

# 04-19-23 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

PREPARED 03-23-23

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Date: Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Conference Room on 10<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall, 161 W Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Adoption of the Agenda

IV. Approval of the minutes for the 03-15-23 meeting.

V. New Business

a) Mayor's Request for Sustainability Plan

VI. Old Business

VII. 2023 Priority Issues (discussion)

a) Urban forestry

i) 2019 Tree Cover Map attached

ii) Current tree related ordinances

- Chapter 26 (Vegetation), Article II, Regulation of Trees on Public Property
- Chapter 26 (Vegetation), Article III, Regulation of Trees et al on Private Property
- Chapter 28 (Zoning), Article IV, Site Design Standards, Section 105, Landscaping Standards
- Chapter 28 (Zoning), Article IV, Site Design Standards, Section 110, Environmental Protection Standards

b) Land use / pollinators

c) Energy efficiency and inventory

VIII. Citizen Comments (3 minute limit)

IX. Commissioner Comments

X. Next Meeting – Wednesday, 05-17-23 at 6:00pm

XI. Adjournment

# ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 03-15-23 MEETING

## MINUTES (PREPARED 03-23-23)

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Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Conference Room on 10<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall, 161 W Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan

*I. Call to Order Chairperson Kazmier called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.*

#### **II. Roll Call**

**Present:** *Commissioner Jane Flores  
Commissioner Will Forgrave (Sixth Ward Councilmember)  
Commissioner Kelsey Heck Wood  
Commissioner Jacob Inosencio  
Commissioner Kelli Kazmier (Chair)  
Commissioner Conner Wood*

**Absent:** *Commissioner Kevin Lund.*

**Staff:** *Troy R White, City of Jackson Engineering*

**Also Present:** *Mayor Daniel Mahoney  
City Manager Jonathan Greene  
Jessica Henry, City of Jackson Intern*

#### **III. Adoption of the Agenda**

*Motion made by Commissioner Wood and seconded by Commissioner Flores to approve the agenda as presented approved unanimously.*

#### **IV. Approval of 02 -15-23 meeting minutes**

*Motion made by Commissioner Heck Wood and seconded by Commissioner Inosencio to approve the minutes as presented approved unanimously.*

#### **V. New Business**

*None.*

#### **VI. Old Business**

*None.*

## **VII. 2023 Priority Issues**

### *a) Urban Forestry*

*Commissioner Inosencio expressed that he would like to organize a tree planting ceremony that includes a formal Earth Day proclamation by the Mayor. A celebratory event for Earth Day or Arbor Day is a needed to pursue Tree City USA designation.*

*Commissioner Inosencio explained that, to obtain Tree City USA designation, the City of Jackson must spend \$2.00 per person per year on forestry. That requirement is met as the current forestry budget is multiple times larger than \$2.00 per person.*

*Commissioner Inosencio stated that a tree canopy survey would be a helpful tool to set a baseline and set goals.*

*Mr. White related that perhaps such a study was done in recent years. He will consult with the City's GIS Coordinator to determine what past work has been performed.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested that getting the Tree City USA designation be the first task to tackle and the canopy survey be the second.*

*Commissioner Inosencio related that he has discussed with the City Manager the need for a certified arborist or forester to guide the management of the City's trees. He related that it is the City Manager's preference that a contracted arborist or forester be used rather than a direct hire to City staff. The contractor the City currently uses has a certified arborist on staff.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested that it be written into a Tree Ordinance that a professional be consulted for tree plantings and maintenance.*

*Commissioner Kazmier summarized the discussion*

- 1) The first priority will be an Arbor Day event. Commissioner Inosencio will lead that effort.*
- 2) The second priority will be to generate a proposed Tree Ordinance.*

*Commissioner Inosencio reminded the commissioners that a Tree Ordinance is a requirement for Tree City USA designation.*

*Commissioner Kazmier directed Mr. White to investigate what exists in current ordinance related to trees. Once it is know what currently exists, the commission can then work towards what is needed.*

### *b) Land Use and Pollinators*

*Mr. White shared a map generated from GIS data to show City-owned parcels overlaid on the zoning map.*

*Commissioner Wood that he wanted to understand what lots are available to be forested or used for pollinators.*

