

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY BOARD

June 2009

Regular Meeting

Municipal Building, Training Room

June 4, 2009- 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

- A. Call to Order
 - 1. Introduction of EQAB members and recognition of visitors
 - 2. Recognition of Recording Secretary:
 - 3. Amendments to the Agenda
 - 4. Announcements

- B. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting Held May 7, 2009

- C. Action Items Update

- D. Presentations
None scheduled

- E. High School Representatives (Clare Freeman; Mike Burns)

- F. Report on DOE-related matters (from EQAB Regulatory Oversight Committee and DOE representative David Page)

- G. Communications
 - 1. Memorandum from Groton (EQAB) to Mayor Beehan and City Council; Phase 2 Highway Improvement Project, Tennessee Department of Transportation, SR 95 (Oak Ridge Turnpike), May 13, 2009

- H. Planning Commission (Chuck Agle)

- I. Special Projects
 - 1. Sustainability (Green) Initiative
 - 2. Outdoor Burning
 - 3. Secret City Festival
 - 4. EQAB Website

- J. Reports on External Organizations
 - 1. Local Oversight Committee/CAP (LOC)
 - 2. Anderson County Solid Waste
 - 3. Special Projects

- K. Unfinished Business
 - 1. EQAB involvement in ICLEI/Greening process

- L. New Business
 - 1. EQAB Budget for FY2010
 - 2. LOC Alternate EQAB representative

M. Adjournment

EQAB Work Session Schedule

6/3 - hold for catch up/review

6/4 - regular EQAB meeting - 7 PM

6/10 - Water Quality, Robert & Boyd

6/17 - hold for catch up/review

Noteworthy Public Meetings/Events

Sat., June 6 National Trail Day—North Ridge Trail Workday: The event will start at 8:30 am at the trailhead on Wedgewood Rd.

Tues., June 16—Informational Program on the Fly Ash with Paul Schmierbach (TDEC) and Neil Carriker (TVA); Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church, Fellowship Hall

Fri., Sat., June 19-20 Secret City Festival

Sat., June 27 Wilderness Workshop, Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church

cc: City Manager
City Clerk
Amy Fitzgerald
Athanasia Senecal
Laura Davis, Fire Dept.
Steve Byrd, City Engineer
Oak Ridger
News-Sentinel
Oak Ridge Observer

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY BOARD
May 8, 2009

Minutes

Meeting called to order by Chair Jimmy Groton, Quorum established. 7pm.

Members Present:

Jimmy Groton
Fred Stephens
Mike Burns
Robert Kennedy
Clare Freeman
Joe Wood
Pat Fain
Pat Imperato
Bruce Nigh
Joan Nelson
Courtney Walls, new member, (not yet sworn in)

Members Absent:

Boyd Carter, excused
Chuck Agle

Guests:

Laura Davis, Asst. Fire Chief O.R.
Allen Thacker
Brad Hensley

Erin Burns, City of Knoxville
Penny Owens, City of Knoxville
Boyce Evans, City of Knoxville, Purchasing Agent
Em Turner Chitty
Lynn Dowlen

Presentation by Boyce Evans moved to head of agenda by consent.

Boyce Evans has been put in charge of the Energy Audit Program for the city of Knoxville. The goal as stated by Mayor Haslam is to have an energy efficient city. Mr. Evans presented information on the process that Knoxville has used to put in place an energy audit of all city facilities and discussed at some length the criteria and use of an outside firm of experts hired by the city. He offered his assistance to the city of Oak Ridge and outlines ways in which their experience might be helpful to us. This was a very informative and educational presentation.

Minutes: Pat Fain, motion to approve. Some amendments made and accepted. Minutes approved as amended.

Action Items: Joe Wood

The list of action items was updated.

School Report: Mike Burns

Mike reported that he was happy to say that the bins at school are being filled with recycle items. Ms. Sobek is wondering about the stream restoration project. Jimmy will email her. The volunteers met with

Pat Imperato concerning their participation at Earth Day. June 4 is the last day of school. The newest member of EQAB confirmed by the Council is Courtney Walls who was introduced to the members and guests and welcomed by all. She stated that she is interested in the stream fix up and can help with this. She will also talk to the Environmental Club.

DOE: Jimmy has talked to David Page who reports that the transfer of parcel E3 is still being worked on.

