

**Sustainability Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**

MEETING DATE	August 16, 2021
PLACE	Zoom Meeting
MEETING CALLED TO ORDER	4:07 p.m.
MEETING ADJOURNED	4:51 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

<b><u>NAME</u></b>	<b><u>PRESENT</u></b>	<b><u>ABSENT</u></b>
Jamie Hasemeier	X	
Michael Stauss	X	
Padraic McGrath	X	
Elizabeth Schappe	X	
Jeffrey Tomich	X	
Paul Barrs	X	
John Berendzen	X	

Also Present: Laura Arnold, City Council Liaison, Todd Rehg, Public Works Director,

1. Meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m.
2. Minutes from last meeting were reviewed. Michael motioned to approve; Jeff seconded.
3. There were no Visitor Comments to address.

**Old Business.**

4. Sustainability Plan. Survey has gone live. Went out Friday morning to all department heads and council members. City Clerk has sent to boards and commissions chairs to distribute.
5. Jamie to have a discussion with the Chamber of Commerce to see about Webster Business Owner's distribution. Can also send to Old Webster Trade Association – another potential route for distribution.
6. Desire is to “not leave anyone's voice out”. So, to that end, our goal is to get out to all residents and business owners. The approach would be to gather information in “waves” starting with business's moving to residents etc. Paul mentioned the possibility of a physical outreach. This might be a “wave number three”.
7. Laura noted that Jennifer Starkey, as Public Affairs & Engagement Director can help the Commission structure our efforts to reach the Webster community. Todd will reach out to Jenny. The city has other outreach efforts ongoing, and it would be good to structure all these together.
8. Douglas Hill Subcommittee: Jeff reported on subcommittee efforts. Jeff referred to his letter of August 16th stating the outcome of the subcommittee's meeting. Laura estimates September or October to be the final plan commission meeting for this project. Laura suggested getting our letter out ASAP.

9. Laura noted that Council can request things of the developer – such as requirements for energy efficiency – our Commission cannot. But we can make suggestions.
10. Jamie noted the Commission members, if they desire to edit Jeff's letter, should send edits to Jeff by this time next week. Our letter will then go to the Plan Commission and copied to Council.
11. Jeff asked if any Commission members can attend the next two Plan Commission meetings. Jeff will take Aug 31, Michael has Sept 13<sup>th</sup>. Others watching/attending would be preferable. Information about the 8/31 meeting can be found at <https://www.webstergroves.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=807>
12. Green Cities Challenge Update: Michael and Jamie will meet on Green Cities Challenge after this meeting. Michael and Jamie have been through the GCC once so far to review the list of "challenges".

### **New Business**

13. Next subcommittee meeting for the Sustainability Plan is tabled, until Todd can talk with Dr. Peoples.
14. Laura noted the Council will be voting on the 17 on the new Mixed Use ordinance language, and the use of "American Rescue" funds to be allocated to the city.
15. Laura asked as to the status of the reusable bag initiative. It has been on hold for some months now. John noted that the city of Collinsville had a similar initiative and they felt it was valuable. We received a six-month extension on our grant. Everyone was in favor of pushing ahead with this effort. We can distribute during both 2021 and 2022 events. Todd will assist with re-starting this effort. The Commission will re-think our outreach strategy. More to follow.
16. Todd met with Ameren about the electric fleet program. Ameren will look at our data and come back at a date TBD to help with our plan.
17. Christine Luebbert has stepped down from the commission. We now have two open spots on the Commission. Applications come through the City Clerk's office. Our Commission is supposed to be 7 – 9 members. We are now at 7.
18. Next meeting: September 20<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 – in person or by Zoom.
19. Motion to adjourn by John: Jeff seconded. Adjourned at 4:51

End of minutes.

Attachments: Draft Douglas Hill Subcommittee Letter

# DRAFT

Re: Douglass Hill Proposal

Plan Commission members:

On behalf of the Webster Groves Sustainability Commission, we are writing to share our comments on the proposed Douglass Hill proposal.

In summary, the Sustainability Commission applauds the project's stated goal of providing additional housing options in Webster Groves. Increased density and an equitable and diverse housing mix should go hand in hand with preserving the environment. And generating more tax revenue and other economic benefits can help further this commission's goal of helping the city become more sustainable.

While we agree with some of the developer's stated goals, we share with many Webster Groves residents some concerns about the project's impact on the Shady Creek area and surrounding neighborhood. What's more, the fact that the project is not economically viable without TIF funding (and even with TIF help is only marginally profitable under current market conditions) does give concern that elements of the project that go to making it a sustainable one could be sacrificed.

Among our biggest concerns are:

- The project's location, partially within a designated floodplain.
- The loss of riparian corridor along Shady Creek and the impact to stormwater flow and potential impact on flooding, either in the immediate area or elsewhere up or downstream.
- The loss of all/virtually all trees along Shady Creek.
- The increase in traffic in the immediate area from 1,000 new dwellings.
- The scale of the proposed development and aesthetics.

To help address these concerns as the project moves forward, we would like to encourage the city to:

- Maximize pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and look for opportunities to connect Douglass Hill with neighboring parks via bicycle or walking paths. Ensure pedestrian connections with North Webster and the Old Webster commercial area;
- Maximize the use of permeable surfaces to reduce stormwater run-off;
- Employ shared parking among (residential/commercial uses) as city staff suggested to reduce the number of new parking spaces required;
- Maximize green space by requiring a certain percentage of plan area be dedicated to green space and/or landscaping (see Fairview, KS)
- If any compensatory mitigation is required as part of the Army Corps permitting process, require it to happen within the city of Webster Groves.
- Ensuring a diverse mix of housing, both in types of units and their price;
- Minimize energy use by encouraging buildings are as energy efficient as possible and use rooftops for solar energy or green/white roofs;
- Provide access to EV charging for residents/visitors and ensure all parking areas are EV-ready;

As stated above, we don't believe sustainability is achieved by maintaining the status quo. That said, it's worth asking if the Douglass Hill development as proposed represents the right project, at the right location and at the right scale to make Webster Groves a more prosperous and greener city. If so, we hope the city will take steps to ensure that it becomes a model for how cities like Webster Groves can evolve in a way that protects natural resources and enhances the surrounding area.

Thank you,

Webster Groves Sustainability Commission