

Charleston Green Team Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 20, 2021

The Charleston Green Team held its fifth meeting at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom. Present were Chair Emmett Pepper, team members Linda Frame, Patti Hamilton, James Young, Rod Watkins, Ted Armbrecht, advisory member Pam Nixon, City Council member John Kennedy Bailey, and Brent Webster.

Minutes from the June 29th meeting were approved.

Emmett introduced Nick Kasza, Sustainability Program Manager for the National League of Cities. Nick discussed the SolSmart program funded by the Dept. Of Energy. The SolSmart program creates national benchmarks for communities to reach and provides guidance and resources to support best practices in solar policy. This consultation with Nick is the first step in the process and would be followed by an expression of interest. The benefits cited include helping to cut red tape and implement standard operating procedures for communities. Solar achievements are recognized by designating gold, silver, or bronze communities. The committee consensus is to do fact finding in the next month and consult with similar cities in the region that have used SolSmart.

Suggested topics from the Environment & Climate Justice Committee of the NAACP were discussed by Pam Nixon. She explained these are recommendations from people who live in Charleston to make it more sustainable & liveable. Issues discussed included encouraging use of public transportation, including holidays; more benches for public transport as well as walking; sidewalks & walkability; increasing recycling; housing for homeless; and incentive fee to decrease trash bags. Councilman Bailey explained sidewalk maintenance as a city ordinance that we own the sidewalk in front of our property and are responsible for maintenance. Brent Webster said that paving for sidewalks is usually through a community development grant. Consensus was to continue consideration of most of these recommendations.

Updates:

Councilman Bailey said City Council Environment & Recycling Committee will meet the 1st Wednesday in August and start discussion of energy benchmarking ordinance.

Communications: Linda announced that the website is launched and she will email a link to everyone. Getting a general email address as a contact on the website was suggested.

Composting: Justin, Emmett, & Ted will be taking a tour of the composting facility. Ted mentioned that he learned a farm in VA buys compost from VT.

Recycling at public events: Linda stated it's a lot of work for volunteers. Brent Webster said about 25 bags of recycling were picked up at Live on the Levee.

Other Business / Announcements:

Emmett will be submitting an Op Ed to the Gazette on the Green Team.

The next meeting is August 17, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patti Hamilton