*City Manager Jonathan Greene explained that the City currently owns approximately 600 vacant lots. Approximately 200 of these will be put up for sale. The overarching theme is to increase the tax base by encouraging development on the vacant lots.*

*Commissioner Kazmier inquired about identifying those lots that are un-buildable as these might be good candidates for plantings.*

*Commissioner Inosencio suggested working with a university to perform an analysis.*

*Mr. Greene related that using vacant lots to plant trees and urban pollinator gardens are acceptable options for vacant lots.*

*Commissioner Kazmier related that urban apiaries require a lot of work and a lot of knowledge.*

*Commissioner Inosencio suggested that urban apiaries are something to work towards. Commissioner Kazmier agreed. She stated that apiaries would be a long-term goal.*

*Mr. Greene inquired about what the current goal is for vacant city-owned parcels – is it to build city nurseries to provide stock to pull from for street plantings? There was general agreement that this is a good goal.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested that a simplified goal could be to plant street trees in those areas that currently have a low tree count.*

*Commissioner Kazmier then inquired whether planting food generating trees needs consideration.*

*Commissioner Inosencio explained that the costs and level of care for fruit trees may be prohibitive.*

*Mr. Greene stated that the best approach is to start small so as to be successful and then scale up over time.*

*Commissioner Heck Wood stated that a goal is to reduce the number of lots that the City has to maintain while simultaneously promoting pollinators and trees.*

*Commissioner Kazmier inquired if it may be possible to use vacant lots for solar panels in conjunction with trees.*

*Commissioner Inosencio explained that State of Michigan rules that govern the energy industry would make that unworkable. He stated that a solar installation must be on a large scale to be economically viable.*

**c) Energy Efficiency**

*Commissioner Inosencio related that the Veregy rep had a schedule conflict and couldn't make it.*

*Commissioner Inosencio related that the only cost for Veregy's services will be the cost of staff time. Costs incurred by Veregy will be recovered from energy savings by the City.*

*Mr. Greene inquired if it is time to turn the project over to City staff?*

*Commissioner Inosencio replied in the affirmative.*

*Commissioner Kazmier requested that the Commission be kept informed if the project is turned over to City staff.*

*Commissioner Inosencio suggested that there may be opportunities to generate energy at the Water Treatment Plant and the Wastewater Treatment Plant.*

*Mr. Greene related that there is potential to earn some LEED points if and when the King Center is expanded. Such an expansion is currently being studied.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested that once initial work is done, a Smart City designation can be pursued.*

*Commissioner Kazmier then inquired of Mr. Greene regarding a sustainable procurement program. She then summarized the previously transmitted memo on the subject. She related that there are reasonable FDA guidelines for sustainable procurement.*

*Mr. Greene replied that the memo will be reviewed to determine what may be applicable.*

*Commissioner Kazmier summarized the urban forestry discussion that took place prior to Mr. Greene's arrival.*

*Mr. Greene related that the quantity of work would not support of full-time city-employed professional arborist or forester. He related that he is comfortable using a consultant for such services.*

*Commissioner Inosencio related to Mr. Greene that an action step for the Commission is to generate a tree care ordinance.*

#### **VIII. Citizen Comments**

*Peter Bormuth of 142 W Pearl Street spoke regarding 1) tree plantings in parks and groves of like trees, 2) UV disinfection at treatment plants and the possible use of solar for an energy source, 3) Veregy's point of contact at the City and 4) President Biden's discussion of the Willow project.*

*Jessica Henry related that she is working to develop environmental initiatives for 14<sup>th</sup> floor offices.*

*Andrew Johnson of 1114 S Bowen spoke regarding accelerating the transition to electric vehicles and solar energy. He relate that he uses an EV which has provided a learning opportunity. He then related that CE is currently looking for eight to ten acre parcels for solar installations. He related that he has applied to join the Environmental Commission so he can contribute to work on these issues.*

