



Environmental Commission Minutes

Friday December 17, 2021

Agenda

1. **Call to order: 2:19p.m.**
2. **Public comment/open microphone**
 - a. Ryan Skrobaczyk; Texas Nursery & Landscape Association
 - i. Regarding agenda item #6
 - ii. Request for robust stakeholder input on policies related to item #6
 - iii. Urging the commission to take into consideration the impact of this proposal on small businesses/the minority-owned business community
3. **Approval of Minutes (N/A)**
4. **Introductions, Roll Call, and Acknowledgements**
5. **Briefing Items**
 - a. **Environmental Commission Ordinance**

Attachments: [Ordinance No. 31847](#)

 - i. The Commission shall be composed of technical experts and members of local neighborhoods
 - ii. Ordinance forming Commission was approved by the Dallas City Council in April 2021; This is the first meeting of the Commission
 - iii. Mission: to provide advice on CECAP implementation and other environmental issues as they arise
 - iv. Each Council Member and the Mayor appoints the members. Two commissioners must have public health experience, based on the CDC definition
 - v. The ENV Commission has 60 days from initial formation to stand up the Standing Environmental Health Committee
 - vi. The Commission has the ability to set up additional committees as necessary to conduct work for the Environmental Commission
 - b. **CECAP & FY 21-22 Implementation Work Plan**

Attachments: [Comprehensive Environmental & Climate Action Plan](#)
[FY 21-22 CECAP Implementation Work Plan](#)

Briefing: CECAP 101

 - i. Will provide highlights and move the in-depth presentation to January's meeting
 - ii. CECAP History
 1. In April 2015, Dallas was suffering a Level III drought. Then the City received the average annual amount of rainfall in the month of May. The Trinity Watershed received more water than it was designed to hold. Engineers said this event was outside the realm of probability.
 2. A couple years later, Mayor Rawlings committed Dallas to the goals of the Paris Climate Accord
 3. The City Council allotted budgetary funding in FY 19-20 to develop the CECAP
 4. The CECAP was unanimously adopted by the City Council in May 2020
 - iii. The impacts of climate change fall first on minority communities, on the elderly, on children, and on communities of lower socioeconomic status
 - iv. The CECAP is based on numeric targets and community input
 - v. 93% of the milestones in the initial implementation plan were accomplished within the first year, representing efforts within 48 of the plan's 97 actions

- vi. The plan is comprehensive and includes goals for air quality, water resources, buildings, energy, transportation, net zero waste, green space, and food/urban agriculture

6. Discussion

a. Batch Plant Policy Recommendations

Attachment: [Council Memorandum dated November 12, 2021](#)

- i. Concrete is a necessity, especially in accomplishing regional mobility goals, but batch plants can negatively impact neighborhoods
- ii. Most batch plant regulations are permitted through the State but the City can do some air quality monitoring through TCEQ grants
- iii. Many batch plants are located in lower income areas, raising concerns around equity
- iv. The City has various programs and plans to lessen negative impacts of batch plants and move toward more sustainable procurement practices
- v. Batch plant policies are included in Mayor Johnson's [Committee Priorities for 2022](#)
- vi. Questions / Comments
 - 1. Philip Hiatt Haigh: Elaborate on applications to support public/city projects
 - a. When doing public projects, the City doesn't get too tight on specs because it drives the cost up
 - b. Concrete sets quickly in summer. This creates a challenge for contractors - they want to be as close to the project site as possible
 - c. We're trying to align the City's regulations closer to federal regulations
 - 2. Colleen Murray: Are permanent sites permitted differently than temporary ones?
 - a. Yes, there's a different permit process. Most sites are temporary.
 - 3. Charlie Dankert: Elaborate on equity checklist? Also, recommendation to create a template for any work product that the Commission passes to the ENVS Committee or City Council to communicate how it directly supports the CECAP.
 - a. We are in the beginning stages of our Equity Checklist. We will work with the Office of Equity and Inclusion, as well as departments who actively do construction
 - b. Will bring this topic back to Council soon
 - 4. Tracy Wallace: Discussions must be taken from the lens of equity. Land values contribute to an inequitable distribution of batch plants. Public health should weigh as much in contractors' decision making as distance, land value, etc.
 - 5. Esther Villarreal: Calling attention to high asthma rates in West Dallas where there are 20 temporary batch plant sites. There has to be a solution to a safer placement.
 - 6. Rita Beving: Batch plants release particulates, VOCs, nitrogen oxides, crystal, and silicate. There are different rules for temporary and permanent batch plants and the industry knows how to navigate these rules. Can circulate a report regarding batch plants if the Commission desires
 - 7. David Marquis: Importance of the ability to carry out and implement plans/goals. Highlighting the importance of zoning in mitigating negative environmental impacts.
 - 8. Temeckia Derrough: Advocating for thorough air quality monitoring around batch plants and fair zoning to prevent batch plants from being established within a harmful proximity to sensitive areas and neighborhoods.
 - 9. Alan Hoffmann: Support for addressing discriminatory zoning. Is there a way we can require temporary batch plants to use equipment/technology designed to reduce emissions and monitor air quality?
 - a. State permits guide what plants can/cannot do. The City has ability, through construction specifications and can possibly add a requirement

