

Commission on Sustainability



MICHIGAN CITY INDIANA

Thursday, October 14, 2021, 5:30 pm
City Hall, EOC Room (downstairs across from Council Chambers)
Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 5:35p.m. by Chair Nancy Moldenhauer.

- I Roll Call: Present were Bailey, Chavis, Tristan Bogart, Angela Reynolds, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Nancy Moldenhauer, Daisy Lee, Laura Henderson. A quorum was not present at time of roll call. Absent were Bryant Dabney and Clarence Hulse. Excused were Tim Bauer, Faye Moore, and Philip Kohler. La'Tonya Troutman was not present at roll call but arrived at 5:38, making a quorum.
- II Approval of Minutes, August 12, 2021, and All Votes Taken During Zoom Pandemic Meetings. Approval of the minutes and votes was deferred due to lack of quorum at the time.
- III Project Teams
 - A **Solar United Neighbors (SUN)**— Round 2 launched last month with a Press Event/Open House at Commissioner Faye Moore's home to view her solar installation. "Solar 101" is scheduled for Thursday, October 21st, 6:30 pm, Michigan City Hall, Common Council Chamber (downstairs) with presentation by Dan Robinson. Already over 20 individuals have signed up as interested. Kindly help spread the word and let your family, friends, neighbors, and community know about this opportunity for FREE cooperative membership with discounted equipment and coordinated installation. The commission was given the "Light Award" by Solar United Neighbors, in recognition of our assistance in launching Round 1 earlier this year. A building owner in the uptown arts district is among those who have signed up to be evaluated for suitability for solar power. La'Tanya encouraged commissioners to join her in phone banking to promote the October 21 presentation. <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/> ; <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/go-solar/>
 - B **"Caught You Being Green"**—Andie Jahnz-Davis [feature article, social media posts, Earth Day Extravaganza 2022] Andie is completing an article about Nora L. Schultz. Her family is celebrating her birthday this week. She requested suggestions on who to feature next. Dr. Erin Argyilan has agreed to partner with Andie in planning the Earth Day Extravaganza 2022. Tim Bauer is joining the project team for Earth Day Extravaganza. November 15 is America Recycles Day, so Andie plans to post things about recycling around that date.
 - C **Electric Vehicles and Chargers**—Tristan Bogart [bid for two Michigan City charger installations submitted by Skyler York of MC Planning Dept., EVC network in Indiana, new models] Tristan summarized highlights from recent news regarding electric vehicles: (1) Tesla delivered a significantly increased number of vehicles in Q3, (2) Rivian has begun production of its electric pickup truck, and Ford is doubling production of its electric truck due to be available June 2022, (3) vehicle industry analysts predict by next year alone all Electric Vehicles offerings will quadruple, (4) Tesla EV sales have overtaken diesel vehicle sales in Europe as of September 2021 (5) Indiana has partnered with other Midwest states to create a segment of highway that will charge electric vehicles as they drive, (6) retail food businesses that invest in electric chargers (especially

level 2 charger or level 3 EV charger) that are on the app PlugShare tend to get more business. It is likely that as production increases the cost of EV's will decrease, making them available to more people. Nancy added that all charging stations have been completed along I-94 which is the first route in Indiana. Skyler York, Director of MC Planning and Inspection Department, has asked for bids to install the two free EV charging units that our Sustainability Commission was granted with the Indiana Volkswagen Mitigation Trust via South Shore Clean Cities.

