Bloomington Sustainability Action Plan Climate, Energy, and the Built Environment Working Group Meeting Three Notes (Part 1)
10 April 2018
City Hall
6 pm – 8 pm

Topic: Identify challenges regarding renewable energy and green buildings and propose solutions.
Facilitator: Stephanie Richards
Computer notes: Steven Chybowski
Attendees: 13 (Anees Azzouni, Cynthia Breithem, Nolan Hendon, Alex Jorck, Molly O’Donnell, Chris Reinhardt, Nejla Routsong, Loren Stumpner, Andrea Webster, Marla Cherney, Steve Chybowski, Autumn Salamack, Stephanie Richards)

Agenda
6:00 pm – 6:05 pm: Feedback on Sustainability Definition and Vision Statement
6:05 pm – 6:40 pm: Review of Meeting 2 Recommendations for Energy Efficiency and Conservation
6:40 pm – 7:00 pm: Presentation on Renewable Energy and Green Buildings
7:00 pm – 7:45 pm: Breakout Discussions
7:45 pm – 7:55 pm: Sharing of Breakout Results
7:55 pm – 8:00 pm: Wrap up

Summary of Topics discussed
• Review goals and actions discussed in meeting two
• Background presentation of the current situation of Bloomington renewable energy and green buildings
• Identify challenges the community faces with renewable energy and green buildings
• Discussion of challenges and solutions for renewable energy
• Discussion of challenges and solutions for green buildings

Detailed Notes

Overview of Process
• Stephanie will meet with the Advisory board on May 15
• Stephanie is still reviewing the sustainable community and vision statement definitions
• As a group, we will review recommendations from meeting two and look at the comprehensive plan
• We will do dot voting to prioritize the actions at the end of the next meeting
Review of Meeting Two Notes

Energy Conservation and Efficiency

Community Goals found in Bloomington Comprehensive Plan

- Goal 3.1: Increase renewable energy sources and reduce community-wide fossil fuel consumption
  - Policy 3.1.1: Serve the community's energy needs using renewable energy sources and target efficiency improvements in the public and private sectors
  - Outcome: Fossil fuel consumption is reduced
  - Indicator: Community-wide electric, gasoline, diesel, and natural gas consumption data

Community Goals found in Bloomington Comprehensive Plan

- Goal 3.2: Drive increased efficiency and reduced environmental impacts in the built environment.
  - Policy 3.2.1: Increase greenspace and protect environmentally sensitive areas.
  - Policy 3.2.2: Encourage and facilitate tree planting on both public and private properties with developed standards to minimize damage to critical infrastructure like sidewalks.
  - Outcome: Green space has increased
  - Indicators: Parks and green space area, vegetative cover in downtown area, percentage of tree canopy coverage, square footage of green roofs

Community Goals found in Bloomington Comprehensive Plan

- Goal 3.3: Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions
  - Policy 3.3.1: Promote energy-saving retrofitting of public and private buildings and informed decision-making for building owners based on energy consumption
  - Programs:
    - Create an energy efficiency program aimed at cost-effective energy-saving strategies for residential households.
    - Improve the information available to renters and homeowners to encourage increased energy efficiency.
    - Assess incentive programs that encourage greater energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in new developments.
  - Outcome: Carbon emissions are significantly reduced

Relevant Recommendations from Meeting 2

Energy Efficiency Program

- Utility programs to decrease commercial energy usage
- Energy audits performed by nonprofits or energy service companies (ESCOs)
- Group insulation programs
- City partnership with contractors
- Information campaign to make energy efficiency improvements more exciting
- Information on financial returns associated with specific energy efficiency improvements
- Research possible changes to Home Owners Association covenants to improve energy efficiency
- Creation of 2030 districts
- Changes to State Building Code
- Changes to Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)
- Skills classes for homeowners so they can make their own energy efficiency improvements
- Web application to encourage supply of energy efficient rentals
- Bank low-interest loans for energy efficiency improvements
 Relevant Recommendations from Meeting 2

**Improved Information**
- Information campaign on the true costs of electricity usage
- HAND green certification program for properties or entire neighborhoods
- Energy disclosure ordinance to require declaration of energy usage

