



May 3, 2021

Citizens Environmental Quality Committee
Winona, Minnesota 55987

Dear Committee Members:

The next meeting of the Citizens Environmental Quality Committee meeting will be held virtually on **Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.** We will be using Zoom to video conference, with a call in option as well. To access Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85610993614>

Passcode: 55987

Optional Call in: +1 312 626 6799 Meeting ID (Web and call in): 856 1099 3614

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Review of April Meeting Minutes**
3. **Sustainability Plan Discussion (10 minutes)**
4. **Noise Pollution Discussion Update (5 Minutes)**
5. **Community Garden Planning Update (15 minutes)**
6. **Community Commercial Shared Kitchens (10 minutes)**
7. **Other Business (5 minutes)**
8. **Adjournment**

Sincerely,

John Howard

Natural Resources Sustainability Coordinator

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

DATE: Thursday April 1, 2021
TIME: Scheduled for 4:30 pm (Virtual Zoom Meeting)
PRESENT: Dan Hall, David Ruff, Niki Ciulla, Lynette Power
GUESTS: Brian Voerding (Engage Winona)
STAFF: John Howard, Katie Grannes (Community Forestry Corps), Kelsie Travers (GreenCorps)

1. **Call to Order:** Call to order at 4:34 PM by Dan Hall (Chair)
2. **Review and Approval of March 2021 Meeting Minutes:** Approval unanimously without alteration.
3. **Sustainability Plan Engagement:**

Brian provided an overview of the goal to have broad public engagement. Brian suggested starting the discussion with the CEQC with the six priority topics.

Priorities:

Dan does not see one glaring environmental issue that stands out – but many items to consider. Natural areas management seems to him to be a top priority. Dan believes much of the energy situation is more state and federal issue.

David said natural resource management is also his top priority. David said continuing to advance active transport, tighter development all help and add up to success over time.

Brian asked about criteria for making big decisions?

Dan said the City could encourage more renewable energy and efficiency with new development. Infill rather than expansion will be helpful.

Niki expressed her interest in learning from survey results since she is new to the area. She agrees that natural resource management is a priority for the community, and she is interested in the energy and benchmark topics, such as energy audits.

Brian asked about how CEQC sees itself being involved, and if there are areas which they expect to not engage in.

David noted that the CEQC members not in attendance are very passionate about community gardens, and residents approached the CEQC about the topic.

Dan discussed the advisory nature of the CEQC, which means they lack the resources or power to implement projects. Resident engagement has influenced CEQC work topics, such as the noise pollution discussed at the March meeting.

David said active transportation is a recurring focus, and the need to see active transportation as more than bike lanes. Niki concurs.

David said the lake water monitoring is another topic to focus on.

Brian next asked about what questions the CEQC would like answered through the engagement process. David is interested in seeing how natural resource management shows up. Seems there is an economic and values basis for having that be a focus.

Niki is really interested to knowing the stories about how residents are personally affected, and expect to be in the future.

Dan is similarly interested in seeing what the community says are major considerations. Some of the global concerns could be top of mind, but at our local level, hard to see immediate problems.

Brian described the preliminary survey results, and other themes from the conversations with stakeholders. Already 200 survey responses and 30 small group or one on one discussions. Flooding and water are common topics, natural areas are too – typically in terms of use. Public transportation has come up, as has natural resources. Use and enjoyment of natural resources comes up often.

Brian encouraged the CEQC to help with outreach to events.

Niki wondered about outreach plan on the survey, and how it was shared. Kelsie has not shared it with the steering committee yet. Niki asked if there are numerical survey goals or goals to vulnerable populations. Brian says he typically aims for 300-500, and looks like we will meet that. John noted that the survey will be open for a couple months at least.

Lynette says community gardens, as well as solar, wind and electric vehicles are very important.

4. **Noise Pollution:**

John summarized a message from another resident who reached out to express her issues with vehicle noise. John will follow up with the policy department to better understand enforcement situation.

Lynette recommends advertising greater enforcement.

Dan expects that the Fastenal office building will be highly impacted by jake braking. Dan noted that the speed limit does not decrease to 30 mph until near the bottom of the bridge. Thus moving the change in speed toward the top of the bridge and the warning sign to the start of the bridge might solve the problem. Lynette also recommends a sign indicating no jake braking, possibly at the base of the bridge.

David wonders if there is appetite to enforce motorcycle noise. Lynette would like to see that. Dan says enforcement is difficult to do since police need to be at the right place at the right time, otherwise it can't be observed.

Dan noticed that the City noise code (39.03 (d)) is not in effect on County and State highways. David wonders if state rules are in line with City ones to limit noise levels. Dan asked who is responsible for enforcement and able to make changes?

Lynette asked about stinky and smoky vehicle enforcement – what can be done. How do police enforce? Niki is somewhat reluctant to enforcement if it will impact poor populations. Niki sees potential for education in sustainability plan.

5. **Community Garden Planning Update:**

John provided an update that the Mayor appointed people to the community garden task force. Niki asked if there was anything needed before the task force to begin work. John said there are not barriers, and expects to meet soon.

