

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DATE: October 15, 2008

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:31 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 6:04 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

ATTENDING MEMBERS

Kent Smith, Chair
Susie Day
Brian Mahern
Michael McQuillen
Doris Minton-McNeill
Christine Scales

ABSENT

Paul Bateman

AGENDA

Presentation on Citizens Action Coalition – Kerwin Olson, Program Director

Community Affairs Committee

The Community Affairs Committee of the City-County Council met on Wednesday, October 15, 2008. Chair Kent Smith called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. with the following members present: Susie Day, Brian Mahern, Michael McQuillen, Doris Minton-McNeill and Christine Scales. Absent was Paul Bateman.

Presentation on Citizens Action Coalition (CAC)

Kerwin Olson, Program Director

Mr. Olson stated that the Citizens Action Coalition is a 501(c) 4 not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1974 by a group of organizations, churches, labor unions, and senior groups, who saw the need for a grassroots organization dedicated to protecting consumers during the energy crisis. He said that CAC intervenes with the Regulatory Commission on behalf of Indiana rate payers and consumers when utility companies request a rate increase.

Mr. Olson stated that the CAC works aggressively at the Statehouse toward clean energy policies, renewable energy standards and basic affordability issues for the middle class. He said that the Citizens Action Coalition Education Fund is a 501 (c) 3 fund, and the main focus is TO provide low carbon workshops. The fund helps in teaching citizens how to reduce their carbon footprint and in return, reduce their energy usage and bills significantly. Mr. Olson stated that the education fund is funded by private grants and contributions. He said that CAC does canvassing door-to-door.

Mr. Olson discussed a PowerPoint presentation in detail, which is attached as Exhibit A. Some of the key points were:

How Indianapolis Compares

- Indianapolis received an F grade from the American Lung Association's State of the Air Report in particular pollution
- Indianapolis has the second highest carbon footprint in the United States
- Indianapolis has less than a 2% usage of public transit

Public Health Problems

- Lead and Mercury in water, leeching from gasoline runoff and coal-fired power
- Ranked 43rd in the Country in Asthma cases
- Obesity rate has doubled since 1980

Mr. Olson stated that if the City would use permeable pavement, it would save on the water table management and sewage, and the increase in cost would be minimal. Mr. Olson stated that neighborhoods are fighting blight with foreclosures hitting Indiana hard, abandoned homes generating crime, depreciation affecting tax revenues and lack of social support for schools.

Mr. Olson went on to explain how Indianapolis can find solutions. Some of those include:

- Green transportation and building
- Permeable and smart water management
- Public transit and greenspace development
- Public Transportation

Mr. Olson stated that there can be green agriculture in the city, because a lot of the farmlands that are available could grow produce locally. He said that with remodeling neighborhoods, some building could go green, which will result in higher value retention and tax base and stabilize housing, which will result in less crime.

Mr. Olson stated that Indiana still builds buildings using the 1992 energy codes. He said that most of the 50 states operate on the 2004 energy codes. He said that is something that has to be immediately changed.

Mr. Olson stated that Indiana needs to have a dense city life. He said that the city needs to cut the carbon footprint, have low to moderate income green housing and encourage local businesses. Mr. Olson encouraged the city to look towards energy efficiency, renewable energy and reduce their reliance on automobiles.

Councillor McNeill asked if permeable pavement was used on the Lucas Oil Stadium and exactly what it is and how it works. Mr. Olson stated that permeable pavement is pavement that allows drainage of water to go straight down instead of collecting in the streets, and it was not used at Lucas Oil Stadium. Councillor McNeill asked if it is mixed in the concrete. Mr. Olson answered in the affirmative. Councillor McNeill asked how likely it is that there would be any damage, like potholes to the street. Mr. Olson stated that it would be no more damage than with the way it is done now.

Chair Smith asked what the term LEED stands for. Mr. Olson stated that it stands for Leadership on Energy Efficient Design, which are the standards for building by the U.S. Green Council on Building.

Councillor McQuillen asked if there are any property tax or city funds going into CAC. Mr. Olson stated that the CAC is 95% funded by members, through field and phone canvassing and contributions from the public. Councillor McQuillen stated that the CAC does lobbying with the legislature and asked if CAC is involved with endorsing any campaigns. Mr. Olson replied in the negative and explained further that they used to but do not anymore.

Chair Smith asked Mr. Olson to provide the address and phone number to the CAC. Mr. Olson stated that the CAC is located at 603 East Washington Street, Suite 502, and the phone number is 317-205-3535.

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With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Community Affairs Committee of the City-County Council was adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kent Smith, Chair
Community Affairs Committee

KS/law