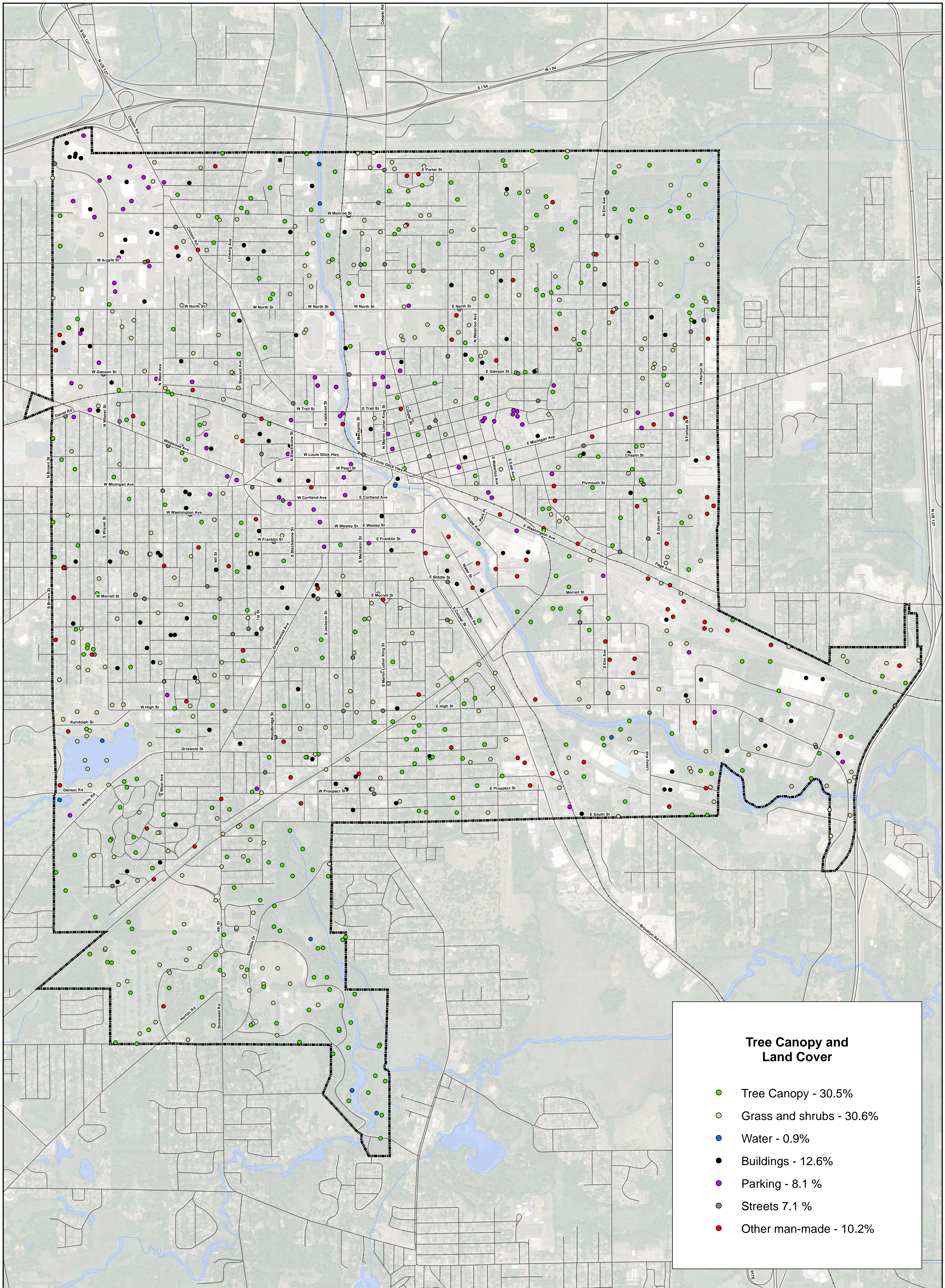
#### **IX. Commissioner Comments**

*There was discussion that a few Commissioners may not be able to attend the April meeting.*

**X. Next Meeting – Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 6:00pm**

**XI. Adjournment**

*Motion made by Commissioner Heck Wood and seconded by Commissioner Wood to adjourn approved unanimously. Meeting ended at 7:23 pm.*



**Tree Canopy and Land Cover**

- Tree Canopy - 30.5%
- Grass and shrubs - 30.6%
- Water - 0.9%
- Buildings - 12.6%
- Parking - 8.1%
- Streets 7.1%
- Other man-made - 10.2%

