

Green Zones Workgroup

Wednesday, July 27, 2016 4:30-7:30pm

Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC)

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Working Group Members Present: Jennifer Swanson, Karen Moe, Louis Alemayehu, Michael Guest, Michelle Chavez, Patrick Hanlon, Roxanne O'Brien, Shalini Gupta

City Staff: Julianne Leerssen, Gayle Prest, Kelly Muellman, Siri Simons, Tamara Downs-Schwei, Laurelyn Sandkamp, Kory Andersen, Aisha Gomez

Guests: Health Impact Advisory Steering Committee Members: Dr. Cecilia Martinez, Say Yang, Sarah Goodspeed (CEED) and Danielle Mkali (Nexus Community Partners); Ned Brooks (MPCA); Kathleen Sustad; Jim Dorsey, Rep Karen Clark

Working Group Members Unable to Attend: Amber Haukedahl, Emily Stern, Gayle Bonneville, Guinevere Baptise-Johns, Jim Terrell, Kent Peterson, Rosa Tock, Yolonda Adams-Lee, Max Holdhusen

Introductions

The meeting began at 4:44pm. Meeting participants briefly introduced themselves.

Overview and Agenda [4:48p]

Kelly Muellman provided an overview of the definition of a Green Zone and the timeline for the Workgroup. She informed the group that the Green Zones Workgroup received an MPCA grant, which will provide funding for Workgroup meeting stipends, Workgroup training and community engagement.

Environmental Justice Training [4:55p]

Shalini Gupta and Dr. Cecilia Martinez from Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy (CEED) led an environmental justice training.

The training included a video of former EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson being interviewed about the modern environmental justice movement. YouTube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzOKwVsAbhM>

The trainers provided an example of a Green Zones initiative/policy in Los Angeles, CA. There the top priority was air pollution. The goals of the initiative were to:

- Reduce disparities in exposure to environmental pollution
- Enforcement and regulation of existing industry
- Process of facility siting for new industrial businesses
- Access to environmental amenities (increase benefits)

The three key Green Zones factors include:

1. Environmental vulnerability
2. Health vulnerability

3. Social and economic vulnerability

Main functional points of a Green Zones initiative:

- Targets overburdened communities
- Utilizes a place-based framework
- Directs coordinated, diverse resources towards place-based planning and policy (cumulative burden requires cumulative strategies)
- An organized transition from “hot spots” to sustainability – very important to plan for mitigating displacement/gentrification

BREAK [6:25p]

Fish Bowl Exercise [6:45p]

Shalina and Cecilia invited meeting attendees to participate in a fish bowl exercise. During the fish bowl, four participants were selected to represent the city, business, and community perspective. Participants were asked what their concerns were and what a Green Zone in Minneapolis should include. The exercise was repeated twice to provide the opportunity for more voices to be heard.

Participants identified the disproportionate impacts of pollution and the potential for solutions to cause gentrification as major concerns. Participants expressed interest in the following components for a Minneapolis Green Zone:

- developed based on data and focused on where the pollution is and having the greatest impact
- drives industrial changes through consumer choice, financial incentives, consequences (fines) for polluters
- includes safe places (physically, mentally and environmentally), parkland, and local, healthy food
- process relies on information from EJ communities; uses cumulative impact analyses; involves community, politicians and business; and mitigates displacement
- shares the benefits and burdens
- redistributes wealth/reparations (opportunity to “right a historical wrong”)
- prevents climate change and provides disaster relief
- includes education and job training for young people in the green economy
- has teeth (laws and ordinances that are enforced)
- improves health outcomes
- increases community connectedness and engagement between community and business/industry
- acknowledges racism as a health issue

The training closed with a quick check-out from each of the participants. People felt a range of emotions from exhaustion to hope. The final points were 1. We can do it. But it will be difficult, and 2. We cannot ignore the racial (and class) tensions – we must meet them head on.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.