

Charleston Green Team Meeting

Wednesday, October 26, 2022

12:00 – 1:30 pm

City Hall, 501 Virginia St East

AV Room #308

The meeting will take place in person and can be viewed over Zoom the public at the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89388665196?pwd=ZktmcERWejBqNFUwcUFpSUx3SGJsZz09>

Passcode: 227718

Phone: 929-436-2866 or 301-715-8592

Webinar ID: 893 8866 5196

AGENDA (amended)

1. Welcome
2. Adopting the minutes from meeting on August 17, 2022 & September 21, 2022
3. Follow Up on Opportunities in the Inflation Reduction
4. Follow Up on Sports Complex Green Initiatives
5. Yeager Airport Runway Extension Project - Discussion/Information
6. Updates:
 - A. City Council Environment & Recycling Committee – Chair Caitlin Cook
 - B. Roll-out of Recycling Bins & Recycling Education Needed - Director Brent Webster
 - C. Communications – Linda Frame & Patti Hamilton
 - D. Gorilla Proposal Status
 - E. Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program
 - F. Discuss applying to grant for capacity building in disadvantages communities
7. Announcements
8. Next meeting: (3rd Wednesday is Nov. 16th)
9. Adjourn

Green Team Meeting Minutes

August 17, 2022

Attendees: Patti Hamilton, Linda Frame, Quenton King, Justin Marlowe, Councilmember Emmett Pepper, Councilmember Caitlin Cook, and Dennis Strawn in attendance.

Patti called the meeting to order at 12:05. Quorum established.

The July 19, 2022 meeting minutes were approved. Justin moved to approve, Quenton seconded. Unanimous.

Advisory Team Members: Justin moved to accept all four Green Team nominees as advisory members. Quenton seconded. Unanimous. They are Dennis Strawn, Rowan Zoeller, Tomi Bergstrom, and Stephanie Hysmith. Patti will follow up with all four by email.

Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program: Dennis Strawn described the details of the program and links were sent around previously by Patti. RCP focuses on barriers created when the interstates were constructed, creating walkability concerns and barriers for safe and free movement. This creates multiple opportunities for federal funding. Councilmember Cook added that there is a match component so the City will need to see which fits best as it will go after maximum opportunity. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) has two more components: Neighborhood Access and Equity Grants and Investments in Economically Disadvantaged Communities. Patti suggested the Green Team could weigh in, if applicable. There can be complications involved if the road is managed by the state (Councilmember Cook) and many of the roads that need more walkability are state roads. Proposals due October 15.

Linda moved that Patti work with Dennis to write a letter of support for the RCP Program. She amended her motion to include other two IRA grant opportunities. Quenton seconded. Quenton added that there are other opportunities in the IRA and his organization could connect Charleston with technical expertise and experience – find people who would donate their time. Dennis said that grants would not just fund projects but also technical assistance to help them get off the ground and that the city has a person on staff who looks for grants. Patti added that the Green Team has funds that could be used as a match. Unanimous.

Updates

Recycling: Councilmember Cook said that Gorilla presented to the Environment and Recycling committee and its last meeting. Blue totes have generated interest in recycling and momentum is there. There is excitement on City Council. City is doing due diligence to vet the Gorilla proposal. There are safety concerns with recycling glass. If the facility is located in Charleston there should be no tipping fee. The proposal would go from her committee to Finance to full council. There was discussion about glass pick up and other municipalities bringing their recycling to the potential new site instead of taking to Raleigh which will save costs. Totes

provide level of protection from glass injuries. Councilmember Pepper added that we should try and figure out how to recycle glass and steadily increase overall participation while keeping it cost effective. Linda mentioned that Roane County recycles glass. She will try to find out where it is taken. Dennis or Patti can call Elkins/Raleigh County to see where they take their glass.

Patti asked if the Tree City USA made it to the Environment and Recycling Committee. Councilmember Cook said the administration can take direct action in some situations.

Communications: Patti and Linda will meet with Tina. They were not able to do so before this meeting.

Tree City USA designation: April 28, 2023 is the next Arbor Day and planning could be started. Justin explained that it is one more feather in our cap to move the city forward and is a marketing tool. Councilmember Pepper added that they will provide signs. Councilmember Cook will follow up and report back to the Green Team. The budget number from Director Webster on tree maintenance (\$96,000) needs to be confirmed. WV Tree Minders was discussed.

Recycling Bins: Great response from City to get bins to people. Education is needed – letting people know that recyclables can just go in the bins and telling them why (Councilmember Cook). There needs to be adjustment and education period. Before a policy is passed to make curbside totes only, we need to work on policy that increases overall participation. This includes making sure it works for the people who might not have much space to store the tote. Justin brought up disposal of leaves in the fall. Councilmember Cook said that there is a composting facility. Patti likes the idea of a refrigerator magnet. Linda suggested using the money available to the Green Team to make the any education program more professional.

Other business: Justin mentioned there is a parcel of land on the West Side that could be repurposed for dog park or community garden. Councilmember Cook suggested that the surrounding community needs to agree that that's what should be there. Councilmember Pepper said that John Butterworth has a chalkboard where people can give input. Patti will add to this topic to the agenda for next month and Justin will provide more information.

On next agenda: more info on RCP and IRA grants, how they work together and if they need to go before a committee. Quenton said that policy people at his group might be willing to present to help understand. He will reach out.

Next meeting is Wednesday, September 21 in person or virtual at noon. Linda will update the website until the end of the year. Quenton moved to adjourn. Justin seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:27 PM.

Green Team Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2022

Attendees: Patti Hamilton, Linda Frame, Stephanie Hysmith, Emmett Pepper, Amy McLaughlin with Charleston Beautification Commission, Bella Goni with Dream.org, Quenton King, Brent Webster, and Dennis Strawn.

Patti called the meeting to order at 12:05. Quorum not established. Patti welcomed the meeting's guests.

Bella Goni, a Policy Analyst with Dream.org, works with Quenton. She presented funding opportunities in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). There is a big segment in the bill on climate action of \$370 billion with \$60 billion for environmental justice. The goal is to cut greenhouse gases by 40% by 2030. She discussed the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program which is funded at \$3 billion. The goal is to address past harms in transportation systems, support equitable transportation planning, and more. The Federal Highway Administration is administering. Local governments may have to match 20%, similar to the Reconnect Communities pilot program. Examples of programs include: covering/capping a highway, turning a highway into a boulevard, creating sound barriers, adding trails and bike lanes, installing green stormwater infrastructure, and expanding rapid bus transit services.

She also explained a second IRA program: the Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grant program which has a broader focus and is community based and lead. It is run by the US Environmental Protection Agency which could provide up to 100% cost share. Examples of programs are Investment in low and zero-emission technologies (community solar) and mitigating urban heat islands and extreme heat (green roofs).

Other programs in the IRA include Clean Heavy Duty Vehicles Program (under EPA) and Urban and Community Forest Program (US Forest Service).

Programs are intentionally broad in purpose so that communities can be involved. There is no timeline to apply in place yet. The California-based Transformative Climate Communities Program can give ideas on how to address disproportionate harm. Linda asked about size of typical grants. Bella said they will likely be different for each agency and program.

Councilmember Pepper asked about help with finding local partners so we could start putting ideas and coalitions together now ahead of time. Can there be more than one community partner organization? Bella answered that usually the more the better and they can have their own area of expertise. Councilmember Pepper said that the Green Team can play a critical role in getting info to the administration.

Dennis asked how city administrations will become aware of these programs. This may also be an ask for Councilmember Pepper to take to the administration. Bella said that federal agencies

have the top-line funding number but there are no funding deadlines yet. She shared concerns that cities might not have enough resources to be aware of and apply for grants. She offered her help and said there isn't a centralized way to digest the information. Dennis pointed out that the city budget might need to be increased to cover any necessary matching funding.

Quenton thanked Bella and suggested we set up a meeting with her and Mayor Goodwin. He volunteered to help set up an action plan to get communities involved. This is new work for Dream.org. Bella will send a one-pager to us today and we can email her with any questions.

Patti introduced Amy McLaughlin, Chair of the City Municipal Beautification Commission who provided updates on the Tree City USA application. The Commission is starting a tree inventory for the city to establish tree health and other information so a multi-year management plan can be designed. This is better for the city and citizen relations. Bob Hannah is the WV Urban Forester and he passed along there is a 1 for 1 match federal grant that can help with tree inventory. City portion can be in-kind. Have to be a Tree City USA or in the process of applying.

Amy added that Andy ____ and Bob said entity serving as tree board needs to be the one that applies. She will run this past the full commission to see if they want to take the lead and will get back to us after their November meeting.

Updates

Recycling: Committee has not met.