- D **Funeral Homes & Crematoriums with Plant a Tree Opportunity:** Bailey Chavis [list and enrollment] Bailey noted that she plans to encourage Geisen Funeral Home to add planting a memory tree to their option of memorials. Other funeral homes in Michigan City already offer this option. Nancy added that as Geisen is also in Lake County thus if we are successful, it may affect a number of funeral homes outside of Michigan City.
- E **Biking, Hiking, and Walking Culture**—Phillip Kohler & Tim Bauer [Grand Opening of the Singing Sands Trail, bicycle repair and ride along the new Singing Sands Trail needs to be rescheduled in the spring] On hold awaiting arrival of Phillip.
- F **Soul Power Project**—La'Tonya (Niki) Troutman, NAACP LaPorte County Unit 6031 [new partner Ivy Tech has joined NAACP Unit 3061, WorkOne, and MC Sustainability Commission] La'Tonya reported that 8 people have successfully completed the first tier of training. She thanked partners: NAACP Unit 3061, MC Sustainability Commission, Ivy Tech, IBEW local 531, and Solar United Neighbors. Tomorrow she will start planning with partners for the 2nd tier. Nancy added that IBEW is looking for electrician helpers.
- G **Indiana University Resilience Cohort for SolSmart Designation & Electric Vehicle Charging Station Plan**—Laura Henderson, Tristan Bogart, & Nancy Moldenhauer [How close are we to Silver Designation?] Nancy reports we are in the home stretch for Silver Designation. Sue Downs of the Inspection department has been very helpful.
- H **National Renewable Energy Lab consulting services** --Nancy got an email today offering what would be an extension of the EV program we are already involved with ERI at IU. This would allow us to make use of the improved data being generated by a professional consultant who is doing an inventory of all city-owned vehicles, which will be done in Nov. or Dec. The National Renewable Energy Lab will offer technical assistance, financial information, expert consultation tailored to Michigan City projects. Daisy moved and La'Tonya seconded that we pursue this opportunity. The motion was unanimously approved.
- I **Carbon Neutral Indiana (CNI)**—Nancy Moldenhauer, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Laura Henderson, & Daisy Lee [We have partnered with Larry Zimmer, President, of Michigan City Planning Commission to have a "friendly competition" between Tryon Farms, Shoreland Hills, and other neighborhood associations this fall-winter for subscribers; who needs to reschedule an assessment or get an update with Daniel Poynter, Founder of CNI] <https://www.carbonneutralindiana.org/> ; <https://www.facebook.com/carbonneutralin> Nancy encouraged us to participate in this competition.
- J **Action Alert:** Two spills at U.S. Steel happened within the last couple of weeks, so Save the Dunes and coalition members are asking concerned individuals and organizations to contact Governor Holcomb, Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), and other elected officials to let them know "Enough is Enough!". <https://savedunes.org/action-alert-us-steel-spill-join-us-in-saying-enough-is-enough/> Nancy encouraged us to go to the Save The Dunes website to see the action alert in detail, including recommended actions for citizens, and asked each of us to contact Governor Holcomb in regard to this matter.

- K **Clean Removal of Coal Ash from NIPSCO Michigan City Generating Plant**—[Continue to sign and recruit others to sign the Just Transition NWI petition to reach next goal of 1,500 signatures at https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/protect-lake-michigan-communities-from-toxic-coal-ash?clear_id=true&fbclid=IwAR1yJAGdSR68llwftC4-eT77JVMqGLrrLboEdi2ER9p6xbDUmlOuc15mgOg]-- Nancy reported that a new goal of 2,000 signatures has been established. Nancy and La'Tonya encouraged us to spread the word and bring attention to this matter. La'Tonya reminded us that right after the holiday lull, the legislative session resumes in January.
- IV Board Comments—Andie mentioned that the Michigan City Zoo has put out a new list of items they need and asked us to take a look at the list to see if there were something we would like to donate. Nancy added that the zoo can use shredded paper with no staples for small animal bedding, which cannot be recycled otherwise. Tristan asked Daisy about grant applications he had forwarded to her. Daisy thanked him for them and said the Parks and Recreation Department needs to get past their busy season.
- V Public Comments--none
- VI Announcements—La'Tonya mentioned her interest in solar Christmas lights for Michigan City, and Benton Harbor's need for water as their own water is not fit to drink. She asked for support on both these issues. Nancy added that the holiday lights in the Uptown Arts district had to be removed due to trees starting to grow around the wires, and that some communities are asking building owners to put up lights, such as lights that outline architectural features. La'Tonya noted that some of the Christmas lights she is looking at have a small solar panel integrated into the lights. Nancy wonders if solar panels could power some of the considerable collection of lights that the city displays at Washington Park each winter. Laura added that Dalia Zygas and Clay Putnam of the Tree Board have been involved with the lights issues.
- VII Adjournment-- Andie motioned and Laura seconded for adjournment. All voted in favor. Chair Nancy adjourned the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laura Henderson, Secretary