



# SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

City Hall—Shared Vision Room, 3989 Central Ave NE  
Wednesday, August 14, 2024  
6:00 PM

---

## AGENDA

### **ATTENDANCE INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC**

*Members of the public who wish to attend may do so in-person, or by using Microsoft Teams Meeting at [columbiaheightsmn.gov/joinameeting](https://columbiaheightsmn.gov/joinameeting): ID 251 571 694 977, Passcode pr46yV. For questions, please contact Administration at 763-706-3610.*

**COMMUNITY FORUM:** At this time, individuals may address the Sustainability Commission about any item not included on the regular agenda. All speakers need to state their name and connection to Columbia Heights, and limit their comments to five (5) minutes. Those in attendance virtually should send this information in the chat function to the moderator. The Commission will listen to brief remarks, ask clarifying questions, and if needed, request staff to follow up or direct the matter to be added to an upcoming agenda.

### CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call
2. Review of Minutes

### OLD BUSINESS

3. Sustainable Purchasing Policy Update
4. Complete Streets Policy Update
5. Partners in Energy Update
6. Sustainable Collaborations Sub-Committee Update

### NEW BUSINESS

7. Commission Chair Position
8. Round Robin

### ADJOURNMENT

*Auxiliary aids or other accommodations for individuals with disabilities are available upon request when the request is made at least 72 hours in advance. Please contact Administration at 763-706-3610 to make arrangements.*



**SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**  
**City Hall—Shared Vision Room, 3989 Central Ave NE**  
**Tuesday, July 09, 2024**  
**6:00 PM**

---

## DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present: Commissioners Ahmadvand, Evenson, Finkelson, Groseth, Jensen Christen, Connie council member came late. Mayor’s assistant- Fabricio was present.

Members Absent: Johnson, Kurek, LaPlante, Leoni-Helbacka

**CALL TO ORDER Ahmadvand called to the meeting to order at 6:02pm**

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Review of Minutes – Delayed minutes for approval for June until next month**

### OLD BUSINESS

3. **Sustainable Purchasing Policy Update**

Environmental Preferable Purchasing agreement- needs to be reviewed by city staff. Asking for Finance to have a Point person. Sulmaan said he would help draft the first round of wording of the document based on comments received from City Division Heads. Using Amazon to filter items that are Environmentally preferable is available. Discussion about how we recycle used technology.

Advertise on website how we use our solar panels for Energy.

Sulmaan will provide revised policy document a week before August meeting.

Trying to nail down current city practices for sustainability.

Green Corp- help with efforts – Andrew volunteered

4. **Complete Streets Policy Update**

Sulmaan, Andrew and Jared met with MNDOT. – Received resources from them to help update our policy. Feedback on INPUT map for SS4A. Will talk more about having something similar as an ongoing software.

Posted on our website. Safety action Plan.- project has started and is currently in the phase of community feedback and identifying problem area’s in the city.

Working on final draft. Talked about bringing it to the Council work session for approval. Jared Finkelson will attend the August Council work session to discuss plan.

#### **5. Partners in Energy Update**

Andrew sent spreadsheet in teams which captures potentials members to be a part of the team working on partners in energy plan. Need 15-20 people. To have on the board. Discussed people who are interested.

Andrew will send out letters to seek out interested parties.

#### **6. Sustainable Collaborations Sub-Committee Update**

Mayor wanted us to attend Monarch pollinator habitat festival. – Maybe set up a table. Information Located on city website. Contact Heights Next at [news@heightsnext.org](mailto:news@heightsnext.org). Interactive map to see where pollinator habitats within the city are located on the Heights Next website.

Want to have their own GIS map which shows the varies effort the city is involved with related to sustainability.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **7. Round Robin**

Conflict on August 13th meeting. Will send out a poll to see what dates work. Talked about August 14TH?

Conflict on November 12<sup>th</sup>. Will send out a poll closer to the date.

Andrew brought up about Ratio – talked about drive throughs

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Kurek. Second by Jensen Christen.



**SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**  
**City Hall—Shared Vision Room, 3989 Central Ave NE**  
**Tuesday, June 11, 2024**  
**6:00 PM**

---

**DRAFT/UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ahmadvand at 6:03 p.m.

Members present: Commissioners Ahmadvand, Evenson, Finkelson, Groseth, Johnson, LaPlante, Kurek, Leoni-Helbacka

Staff present: Andrew Boucher, City Planner  
 Liam Genter, Urban Forestry Specialist  
 Sulmaan Khan, Interim City Engineer

Council Liaison: Connie Buesgens

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Ahmadvand, seconded by Groseth to approve the minutes of May 14, 2024 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**3. Sustainable Purchasing Policy Update**

The City's existing purchasing policy was examined in relation to the proposed draft policy by city staff as well as the Commission and it was expressed that instead of creating a new policy that the proposed draft be incorporated into the existing policy. Interim City Engineer, Sulmaan Khan states that he intends to solicit initial comments from City Division Heads on the proposed policy and will incorporate those comments into the first round of wording of the document.

**4. Complete Streets Policy Update**

Complete Streets policy draft was discussed prior to the June meeting between Interim City Engineer Sulmaan Khan, City Planner Andrew Boucher, and Commissioner Finkelson in preparation for a future workshop with Nissa Tupper, Transportation and Public Health Planning Director at MNDOT. The group achieved consensus that the policy had been discussed enough for staff to prepare the item for a future work session after the meeting with MNDOT. Citywide transportation safety plan and Safe Streets for All were discussed.

**5. Partners in Energy Update**

City Planner, Andrew Boucher provided an update on the recruitment of individuals interested in participating on the Energy Action Team as part of Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy program. It was

desired to include a member of the City Council (Councilmember Buesgens as the Sustainability Liaison) as well as members of the other boards and commissions; Planning Commission, Sustainability Commission, Parks and Recreation, Economic Development Authority, etc. Commissioner Leoni-Helbacka and Chair Ahmadvand expressed interest in participating on the Energy Action Team. Other community groups and organizations such as HeightsNext, the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee, Columbia Heights School District, SACA, and places of worship were identified as potential stakeholders along with homeowners, landlords, and businessowners. The Sustainability Commission involvement in promotional and marketing material was discussed.

#### **6. Sustainable Collaborations Sub-Committee Update and Sustainability Commission Newsletter Submission**

The City e-newsletter was discussed with a deadline of June 27, 2024 for submissions for the July edition to be received by. The fall newsletter was mentioned and has a deadline of July 22, 2024.

### **NEW BUUSINESS**

#### **7. Deeproot Green Infrastructure Presentation by Nicole Peterson**

Urban Forestry Specialist, Liam Genter introduced former Parks and Recreation Commissioner and licensed landscape architect Nicole Peterson to discuss the important of soil volume in fully developed cities and present on behalf of her employer, Deeproot, in relation to their Silva Cell product, which is designed to accommodate health, mature tree growth by allowing for greater amounts of space beneath pavement. Examples of these products in other cities were demonstrated including at the City of Shakopee, MN.

#### **8. Xcel Energy Upper Midwest Energy Plan Public Meeting and Comment Period (Midwest Energy Plan | Xcel Energy)**

Commissioner Kurek informed the Commission and staff of Xcel Energy's clean energy plan for the Upper Midwest and encouraged people to participate in the public engagement in-person or virtually as well as a discussed submitting written comments.

#### **9. Round Robin**

Future City events such as the Arts and Info Fair and the Jamboree were discussed as potential opportunities for tabling if interested or desired.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Ahmadvand, seconded by LaPlante to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Boucher,  
City Planner