

Charleston Green Team Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

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/87443125050?pwd=VjhtVDI1OWhONXpEQlY5anN0YjJYdz09>

Passcode: 479203

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

Webinar ID: 874 4312 5050

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Adopting the minutes from meeting on December 7, 2022
3. Report on Pedestrian City Code - Justin Marlowe
4. Bicycle Friendly Community Designation - Dennis Strawn
5. Report on Tour of DC America in Milton - Councilman Pepper & members of Green Team
6. Community Solar WV - Consideration of Letter to City Council; Quenton King
7. Updates:
  - A. City Council Environment & Recycling Committee – Chair Sam Minardi
  - B. Communications – Linda Frame & Patti Hamilton
  - C. Gorilla Proposal Status
  - D. Opportunities in the Inflation Reduction Act
  - E. Yeager Airport Runway Extension Project
  - F. Sports Complex Green Initiatives
  - G. Tree City USA - Information from Beautification Commission
  - H. Appointment to Fill Green Team Vacancy
8. Announcements
9. Next meeting: (3rd Wednesday is February 15, 2023)  
(Had discussed a “field trip” to see the Glass, Smash = Sand process)
10. Adjourn

## **Green Team Meeting Minutes**

### **December 7, 2022**

Attendees: Patti Hamilton, Linda Frame, Rod Watson, Justin Marlowe, Stephanie Hysmith, Dennis Strawn, Quenton King, Ted Armbrecht, Brent Webster, and Emmett Pepper.

Patti called the meeting to order at 12:00. Quorum established. Rod asked to change the last page of the October minutes to "agreement" from "lease" in reference to the Gorilla update. Justin moved to approve the minutes from the October meeting, Rod seconded. Unanimous.

#### **Guest Speaker**

Patti introduced Christy Brown from Glass, Smash = Sand. Christy had over 300 requests for glass pick up. There is a two-bag limit for glass pick-up. No food residue is accepted but labels can stay on. She collected 4,200 bottles in her first week and produced 61 sand bags weighing between 50 and 70 lbs, 50 of which will be donated to the City. Other organizations that might be interested are Kanawha County Parks and Recreation and Blenko Glass. Patti suggested reaching out to Rebecca McPhail with the WV Manufacturers Association and Steve Roberts with the WV Chamber of Commerce for other ideas. Christy said that prepping the bottles is the time-intensive piece. Other ideas are sandblasting, winter road treatment, and landfill cover. Waste Management might be a partner. Negative response from restaurants and bars as they don't want to pay for it. Volunteers are needed to both pick up and crush glass, provide outreach, and find a source for the final product. Rod and Quenton offered to help. Christy can be reached at [glasssmashwv@gmail.com](mailto:glasssmashwv@gmail.com)

#### **Pedestrian Safety**

Justin said the City is in line with state code which has not been updated for at least 80 years. He is getting information from other states and will provide an update at a future meeting. Limitations might be a state code problem. The City can be more restrictive but not less so.

#### **Green Team Vacancy**

Dennis asked to be considered to fill the current vacancy. Rod moved and Quenton seconded to nominate Dennis to fill the vacancy. Unanimous. Patti will send a letter to Mayor Goodwin.

#### **Planning Department Meeting**

Emmett, Quenton, and Linda attended a meeting with the City's Planning Department staff which is currently revising the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. Quenton discussed helping them create a separate sustainability plan. Rod moved and Justin seconded creation of a Green Team subcommittee on this issue. Unanimous. Linda, Quenton, and Patti offered to serve on the committee. Emmett added that other Green Teams sometimes have sustainability plans and we could consider those ideas along with other issues.

#### **Updates**

The Environment and Recycling Committee has not met since the last Green Team meeting.

Communications Committee: Director Webster said there is a lot of household trash contamination found by his crews in the new blue bins. Linda and Patti will make some education videos before Christmas and post on the Green Team Facebook page.

Gorilla proposal: a report from the City Manager should be coming soon. The project is proceeding.

Reconnecting Communities Grant: Dennis talked to City staff and a proposal was submitted. Dennis suggested a mechanism be put in place to notify the Green Team.

