



**Environmental Management Commission  
Meeting Minutes – March 13, 2013**

Meeting Location: Mid-America Regional Council

Commissioners present: Carol Adams, Jensen Adams, Bob Berkebile, Tom Brink, Julie Coon, Jim Hansen, Marty Kraft, Sal Madge, Robin Martinez, Jason Parson, Jack Schrimsher

Staff: Dennis Murphey and Jerry Shechter – OEQ, Matt Gigliotti – Law Dept, Scott Cahail – Water Services, Andrew Bracker – City Planning & Development (CPD)

Guests: Ron McLinden

The Co-chairs called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm; a quorum was present

- A. Welcome and Introductions - The Chair welcomed commissioners and guests. Special welcome was offered to newly appointed Commissioner Julie Coon.
- B. Minutes – Robin Martinez made a motion, seconded by Jack Schrimsher, to approve the minutes of the meeting of February, 2013 as presented. The motion was approved.

C. Waste to Energy – Andrew Bracker, Brownfields Program Coordinator, CPD

The City has been involved in securing feasibility studies for energy production from biomass and from photovoltaics at the site of the old Municipal Farm adjacent to the sports stadia. The primary staff on the project are Andy Bracker and Gerald Williams, CPD. There are about 427 acres at this site. The studies are focused on putting the minimally used land into productive use after years of varying institutional uses. BNIM has helped develop a sustainable reuse plan which was adopted by City Council. Potential uses include urban agriculture, as well as energy production. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had money available for a grant to use National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) in Golden, CO and the two concepts KCMO wanted to develop are biomass combined heating and power, and solar – both on a commercial scale. About 15 acres of the land is an old landfill. The process is early in the feasibility study regarding biomass tying together municipal functions such as wood waste. A biomass plant might potentially utilize 75,000 to 100,000 cubic yards of wood waste that currently goes to Missouri Organics. It may be possible to co-locate the feedstock to the biomass facility.

At the same time, a partnership has been formed with MRI Global (which manages NREL) who are interested in the project. They have come up with an idea to find the most ideal end user of the output, such as a high technology greenhouse complex, and co-locate at the study site. This would provide for a local supply of food as well as education potentials. The City has had discussions with KCP&L and has determined (1) the City cannot replace coal with biomass output, and (2) with regard to renewable energy credits, it is too easy for the utility to meet its portfolio standards by buying cheaply from out of state. NREL is helping to study solar potential. MRI Global is also interested in including Biochar in the study – but that Biochar has its own set of problems.

There was a question regarding any impact the quarantine of Emerald Ash Borer (ESB) infested wood waste from Clay and Platte Counties might have on biomass projections. It is assumed that the EAB will eventually make its way to Jackson County and, as a result, the quarantine may be temporary. The areas of interest are to find appropriate uses throughout the area.

Bob Berkebile asked if the City could have a role in enlarging the partnership with MRI and the greenhouse and the City's potential EcoCenter and the biomass project study. The opportunity is there and it is hoped that NREL will help figure this out.

It was also suggested the site might be appropriate for an inland waters research institute.

Issues of distributed renewable energy production will continue to be discussed. One such issue is whether a multifamily complex can have a single electric meter. Jensen Adams said he thought Toledo, OH had created some kind of an improvement district as the central mechanism. It was suggested that Missouri law may be different than Ohio law in this regard, and that the Commission might consider doing some research into best practices and other suggestions to the city for action.

D. Solid Waste Management Eco-Center - Deferred to next meeting

E. Sustainable and Beneficial Uses of Vacant Lots – Robin Martinez noted he had been corresponding with Dave Park and that he had received a copy of the map of vacant lots now in the City's Land Bank.

F. OEQ Update – Dennis Murphey

1. On March 7, 2013, Dennis and Joanne Collins made a presentation to the Council Business Session updating what has been achieved pursuant to the Climate Protection Plan. Mayor Pro Tem Circo asked for data and the importance of an updated greenhouse gas inventory was mentioned. City Manager Schulte indicated the funds for the update will be put back into the budget.
2. Mayor Pro Tem Circo asked questions about the Environmental Achievement Awards and said, in the future, City staff recognized by the EMC will also be recognized at a Business Session.
3. City Council Actions
  - City Council passed a resolution directing staff to participate in international celebration of Earth Hour on March 23, 2013 by turning off lights for an hour.
  - City Council, once again, authorized participation in the Missouri Green Sales Tax Holiday from April 19<sup>th</sup> to April 25<sup>th</sup>.
4. Staff has completed the solar lease agreement with Brightergy for the first 10 rooftop solar installations. If this goes well, there will be potentially another 30 rooftops installed by Brightergy.
5. The City has received DOE approval for an extension of the EnergyWorks KC grant to September 30, 2013 giving us another 5 months of activity.
6. There is an active campaign in various state legislatures, including Kansas, to keep local governments from engaging in and promoting sustainable development.
7. EPA just issued a news release of the 25 cities in the U.S. that have the largest numbers of Energy Star® certified buildings. Kansas City, Mo is tied for 23, with Portland, OR, based upon number of buildings. However, based upon the square footage of space in Energy Star® certified buildings, Kansas City is the 15<sup>th</sup> highest rated city in the U.S.
8. Ann MacGregor, Sierra Club, has asked to make a presentation to the EMC. Dennis was asked to invite her to the next EMC meeting.

G. Urban Acupuncture – Bob Berkebile

This is an outgrowth of attempts to find ways to expand the performance of buildings which is typically focused on energy use and conservation. There is growing global interest to address other issues including water, material resources, health, and quality of life by utilizing programs like the "Living Building Challenge" or "One Planet Communities". A living building is a way of analyzing the performance of buildings that seek to reach beyond USGBC's "LEED" rating system. LEED seeks to reduce damage to the environment as much as possible whereas a living building seeks an audited net zero or positive impact. Most Living Buildings are pedagogical (an effective teaching tool). Another move beyond LEED Platinum is regenerative or resilient design.

Of the many questions being posed are: How would that apply in KC? What would that look like? And, how much more would that cost? The initial capital may be greater but the return on investment (ROI) and Net Operating Income (NOI) are significantly improved. In KC, with surplus school buildings being available at strategic locations in many neighborhoods, Bob has proposed pilot "Urban Acupuncture" projects - a strategic investment of leadership, design and capital, at a strategic location, at a strategic time, to create catalytic, positive change.

EXAMPLE: The two Westport school buildings, which are available, could be (1) the home of a group of non-profits, including Cultivate KC and KC Healthy Kids, (2) a culinary arts institute focused on health and wellness, (3) no waste (waste to nutrients), (4) pilot public school (charter initially) with the long term intention to return the vastly improved building and teaching environment to the school district, (5) creativity and innovations center, (6) overall, to create a 21<sup>st</sup> century model for healthy living and life-long learning in a post-carbon community. The Bancroft School redevelopment is a first step in that direction.

Bob mentioned that the Municipal Farm and the vacant lots initiative are all candidates to become urban acupuncture, and that the Commission might encourage the city to support and/or to incent urban acupuncture pilot projects.

There was general discussion about planning by the City – which is historically slow to accept change.

H. Liaison Updates - None

I. Old Business – Bannister Complex – Carol Adams distributed copies of City Council Resolution #130194 regarding the draft environmental assessment of the Bannister Federal Complex. The resolution expressed the City's preference for commercial redevelopment rather than a no-action alternative

J. New Business – None

K. Visitor Remarks - None

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm

The next monthly meeting is scheduled for

April 10, 2013  
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm  
Mid-America Regional Council  
600 Broadway – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor