

## REGULAR MEETING OF THE DEARBORN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Dearborn, Michigan

April 30, 2025

This regular meeting was called to order at 5:36pm by Chairman Saymuah.

Commissioners present: Lamis Srour, Mohamed Dabaja, Rene Ziaja, Machhadie “Micho” Assi, Ramsey Saymuah, and Paul Boyce

Commissioners present via Google Meet: Asma Said

Commissioners absent: Batoull Haidar, Mohamed Tanana (arrived 5:40pm)

Also present: Sara Elhasan (Public Health Advisor), Jeremy Brown (Assistant Corporation Counsel), and a member of the public.

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Chairman Saymuah announced Item II., Introductions. Sara Elhasan introduced herself.

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Chairman Saymuah then announced Item III., Approval of February Minutes. The draft minutes being prepared by Commissioner Boyce as Secretary. Commissioner Srour motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Ziaja. After a unanimous voice vote in favor, the motion was adopted.

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Commissioner Tanana arrived at 5:40pm. Commissioner Assi reached out to Batoull Haider; Commissioner Haidar unable to attend.

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Chairman Saymuah then announced Item IV., Old Business

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Under Old Business Chairman Saymuah reintroduced Item V.A., By-Laws. The By-Laws were tabled last meeting. Comments made online since last meeting were clarified. Article III., Section 3, a general dearborn.gov email address pending, Sara Elhasan to follow-up with IT. Commissioner Assi asked if email could be posted on Public Health Dept website. Discussion followed on how best to distribute a general email. Commissioner Boyce liked how Planning Commission puts a general email at top of their agendas. Article IV., Section 1.i., Regular meeting schedule discussed. Discussion of quarterly meetings not allowing needed actions in standing up this new commission to be completed. Commissioner Assi suggested meetings be every other month on third Wednesday. All in favor of schedule change. Sect 1.iv., Commissioner Boyce asked if the Federal Advisory Committee Act would be applicable to the Environmental Commission; Mr. Brown stated it would not. Article V. Section 1. Given by-laws were derived from the Zoning Commission of Appeals, a body of ten, and Environmental Commission is body of nine, clarifying six commissioners required to alter, amend or temporarily suspend by-laws; Mr. Brown advised maintaining affirmative vote of six.

Commissioner Ziaja inquired further on schedule. Time of meeting discussed, 5:30-7:30pm best time for all commissioners. Sara Elhasan checked that June 18, Aug 20, Oct 15, and Dec 17, 2025 did not fall on holidays. Sect 1.ii, Meeting dates for following year to be set forth last meeting of calendar year. Commissioner Boyce motioned to approve By-Laws as amended, Commissioner Tanana seconded motion, all in favor.

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Chairman Saymuah then announced Item IV.B., Work Plan. Commissioner Boyce proposed Work Plan FY2026 with goal of having it complete by June meeting and forwarding to Mayor in July. Discussion followed on format, metrics, communication, . . . . Clarification that Work Plan is separate from assisting with State of the Environment report. Clarification that current draft Work Plan is table format of enabling ordinance. Clarification that work is to advise; Bulk Storage/Fugitive Dust recommendation next on agenda was given as example. Clarification of volunteer assignments, subcommittees vs leads/teams, noting Chair appoints committees that must be chaired by commissioner.

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Commissioner Tanana motioned to reconsider the By-Laws, seconded by Commissioner Ziaja. All in favor. Commissioner Ziaja motioned to remove Article IV., Section 1.iv., and approve By-Laws as amended, seconded by Commissioner Saymuah. All in favor.

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Mr. Brown departed at 6:35pm.

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Commissioner Boyce moved to table the draft Work Plan with the goal of completing it by June meeting for FY2026 and forward to Mayor in July. Discussion continued. Commissioner Assi asked how we can stay in-the-loop on work progress. Ms. Elhasan suggested a living document that commissioners update. Commissioner Ziaja likened it to City Beautiful newsletter of happenings. Seconded by Commissioner Dabaja. All in favor.

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Commissioner Said left meeting at 6:50pm.

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Chairman Saymuah addressed Item IV.C., Recommendation – Bulk Solid Storage and Handling. Commissioner Saymuah reviewed work on recommendation. Discussion followed on procedure to submit recommendation and timeline. Commissioner Assi asked for feedback on recommendations. Ms. Elhasan indicated Public Health/Environmental is small department/division, this is first recommendation from commission, there may be follow-up questions and ordinances may be lengthy process. Commissioner Saymuah motioned for recommendation per wording on agenda, seconded by Commissioner Ziaja. Discussion following clarified recommendation for non-carbonaceous fugitive dust, noting city recently passed legislation on carbonaceous dust. Chair Saymuah called for vote, all in favor, none opposed. Ms Elhasan acknowledged recommendation to the Department of Public Health.

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Chairman Saymuah started V. New Business, A. Recommendation – Tree Canopy Goal. Commissioner Boyce summarized 3-30-300 Rule as new benchmark in Urban Forestry. Three trees should be visible from dwelling, neighborhoods should have 30% canopy coverage, and a greenspace with trees should be within 300 meters (or ten minute walk). 3-30-300 Pilot Survey was conducted in collaboration with City Beautiful Commission in April. Initial responses mostly from West Dearborn, so survey sent to Environmental Commission for more data points in East Dearborn and South End. Results provided as background document to agenda item, commissioners encouraged to review. Dearborn's tree canopy on average is 22%, lower in East Dearborn and South End, higher in West Dearborn. Commissioner Boyce motioned a recommendation that Dearborn strive for 30% tree canopy. Discussion followed. Commissioner Ziaja pointed out that full recommendation included advising Dearborn create Urban Forestry Plan. Commissioner Srour asked how many samples were in pilot and if businesses included. 3-30-300 survey thought provoking, Public Health could use it broader throughout Dearborn.

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Library announced the building is closing. Commissioner Boyce retracted motion, to be taken back up at next meeting.

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Commissioner Saymuah motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Srour. All in favor.

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The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.