Opportunities in IRA/IJA: Patti mentioned that we are not being utilized and that she will contact the City Manager. Quenton shared an email with funding opportunities including a \$250,000 grant that can be used for a variety of projects including hiring a staff person. The application is due January 16, 2023. Ideas for the funding are outreach for the Gorilla facility or creation of a recycling liaison. Rod said that communication from the City is needed to know if grants have been applied for and, if not, how we can help. Director Webster suggested we reach out to Councilmember Cook. No match for recycling grant is needed.

Airport expansion: Dennis provided an update that a group, Friends of Coonskin, has been created. Majority of the impacted property belongs to the airport and is leased to the county or shared via an agreement. Options are to do nothing, construct an embankment system of 200 feet, or build the full 1,000 safety overrun. Councilmember Pepper said replacement would need to be 1:1 for the land lost and a concern is that the mitigation might not fully replace the loss of access to nature for Charleston residents. Ted asked about expanding the Blackwell property in North Charleston. Needs to be similar to Coonskin not soccer fields.

Sports Complex green initiatives: no update.

Tree City USA: Beautification Committee is applying by end of 2022 and will consider it in 2023. Director Webster said that all criteria will be met. Anna Forbes is the new chair of the Beautification Commission. He does not think establishment of Charleston as a Tree City USA requires a City Council resolution but he will follow up with city manager.

Announcements – Dennis suggested that Charleston be recognized as a bicycle-friendly community. He will gather more information for discussion at the January meeting.

Next meeting is Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at City Hall. There was discussion of the February 15 meeting being a field trip to Glass, Smash = Sand.

Quenton moved to adjourn. Unanimous.

The Honorable Craig Blair  
President of the Senate  
State Capitol, Room 229M, Building 1  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

The Honorable Roger Hanshaw  
Speaker of the House of Delegates  
State Capitol, Room 228M, Building 1  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Re: Community Solar in West Virginia

Dear Members of the West Virginia Legislature:

As members of Charleston City Council, we strongly support the legislature prioritizing community solar and other cost-effective investments in renewable and efficient energy technologies in West Virginia. Community solar would allow residents, municipalities, and other tax-exempt entities to acquire renewable energy cost effectively.

Community solar is available in at least 21 states. Permitting the ability for municipalities, renters, and homeowners who are unable to install solar on their homes can reduce energy costs for our most vulnerable residents, which have risen in recent years. The average West Virginia Appalachian Power customer has seen their electricity bill rise 160% in the last 15 years, including our constituents.

Expanding solar access in West Virginia will put our state in a position for economic and job growth. The US Department of Labor lists solar photovoltaic installer as the fastest growing occupation in the nation. An economic impact report by West Virginians for Energy Freedom found that enabling community solar programs in West Virginia would generate 2,500 full and part time jobs for the state.

We admire your recent efforts in embracing renewable energy access in West Virginia, including the Berkshire Hathaway Energy solar micro-grid in Jackson County. We hope that conversations and solutions will come out of the New Energy caucus in the House of Delegates that can result in renewable energy investment in the Charleston area, as well. By further removing barriers to renewable energy development, the Legislature can continue to attract corporations and developers to West Virginia. By legalizing community solar, municipalities and their residents will enjoy the same benefit as corporations when it comes to choosing renewable energy and lower, stabilized electricity bills.

West Virginia can continue to be a leader in energy generation. Our state has great potential when it comes to solar, hydro, and wind generation. Community solar is a step that will signal our seriousness, commitment and openness to business and innovation. We urge you to make community solar a priority in the 2023 legislative session.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Please consider our position as representatives of the residents and businesses of Charleston as you review this matter.

Sincerely,

CC: The Charleston delegation to the West Virginia Legislature:

Sen Mike Stewart

Sen. Glenn Jeffries

Sen. Mark Hunt

Sen. Tom Takubo

Sen. Eric Nelson

Del. Larry Rowe

Del. Chris Pritt

Del. Mike Pushkin

Del. Moore Capito

Del. Kayla Young

Del. Doug Skaff