

Environmental Sustainability Task Force
Wednesday, May 25, 2016
6pm
Whittier Alliance

Attendees: Regina Brenner, Emanuel Tekle, Bethany Ringdal, Ivy Girdwood, Dave LaViolette, Greg Schmidt, Willow Kreibich, Christine Popowski, Brian Foster, Paul Shanafelt

- Intro
- Blooming Alley Project
 - Organization: Metro Blooms
 - Uses landscape to improve water quality (primarily rain gardens)
 - Neighborhood of rain gardens: community involvement and implementation of rain gardens as well as education
 - 23 neighborhoods have done neighborhood of rain gardens in Minneapolis
 - Blooming alley: (predominantly south mpls) uses a block of an alley and organizes community on alley (only private property) to participate in changes to improve water quality
 - More long term than rain gardens
 - Planning grant
 - Covers cost of engaging potential community
 - Help organize and educate the alley and bring in design owners and professionals to work with property owners (who will be required to pay some however grant funding is available) to design the project
 - 30% of property owners community surrounding alley must commit in order for project to happen
 - Grant money depends on availability but need will be considered (“they will try to meet you where you are”)
 - Begins with “planning party” that would educate community on project
 - Grant funds requires community engagement, education and outreach
 - An additional grant would be necessary for installation
 - Rain gardens
 - Reshaping landscape, pervious pavement
 - Planting around concrete surrounding alley
 - Would require specific gardening techniques to control water runoff
 - Implementation is up to property owners
 - Goal: keep water from running into alley and into storm sewer
 - Requires plants that can survive dryness and renovation (often but not always native plants)
- Whittier Bike Program
 - Zap Program: reflector in bicycles spokes which records mileage when the reflector passes sensors which calculates environmental impact and sends results in newsletters

- Issue: sensors are not very well distributed
 - Seward: people who bike to grocery store receive a punch card and get entered in a raffle for \$50 worth of groceries
 - Looking for a way to showcase Whittier's biking culture and encourage community to bike more
 - Bike fair with open streets
 - Free bike tune ups
 - Bike incentives
 - Social media and contacts exchange as a way to formulate a bike community
 - Bike coalition as a potential resource/supporter
 - Themed bike rides on greenway?
- Washburn Fair Oaks Park project
 - Fair Oaks is under utilized
 - Tree swings
 - Way-finding signs encouraging people to walk through and not around park
 - Amphitheater: in Merriam park Minnesota orchestra played concert followed by an amphitheater
 - No power outlets
 - Slope of hill makes location ideas for performance
 - Picnic Saturdays with musicians
 - Colored benches originate from in-danger youth who picked out colors based off of art
- Group Updates & Announcements
 - Solar gardens: residents subscribe to get their electricity through a solar garden (garden can be as far away as a neighboring county)
 - Credit score limitation can sometimes isolate certain communities
 - Availability in Whittier undetermined
- Task Delegation
 - Task forces will begin to establish identities

Adjourned at 7:20pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ivy Girdwood