**Assessment of Incentives**
- Landlord inclusion of utilities in rent
- Tax breaks/subsidies for energy efficiency improvements
- Recognition for landlords that make energy efficiency improvements
- Tax incentives to encourage contractors to build smaller homes
- Higher building permit fees for bigger homes
- Tax breaks for sustainable HOAs
- Double rebates for energy efficiency improvements (in partnership with nonprofit)
- City loans for energy efficiency improvements (e.g., Property Assessed Clean Energy)

**Potential Metrics**
- Energy usage data normalized for weather changes
- Per widget energy usage data

**Potential Partners**
- Indiana University
- South Central Community Action Program
- Chamber of Commerce
- Neighborhood Associations
- Homeowners Associations
- Banks and Financial Institutions
- Nonprofits
- Utilities
- ESCOs

- Most recommendations from meeting two relate to comprehensive plan goal 3.7
- We believe that PACE would have to be passed at the state level first before it could be passed in the city
- A concerted effort to impact the state on energy conservation – mandated energy efficiency from the state – would also impact the block pricing of utilities which would involve IURC
- Our goal “Change state building code” should be more specific and be to “change local level building code that is more stringent than before”
- Can we prioritize the actions based on the ones that will have the biggest impacts? We have a lot of actions already

**Presentation on Renewable Energy and Green Buildings**
- There is variation in the data about how much energy is produced by renewables in Bloomington
- We can make recommendations so that new developments consider sustainable options in their covenants
- We can utilize city ordinances via the Planning Department
- We can partner with the energy provider like other cities
- Consumer purchase options – Duke has a program where you can opt in to buying wind energy
- Promote the Duke program of consumer purchase options – choosing to use wind/solar power
- We can incorporate ideas from our partners

**If we Think it is Important to Increase Renewable Energy, why isn’t it Happening?**
- Cost
  - Possible Solution: Low interest loans
  - Possible Solution: Solar for all
  - Possible Solution: Pay as you go – pay as you get benefits
  - Possible Solution: Pay it forward
  - Possible Solution: Research power purchasing agreements process – make it more accessible as a solution
• Possible Solution: Partner with local banks and the faith community
• Low cost of electricity compared to other states – payback period for solar is much longer
• Possible Solution: Carbon tax – state or federal level
• Possible Solution: Elimination of block pricing
• Excess capacity and power management – how can we encourage the optimal level of solar?
• Possible Solution: Purchase excess power
• Possible Solution: Micro grids
• Possible Solution: Incentives for battery storage
• Resource availability – Wind and sun limits
• Possible Solution: Battery storage
• Possible Solution: Capitalizing on the resources available
• Supplementary power and backup power
• Net metering law
• Lack of state/federal rebates and incentives
• Possible Solution: Replicate Bloomington’s 2017 program
• Possible Solution: Local grants and tax incentives
• No renewable portfolio at the state level
• Possible Solution: Lobby the state to adapt Renewable Portfolio Standards
• Inability to do community solar projects
• Possible Solution: Promote community opportunities at the state level
• Possible Solution: Virtual net metering
• Possible Solution: Power purchase agreements
• Lack of knowledge in implementing projects
• Possible Solution: Education
• Contractors that are not willing to do smaller projects
• Possible Solution: Group projects together
• Possible Solution: The City can provide a database of contractors that are willing to do small projects
• Lack of financing options/PACE

What Challenges stand in our way for Green Buildings?

• Lack of knowledge and understanding of green buildings
• **Possible Solution:** Educational outreach
• **Possible Solution:** Showcase pieces of green buildings
• Certifications = green washing (not rigorous enough)
• Also, very rigorous to reach the higher levels
• Regulatory barriers
• **Possible Solution:** Have each department establish goals for barriers
• Contractors not willing to do green building projects
• **Possible Solution:** Incentives in energy code, UDO
• **Possible Solution:** Providing contractors with ideas during permitting and require comment
• Cost barriers
• **Possible Solution:** Tax incentives
• Split incentive problems (owners v. renters)
• **Possible Solution:** Including utilities
• **Possible Solution:** Research on demand
• Miscommunication regarding demand
• Promote certifications besides LEED
• **Possible Solution:** Education
• **Possible Solution:** Green building tours
• **Possible Solution:** Conferences hosted here
• Public health component of green buildings is forgotten about
• Awareness of resource efficiency practices
• **Possible Solution:** Calculating salvage rates