Communications: Linda suggested we put together a list of ideas and questions for Tina and we provide it to her in advance and set up a time to meet in October.

Recycling Center: Pepper said there should be a proposal coming in the next month or so. There is no agreement as of yet. Linda asked if solar and glass involved. Stephanie has a resource in Ohio. Patti wondered if it fits into any of the IRA grant opportunities.

Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program: no updates.

No announcements or other business.

Next meeting is Wednesday, October 26 at noon at City Hall. Possible agenda items: supporting letters for projects, and discussion with the City's grant administrator.

Dennis mentioned that the Mall renovations have green innovations, including a green roof, and we can lend our support in a letter. Maybe have a speaker come to talk with us. Walking and biking opportunities available.

Meeting adjourned at 1:13 PM.



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Charleston Green Team: Inflation Reduction Act Opportunities for Local Government

Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program: (under Federal Highway Administration at Department of Transportation) - supplemental to the [Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program](#)

- Funded at \$3B through FY2026 to reconnect communities divided by existing infrastructure, mitigate negative impacts of transportation facilities or construction projects on communities and support equitable transportation planning
- Provides \$1.893 billion at 80% federal cost share to improve walkability, safety, and affordable transportation access through construction of projects that are context-sensitive
- Also provides \$1.11 billion at up to 100% federal cost share for the same activities, but specifically to economically disadvantaged communities with a community benefits agreement/ anti-displacement policy/local hiring plan/community advisory board, with additional \$42M for technical assistance from FHA

Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grants: (under Environmental Protection Agency)

- Funded at \$2.8B in grants through FY2026 to fund community-led projects in disadvantaged communities to address disproportionate environmental and public health harms related to pollution and climate change
 - Through community-led pollution monitoring and reduction technologies; mitigation of climate and health risks from extreme heat; climate resilience and adaptation; reducing indoor toxics and pollution; and facilitating engagement of “disadvantaged communities” in state or federal public processes, with an additional \$200 million in technical assistance related to grants awarded.
- For local government to apply, must have partnership with community-based group

Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles Program: (under Environmental Protection Agency)

- Funded at \$1B through FY2031 billion to cover incremental costs associated with zero-emission school buses, garbage trucks, and transit buses, with \$400M set aside for vehicles serving communities located in areas with impaired air quality
 - Can also cover purchase, installation, operation and maintenance of charging/fueling infrastructure and any workforce development and training needed to support

Urban and Community Forestry Program: (under Forest Service at U.S. Department of Agriculture)

- Existing program funded at \$1.5B through FY2031 to plant trees, establish community and urban forests, and expand green spaces; U.S. Forest Service works with groups in states and cities to help plan, implement, and maintain urban greenspaces. More info and example projects [here](#)

Further questions? Email Bella at isabella@dream.org. Presentation linked [here](#).



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Example Projects:

[capping highways](#), [highway to boulevard](#), [climate resiliency](#), [community solar](#), [green stormwater infrastructure](#), [air pollution prevention & reduction tech](#), [mitigating extreme heat](#)

- For community-led project Inspiration: see CA's [Transformative Climate Communities Program](#)

More Relevant IRA Funding Opportunities *(not just for local governments)*

High Efficiency Electric Home Rebate Program aka HEEHR (under Department of Energy)

- Funded at \$4.275B through FY2031 to award grants to **state energy offices** to develop and implement a high efficiency electric home rebate program for low or moderate income households or owners of multifamily buildings where at least 50% of residents are low or moderate income
 - **Rebates can also be issues to governmental entities to carry out an electrification project on behalf of low or moderate income households**
- Projects can include purchase and installation of electric heat pumps, electric stoves and cooktops, insulation, air sealing and materials to improve ventilation and more
- Expected to take 12-24 months for this funding to be available

Energy and Water Efficiency in Affordable Housing (under Department of Housing & Urban Development)

- Funded at \$1B through FY2028 to provide loans and grants to **property owners** to fund energy and water efficiency projects in affordable housing

Funding for Building Energy Code Adoption (under Department of Energy)

- Funded at \$1B through FY2029 to award grants to states and local governments to adopt the latest building energy or zero-energy codes for residential and commercial buildings, and to implement plans to achieve full compliance

For more info on how states & cities can benefit from climate investments in IRA, [read this article](#).

For a breakdown of IRA opportunities (programs + tax credits) by issue area, [see this analysis](#)

Further questions? Email Bella at isabella@dream.org. Presentation linked [here](#).