

CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE
Standing Committee on Sustainability and Transportation
Councilor Spencer Thibodeau (D2)
Chair Councilor Belinda Ray (D1)
Councilor Jill Duson (At large)

Minutes August 26, 2020

Members Present: Councilor Thibodeau, Councilor Ray, Councilor Duson

Staff Present: Troy Moon, Lena Geraghty, Dena Libner, John Peverada

Meeting called to order at 5:35pm.

June Minutes

June meeting minutes approved by Councilor Ray and seconded by Council Duson. Passed unanimously, 3-0.

Sustainability Update

One Climate Future draft is being finalized currently with the plan to be presented at the September meeting.

The straw ordinance is in effect. Anecdotal evidence shows that businesses are complying.

Have been busy drafting and filing comments at the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

No more energy benchmarking received.

Pesticide reports are up in See Click Fix. Have prepared a postcard to be mailed to reported properties.

Continuing to share information with Maine DEP about air quality monitoring. There have been some issues accessing air quality monitoring station at Deering Oaks. City is working on getting some signage installed.

Jetport EV chargers are installed. Next up is Payson Park and City Hall installations.

Solar consortium progress will be presented to the full Council at the next meeting in August. Portland's share of the project will be about 20,000 megawatt hours annually. Projects are ramping up and will lead to some significant savings moving forward.

Councilor Ray is impressed that there will be some savings in this coming fiscal year. She confirmed that there will need to be an annual discussion about selling the RECs.

Councilor Duson is thinking about making a recommendation to the Finance Committee to restore the sustainability staffing resource in this budget year. She would like the committee to consider asking the City Manager to use the savings from this solar work to restore resources to the Sustainability Office as soon as possible. She doesn't want to lose progress.

Councilors Ray and Thibodeau agree with Councilor Duson's comment about sending over a communication from the Sustainability & Transportation Committee to the Finance Committee.

Councilor Thibodeau had an air quality meeting in the West End recently to talk about a mobile air quality monitor with Maine DEP. He expects this to occur in the near future as volunteers in the West End are providing some space for the unit.

Public Hearing Petition for restricted parking on Cottage Street

Dena Libner presented the background for the petition.

Councilor Ray wanted to confirm that all households have been notified. Yes, there was notification and some initial comments.

Lisa Hicks from Cottage Street was the petitioner. Councilor Chong helped her with it. The Sahara Club moved into the neighborhood and on-street parking became an issue. 50-80 cars at the meetings. Residents are mostly interested in preserving space for them. It is difficult in the winter for cars and trucks to pass.

Troy referenced two messages in favor of the proposal and another message that was in favor of the proposal but suggested that it be restricted to winter time only.

Councilor Duson asked if the Sahara Club was notified. Dena responded no. Councilor Duson requested that the Sahara Club be notified for when this is on the Council agenda.

Councilor Ray is wondering how this might help because this won't help solve their problems. Dena confirmed with Lisa Hicks that she was seeking to prohibit parking on the odd-numbered side of the street.

Lisa Hicks says that the most important thing to address is the narrowness of the street because of cars parked on both sides. There is no need for this to be time limited.

Councilor Ray says this makes sense with the clarification. She detailed the establishment of a residential parking program and said to come back with another petition for time-limited parking if that's the preference in the future.

Councilor Duson is comfortable moving this to Council and making sure that the Sahara Club gets a notice before the Council meeting.

Councilor Ray makes a motion to forward this to the Council with a recommendation for approval with a notice to the Sahara Club. Councilor Duson seconded. Passed unanimously, 3-0.

Guest Pass Parking Recommendation

Lena presented the guest pass parking memo.

Councilor Thibodeau would like location options for piloting a guest pass solution.

Councilor Ray is interested in having Zone 4 be a test area for guest passes. She would like a staff recommendation on what it would look like if they had to implement a guest pass program.

The Councilors will continue to review the memo and come back with questions and next steps.

Presentation of the One Climate Future Vulnerability Assessment

Troy presented the One Climate Future vulnerability assessment. There are two kinds of impacts: shocks and stressors. Sea level rise is one of the impacts we're most familiar with in Portland. Buildings and infrastructure in many areas of the City are already at risk from sea level rise and intense weather events. Climate change is also a public health crisis. Heat, vector-borne diseases, mosquito-borne illnesses, and air quality concerns being significant risk factors. All of these vulnerabilities will affect city operations.

Councilor Duson requested a "what can I do" two-pager for the final One Climate Future plan. Potentially this could be a good thing to collaborate with the Youth Climate Strikers on.

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Duson and seconded by Councilor Ray. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:58.