whitfield disagrees with this suggestion because there could be potential impacts on neighbors if there wasn't some regulatory authority involved in the farm/garden development. Chair Amor discusses the background for the ordinance and says that the City used the Seattle agriculture ordinance as their starting point and removed items from it that they didn't think would fit in with the City's viewpoint. Chair Amor agrees that the ordinance can't be rescinded because that would mean that Flagler Community Gardens would be in limbo. She notes that at the time of the ordinance development, there were several churches and communities interested in starting a garden but they have disappeared. Mr. Lentner does not believe that the Commission will suspend the ordinance and suggests they examine other components of the ordinance. Mr. Olivieri suggests that we examine the ordinance and see what can be struck out and what could be added to it.

There is mention in the ordinance about using nonresidential land vs. residential land and since many low income residents wouldn't have access to higher-value commercial land, this part could be struck. Chair Amor suggests that the minimum square footage for an urban farm should be struck. Mr. Albee suggests that any surplus land be used for cultivation. Ms. Eckels suggests that a policy be written that is broad but reflects the Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) and Sustainability goals. Chair Amor thinks that the ordinance remains in place and keep refining it and making the ordinance and policy align as close as possible. The SAB board would like participants in today's workshop to bring their draft policy statements back to the next SAB meeting in August so that suggestions can be incorporated into a broad policy statement. Mr. Lentner suggests the policy statement includes the food security and economic barriers as discussed in the meeting. Chair Amor suggests the policy includes the wording "increased access to local food production."

A discussion occurs about whether there should be a regulation on creating a natural environment (without pesticides) in the ordinance rather than in the policy. The discussion then moves to how often someone from the City would come around to inspect the site for this issue. The decision is that the State regulations will control the issue of pesticides. A debate ensues about whether gas-powered equipment should be used or whether it should be closely aligned with the SAP and not have gas-powered equipment usage.

The discussion moves on to how Seattle has created an informational sheet on Urban Farming/Community Gardens. Seattle gives its citizens a simple sheet describing each aspect and what municipal laws or State statutes control the aspect and what you need to do for a specific activity. There is an examination of the current City of Fort Lauderdale agricultural application and it is noted that the application is confusing and doesn't define what an Urban Farm is versus a Community Garden. There are items in the application that do not make sense such as proof of ownership – which you wouldn't have if you were doing a Community Garden on shared property. The current application asks for a survey including location and size of current trees on property. A site plan, engineering plan, elevations, landscape plans, etc. The group discussion is that the City's application is a barrier to implementing a community garden and perhaps those church groups who were initially interested in doing a garden saw the checklists with this application and backed off. The ordinance does not discuss at all bringing food to market – for an urban farm use.

It is felt that there should be a vision statement outlining what the SAB feels should be the goals and focus of the ordinance for a sustainable food system. Perhaps a Pilot program would be good to implement in the City for items such as introducing hens into the City. Hens would be part of pest management as well and limiting fertilizer inputs. Eggs provide high quality protein for citizens. Urban farms on commercial zoned land can have hens on their property as long as they are 300 feet from residential zoned property. Mr. Scott doesn't think his Community Garden could have hens if the 300 feet limit is in place. This will be researched.

Mr. Madfis reiterates that Urban farms should be allowed in residential zones. That is where they are most needed to give citizens easy access to fresh produce. He feels that Community Gardens shouldn't be in residential areas because farmers get in and get out and don't have loud noises or activities. A Community Garden would have socializing and noise occurring within a residential neighborhood. If an Urban farm could sell once a week to locals, it would be helpful to both the farmer and citizens. Farmer's Markets are not easily accessible. The one in downtown is a problem because you have to pay to park just to buy some low value produce. Plantation and Tamarac have successful Farmer's Markets with free parking. Sustainable agriculture is closely related to the neighborhood it's produced in and having cottage industries bring their products into a local park would be beneficial for citizens. Farmers should be able to sell directly from their farm. Mr. Albee feels that for small producers there needs to be an equitable outlet and they should be able to sell within their neighborhood and have it as a community-based activity.

Mr. Scott says that their community garden will not be selling their product but would like that option. They would be willing to have local vendors come in to sell their product. Their particular garden is leasing a 4x4 plot to individuals for personal consumption. Other community gardens should have that opportunity if they want to sell their produce to reduce their mortgage, etc.

Pompano Beach and Oakland Park do not have policies or ordinances. Mr. Albee has a working relationship with them and both cities are excited to have urban farms/community gardens within their borders. In Pompano, they went through the site plan, and received a unanimous vote to proceed. They have a special exception from Pompano that lasts 5 years and at the end of that

time, it can become permanent. They did not have to go through Phase I or Phase II environmental assessments. For Oakland Park, there will be a culinary district and they wanted to have an urban farm associated with it. The City owned some land (as parks) and this will be the farm. Broward College will likely create a culinary school in this area. There was an ordinance written for the culinary district. They also have composting onsite.

The City of Fort Lauderdale's agriculture policy should be sustainable, equitable, and healthy. Then you can proceed with a vision statement. Broward County has a statement in their Comprehensive Plan that has climate change element and discusses having a network of community gardens as well as food security as part as climate adaptation mitigation. Food security is important to climate adaptation. The City could ground their policy in the recently passes County Comprehensive Plan. At the same time, the ordinance needs to be examined with the mindset of the policy to see what is in conflict with the policy and what needs to be struck/revised/added. These both need to be done in parallel at the next meeting.