to install air quality monitors. Not sure we can require equipment, but that is something we can look at.

- b. That technology exists, but it isn't required by the state, so it's not done
- 10. Micah Pace: Collaborating with the industry will be more productive than trying to regulate. Support for zoning reform and finding more appropriate locations for batch plants. Suggestion to conduct a pilot study and create a management best-practices document to facilitate collaboration between the City and concrete companies. Consider the role of trees in reducing particulate matter in the air.
- 11. Temeckia Derrough: Noting that companies know how to work around permit requirements in submission of air quality data. Companies often present false data, or data from a different location. Is it possible for the City to put air quality monitors near plants?
 - a. The City can put air quality monitoring equipment anywhere, but it's easiest to place them on City property and right-of-way
- 12. Kathryn Bazan: It would be helpful to share an example of a batch plant permit with the commission. Some operators follow their permit to a tee, but some don't. It's a matter of enforcement. Will have staff bring back some recommendations to forward to the ENVIS Committee.

7. Environmental Health Standing Committee Formation

- a. Must be established within 60 days
- b. Requirements
 - i. 2 public health experts from the commission
 - ii. 3 Dallas residents
 - iii. Members will preferably have environmental and/or public health experience
 - iv. Additional qualifications for residents are up to the Commission
 - v. Suggestion: Have applicants apply via email. Work with City staff to set up an email address and a standardized format for applications. Staff can compile and then bring applications back to the Commission to allow further consideration and vote.

8. Environment & Sustainability City Council Committee Assignments to the Environmental Commission

- a. **Gas-Powered Landscape Equipment Policy Recommendations (due September 2022)**
 - i. [Committee Report](#) and [presentation](#) from the December 7th ENVIS Committee meeting
 - ii. Will bring this item back for further discussion and consideration
 - iii. We are in the process of bringing a memo back to Council (on January 3rd) on next steps, including analyses of economic trade-offs related to this proposal. This will require thoughtful engagement with landscapers and public health experts. There may be environmental equity issues tied to gas-powered equipment (i.e. the average pay for landscapers is \$30,000 and many landscaping companies are family businesses). Therefore, we must consider equity impacts. As we get that data, we can bring it back to the EVC before taking it to Council. There is potential to establish a working group on this topic.
 - iv. Charlie Dankert: Suggestion to conduct a feasibility study on the economic impact of this proposal. The Park & Rec department has conducted a pilot study on battery-powered equipment.
 - v. Tracy Wallace: Noting that a solution that is equitable and safe is possible.

9. Upcoming Meetings:

- a. Environment & Sustainability Committee Meeting: Monday, January 3, 2022, 9:00-11:00AM
- b. Environmental Commission: Friday, January 14, 2022, 1:30-3:30PM

The Commission adjourned at 3:56p.m.

Approval for transmission:



Kathryn Bazan (Dec 22, 2021 15:48 CST)

Kathryn Bazan, Vice Chair



Erin Diehl, Board Coordinator