

Athens City Environment and Sustainability Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Zoom Conference Call
Wednesday August 6, 2020 6:00 PM

1. Call to order—Chairwoman Aimee Delach called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. Members present include Aimee Delach, Jasmine Facun, Paul Logue, Sam Crawl, Elaine Goetz, Megan Almeida, Abbey Rodjom, Austin Babrow, Sarah Conley-Ballew, and Ed Newman. Members absent include Stefan Gleissberg. Quorum was established.

2. Disposition of Minutes—The minutes from June 2020 were reviewed by the commission. Austin Babrow made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Abbey Rodjom seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The June 2020 minutes were approved.

3. Next Meeting Date – September 2, 2020 6:00PM. Aimee Delach reported that she may not be present in October.

4. Old Business

A. Student data collection—Paul Logue shared PPT and will email it to all members. Aimee asked all to review for their sections and discuss in Sept.

B. Biodiversity plan section—Aimee asked all to look at for Sept. She asked Jasmine Facun to review and consider her thesis findings for incorporation as well.

C. West Side Community Association collaboration—Abbey reported that the plan was in place and has been tabled since pandemic started. Plan isn't as concrete as it was. They have \$100 for plantings and need to decide what to plant and have APR director Terri Moore review and approve. Aimee has milkweed and butterfly weed to contribute. Ed Newman said he will ask the WCA about moving this forward.

5. New Business

A. Jasmine Facun graduate thesis summary—effects of mowing on the river channel. Jasmine provided some detail on the Army Corps of Engineers project from the late 1960s/early 1970s. Channel project widened, deepened, and straightened the river. Project accelerated development in the floodplain and accelerated loss of biodiversity. Trees are unlikely to develop in the channel due to compaction and policies. Jasmine's thesis considered pollinator plantings and their effectiveness in the channel project. Several recommendations for future policies are included in the thesis and the San Antonio River channel restoration project was identified as a best practice. Sarah Conley-Ballew commented that the river creates sandbars. Jasmine said the sandbars have ecological benefits but can be an issue for flood control. Aimee has info on pollinators and solar fields. Paul asked about communication with the Hocking River District and Austin asked about the Army Corp's role. Ed was

interested in community organizing on this issue. Aimee recommended that members brainstorm more on this issue and consider process for communication with Council.

B. Backyard chickens—Jasmine provided background from a West Side FB page post on this matter. This was brought forward by a former city council member 10 years ago. The objective then was to reduce the accessory use setback requirement for the keeping of fowl in Athens City Code 23.04.01 (B) from 100' from any lot line to 10' from any lot line. The planning commission discussed this proposed change and recommended that the 100' setback requirement remain.

6. Announcements and Updates

A. Wayne National Forest plan—Aimee reported that the final assessment has been released and no further comments are being accepted right now.

B. Sarah asked to put solar back on the agenda for Sept

7. Adjournment

With all agenda items discussed and no additional business Ed Newman motioned to adjourn the meeting. Elaine Goetz seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20PM.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Logue