6. **Other Business:** Dan noted that PFAS was found in the Winona landfill outflow. Dan relayed that the plastics industry has been working on this issue for about two years now. In plastics, the PFAS are seen as impurities. EU banned PFAS at 25 PPB or above, which is very stringent, and led to reformulations of some compounds.

John noted that the landfill drainage is sent to the Winona Waste Water Treatment plant.

7. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 5:47 pm. Motion by David, seconded by Lynette. Approval unanimous.

Notes prepared by John Howard.

CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 3. Sustainability Plan Discussion

PREPARED BY: John Howard

DATE: May 6, 2021

The City is proceeding with public engagement and outreach for the Sustainability plan. Engage Winona prepared a preliminary summary of themes from the engagement so far. The data will be updated as more surveys come in, so this is just a snapshot in time.

If you have not yet taken the sustainability survey, it is available here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/sustainabilityplansurvey>.



ENGAGEWINONA

City of Winona sustainability plan engagement update

ACTIVITIES

Stakeholder listening sessions

- 25-30 stakeholder listening sessions, ~125-150 direct participants
- Representation covers all community sectors

Survey

- 450+ responses
- First round of gift card winners announced, continued promotion through May

Business

- 6 completed surveys
- 6 registrations for April 28 roundtables
- May 14 Eggs & Issues

Digital

- Sustainability website page
- Late April: Miro asset map

Student/youth

- Classroom conversations
- Hands-on activities (Riverway, Bluffview)

Community

- Your hopes for a sustainable Winona - preK-12, community contest

Planned in-person

- Bluff Country Co-op - Wednesday, April 28-Saturday, May 1
- Winona Farmers Market - Saturday, May 8, 7:30am-12pm
- (Tentative) Lake Park Lodge - Saturday, May 15

Next steps

- **April/May:** Straggler stakeholder sessions
- **May:** Public engagement
- **April/May:** Business roundtables, Eggs & Issues
- **May:** K-12, community contest - your hopes for sustainability
- **May:** Digital engagement (Miro asset map + storytelling), continued survey promotion
- **May:** Additional targeted engagements (nonprofit leader conversation, Kids First@Maplewood, etc.)

EARLY FINDINGS, THEMES

Participants (survey)

- **Home:** 80-85% city of Winona; 10% surrounding; 5% Winona County
- **Roots:** 50% more than 10 years; 33% 0-5 years; 17% 5-10 years
- **Age:** Balanced distribution, from youth to age 80
- **Race/ethnicity:** 82-84% White, 4-6% Black, 3-5% Hispanic or Latino, 3-4% Native American, 3-4% Hmong or SE Asian, 1-2% multiple races
- **Gender:** 60% women, 35% men, 2% nonbinary
- **Household income:** Really balanced distribution, from 0-\$25K to \$150K+
- **Education:** Skews toward more highly educated: 25% high school-some college; 40% college degree
- **Children/family:** ~40% have at least one child at home

General priorities (survey)

- 98% - sustainability is very/extremely important; 40% said extremely
- 95% - Very/extremely important to protect Winona's natural resources
- 83% - Very/extremely important for city to be working to be more sustainable
- 70-80% - Very/extremely important to have equitable outcomes, economic resiliency, mitigate climate change

Most engaged issues

- Water
- Food
- Natural areas management

Least engaged issues*

- Waste and materials
- Energy
- Transportation

**Not for a lack of conversation or ideas, just a feeling of less power/ability to influence change*

Top city government priorities

- Protect what we have - especially water and bluffs
- Environmental goals+benchmarks baked into all city processes and approvals - code, inspections, reviews, permits, zoning, etc.
- Closer collaboration with the business community, especially new development
- Education + outreach + incentivized support
- Proactive communication + support for grassroots efforts
- Maintenance staff trained (buffers, natives, landscaping, salt) and following through
- A showcase place for education, demonstrations, etc. (Lake Park)
- Culture, policy, education shift on residential+commercial yards, landscaping
- Meaningful role for Citizens Environmental Quality Committee
- City needs to be a champion - or champion a champion

Top citizen actions

- Community gardens
- Reimagining residential yards
- Dark skies
- Hiking trails volunteerism
- Bike infrastructure
- Engaging specific populations (youth, people of color, retirees)

Citizens' biggest desires for self-changes

- Growing food
- Native plantings
- Recycling/compost/organic waste

Preparedness/ability (survey)

- City: Somewhat (50%)
- Community: Somewhat (50%)
- Residents: Not so much (25%)
- Business/organizations: Somewhat-very (40%)

Defining sustainability

- Many definitions, but generally condense into: Preparing for the future by protecting and maintaining what we have, while limiting the damage we've already created
- Setting a strong example - being a sustainability leader
- Protecting resources for (literally) children, future generations

Biggest opportunity or impact

(What one thing should city be working on, what one thing would make biggest impact)

- All across the board; no standout single issue or issue area

Most present fears

- Flooding
- Lack of political courage; too many loud voices opposing change
- Water quality
- Failure to protect Winona's natural resources, our largest, most marketable quality-of-life assets
- Climate change has gone too far - nothing we can do locally