Mr. Scott notes that the part in the ordinance/application that discusses signage is a problem. They're trying to raise \$100,000 and have sponsors and the size of the sign allowed won't let them put the sponsor information on it. They have to let everyone know who their sponsors are. Mr. Madfis noted that the garden developed in Dania had 2 informational kiosks that listed their sponsors and the purpose of their farm.

Mr. Olivieri noted that there were model policies online that he used in TOUCH and will base this as a template and send to Mr. Nichols. SAB would like the policy at least a week before their next meeting. The APA guidelines of urban agriculture have all the ordinances that allow poultry, animal husbandry from Alabama to Maine and have components of local plans of urban agriculture and policies and how their framed. This is a good resource that should be included in the planning of the City's ordinance. Mr. Madfis and Mr. Albee will go through the ordinance and do strikethroughs. Mr. Thitisawat will invite his FAU architecture students to the next meeting since they research codes as part of their curriculum. His students have been allowed by the City to work on a piece of property near Sistrunk and it's in a commercial area that has an abandoned building. Instead of turning that into a green residential building to demonstrate different technologies, he thinks they can incorporate a community garden or urban farm idea into the project. This could be a good pilot project that the City can be involved in and can learn how to deal with the ordinance. The students could start with gathering information so that they could contribute to the ordinance or policy writing. They could create a file in DropBox and SAB could list concerns such as runoff, pesticides and they could collect codes or regulations that regulate the different issues and point to different departments that could use this information. Mr. Madfis thinks that students would be good at working at the policy and where one would start from and how to activate all the different people. Chair Amor suggests that the students look at the Dania Beach PATCH farm and how their codes allow that as well as Lauderdale Lakes and how they are shaping their code. Mr. Lentner notes that in Atlanta, GA they are creating a beltline project which is connecting the whole city through their abandoned interior railway. They are creating a green walkway incorporating sustainable living things and community gardens are being connected in various parts. The City of Fort Lauderdale

could do something like this to create a connection such as having the various community gardens and urban farms be allowed to sell in markets in parks. The policy should encourage the parks to allow the sale of produce in the parks. Atlanta had significant partnership with corporations to create markets in their parks. Perhaps the parks that are too small for major events like ball games could be used for markets.

Pompano Beach's Fairview Park has the city participating by putting up fences, etc. They don't have ordinances or codes for it. Ms. Whitfield notes that a 5-day approval process for the application is very good – it takes at least 30 days in California. Mr. Madfis said that it took a while for the application approval because he also applied for a fence permit and Zoning tied this permit to the application and then the application was lost. He had to resubmit it.

5. Communications to the City Commission

The Marina Lofts/Raintree SAB communication was presented to the Commission at the last afternoon meeting. There wasn't much discussion at that time by Commission other than the board clarified that SAB didn't want the tree moved. Chair Amor spoke at the meeting and offered to meet with Commissioners to show how to keep the project going forward without moving the tree. She will be meeting with Commissioners Trantalis and Roberts and the Mayor to discuss. Ms. Eckels attended her pre-commission meeting and clarified the communication and noted that the Raintree would be a positive feature to any restaurant/shop development there. Tom Chancy will be coming to all of Chair Amor's meetings with Commissioners and the Mayor. He'll talk about the dimensions for the tree and she will talk about the architectural development for the site. Mr. Thitisawat notes that a professor at FAU gave his students an assignment to design at the same site to see what they would come up with. Mr. Ayers feels that there would be incredible pushback by the developer if Commission didn't go forward with the approval. It's noted that the developer wants to move the tree near the railroad tracks. This is an out-of-way location.

Josh Nichols notes that the positive feedback communication to Commission previously discussed at the last meeting has to be drafted by the SAB – Staff isn't allowed to do this. He will get together all the City's accomplishments so that it can be worked on next meeting. He will not be present at the next meeting because he is attending an APWA conference in Chicago.

6. Items for Next Meeting:

Agriculture ordinance workshop will continue next meeting.

7. Public Comment:

None.

8. Committee Comments:

Mr. Thitisawat asks Mr. Madfis and others in the committee to look at a student design competition submission they are doing for San Francisco which will have a community garden component.

Mr. Moyer notes that the Lauderdale Lakes community garden was submitted for the Broward County League of Cities Green Leaf Award. Also, the Deerfield Beach clothing recycling was approved as a County best practice. He was on this committee.

Chair Amor is having a children's summit on August 9th at the summer camp she runs. The children will write recommendations to be added to the DRC. It is at FAU's Davie campus auditorium.

Chair Amor just got a grant from Broward County Cultural Division to do Feed Your Creativity Art for Your Heart which celebrates local food production. They will be taking bicycles to create sculptures and place them in various locations – FAT Village is one location.

Ms. Eckels suggests that you do not keep your backup for your computer near your computer. Hers was stolen when her computer was stolen during a break-in. Back up things to the Cloud.

9. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:11 pm. **Motion** made by Ms. Eckels. Seconded by Mr. Moyer.

Next meeting date: August 26, 2013

[Minutes prepared by Mary Ann Johnston]