Communications:

Saturday, June 6 – TCWP cleanup day for Northridge Trails

Saturday, June 22 - Secret City Festival, EQAB will participate with a booth

Planning Commission:

Chuck Agle absent due to business travel

Planning Commission will discuss Marina Development at their regular meeting on May 14 in Training Room (next Thursday)

Special Projects:

- Sustainability – Work Sessions continue weekly in preparation of report
- Outdoor Burning – Discussion with Asst. Fire Chief Laura Davis. Asst. Chief Davis reported that there is a new state rule on air curtain destructors. A state permit is now required to use this burning process as the state now considers this an air quality issue. The O.R. Fire Department can no longer issue these permits. The fire department has recommended the elimination of burning due to air quality issues. She stated that the scope of the problem is anything from a pile of leaves to 30 acres. However, the fire department has no jurisdiction over burning on federal land and are not consulted in any burning, controlled or otherwise on the reservation.

There was some discussion about requiring a burning security deposit with the issuance of a building permit as penalties for unauthorized burning is only \$50 and not sufficient to get anyone's attention.

Open Burning will be a specific item on June's agenda and concerned citizens will be notified, particularly all those who have come to our meetings in the past with concerns.

- Secret City Festival - Joan Nelson will be in charge of our participation. Pat Imperato will work with Joan to develop a game with an environmental theme. Jimmy and Bruce will help construct the materials needed.
- EQAB Website – Fred continues to work with city staff on this and is making progress.

Old Business:

- Letter to the City Council concerning Phase 2 of Turnpike – Jimmy reported that the letter to the council was presented and appeared to be well received. There was a general discussion and they said they would look into it. There was concern as to status on the Stimulus List, however, an announcement yesterday said that it is **not** on that list, but does remain on the regular DOE list of projects in a prominent position. CROET also sent a letter to Commissioner Nicely, TDOT, that echo acknowledged similar concerns.

In a new development, the subdivision of Southwood has voiced its displeasure over the width of the road as it will put a 4 lane, high speed within 80 feet of the some of the houses in this subdivision without any barriers for speed or sound. The City is now writing a letter to TDOT on this issue.

June 4, 2009

Agenda

- A motion was made by _____, seconded by Robert that EQAB write a follow-up letter to the Council - That EQAB submit to the city council that we continue to be concerned with the proposed width of Phase 2 of the turnpike project due to the impact on the Southwood neighborhood and other quality of life issues and that it now appears that the project is not in the stimulus package and that we now have additional time for action. passed unanimously

- Landscaping on Rt 95

Jimmy showed the EQAB members the areas that the city will use the \$25,000 to landscape in the area of 95 currently under construction. There were 3 areas. Both sides of the Turnpike between Oklahoma and Grand Cove Lane 900' x 30' (N) and 1100' x 25' (S) with canopy hardwood trees and under story trees/shrubs. And on the north side of the Turnpike between the Boys Club and the funeral home 800' x 25'.

Adjourned 9:50

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 13, 2009

To: Honorable Mayor Tom Beehan and Members of City Council

From: James Groton, Environmental Quality Advisory Board

Subject: Phase 2 Highway Improvement Project, Tennessee Department of Transportation, SR 95 (Oak Ridge Turnpike)

Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council,

On April 9, 2009 EQAB communicated to you our concerns related to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's (TDOT) plans to begin construction of Phase 2 of the State Route 95 Highway Improvement Project. At that time we reported that we believed there were several compelling reasons to ask TDOT to review and modify the proposed design to something less extensive, less expensive, and something more compatible with expected land use changes in west Oak Ridge with the eventual build-out of Rarity Oaks, Horizon Center, and Parcel ED-6. The proposed design would not be in keeping with our sustainability goals of enhancing quality of life of Oak Ridgers and preserving the green environment to counter the negative air quality impact of increased highway/city traffic and noise.

Last week EQAB learned of new concerns related to the proposed project. These concerns were reported in the Oak Ridger on Monday, May 11, 2009. According to recent information it appears that several homes in the Southwood and Sweetgum subdivisions would be dangerously close to the proposed roadway. Some homes would be as close as 80 feet from edge of pavement in the proposed design. We believe that safety concerns related to this information warrant a reconsideration of TDOT's proposed design. We believe the changes to an urban design which we suggested in April would help alleviate these safety concerns and meet traffic use and safety goals.

EQAB has also learned that funding for the Phase 2 project would come from regular TDOT funds rather than the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Since stimulus money from ARRA would not be used we suggest that the political sensitivity and urgency of the project are not as great as many people earlier believed.

Based on these issues, we respectfully request that you communicate with TDOT about the possibility of a redesign of the project while keeping the SR 95 Phase 2 project on their schedule for Fiscal Year 2010. We believe that there are many important reasons to improve the current road design, but we believe the plan TDOT has thus far proposed is not the right plan.

Thank you very much.

Respectfully submitted,



James Groton
EQAB Chairman