

WATER RESOURCES CLIMATE CHANGE WORKGROUP
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DISCUSSION ONE: GLOBAL TRENDS AND REALITIES

Questions 1: As you watched the weather unfold over the last month, what have been your thoughts? How does it echo what we've just reviewed? How does it differ?

- We aren't as impacted in our area as some other places. We have excessive rain and heat waves, but not as much as other areas.
 - I've been here 41 years, our lot used to always be dry and now it's never dry.
 - Downpours are quite fierce. Soil can't handle it (clay), so water runs off quickly and takes pollutants with it. Backyard is constantly wet, heavier rains and it never dries out.
 - No end in sight when Akron-Peninsula road will re-open, due to water erosion.
 - Hardwood trees are more stressed, they are losing leaves all summer. Seeing growths of moss that were not noticed before.
 - As an observer of planning commission, I see that bit by bit we're shaving away wetlands. More and more businesses that come in are cutting away at the wetlands.
 - Tinker Creek Watershed Partners looks at flooding and storm water issues. We have ¼ more storms in our area than in the past. That means more erosion and more pollutants. This group tries to do restoration. Planting native trees are encouraged at private homes and within cities. They absorb both water and CO2.
 - We should be teaching people not to use fertilizers. We could accomplish this locally with land development codes.
 - I see an impact, but is it an impact that people care about? Will people be motivated to action?
 - Things should be handled better through government codes.
 - Property rights win out. [Courts have found that...] Lake Erie doesn't have a "right" to not be polluted. Nature should have rights.
 - At any given time, Hudson has a dozen water projects going on. What water problems are being resolved with these projects?
1. Cleveland, Ohio, and in general, the Great Lakes region has been listed in the top 12 great locations to move to as a result of climate change. What is your reaction to that statement? What would it mean for us?
- It's reality. Other parts of the US have more obvious destruction, so those residents look for a place to go. I don't know how we will respond to this.

- We have fresh water and that will be more difficult to come by. We need to protect it. We also have great summers which attract people.
- We are already seeing climate refugees. What will the scale be?

Questions 2 and 3: Did not get to these questions

DISCUSSION TWO: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE REALITIES

Question 1: Why are Environmental and Social Justice important as we make choices to address our climate change realities? In what ways are we all ultimately affected?

- First, we have a moral obligation. Second, there is always financial impact. If we are going to care for other people there is going to be a financial impact.
- If we don't help other people there will be a financial impact. It doesn't just cost us to do something, it costs us if we don't do something.
- If we look at it from a purely selfish standpoint, not linking those things (environmental and social justice) means you are going to have more people who are very unhappy and will go to the streets, just as we see with other issues. If you don't even want to look at the moral aspects, which are critical, then why does the Dept. of Defense have such concern over some of these things? The two things are historically and critically linked.
- We need to do it out of a moral concern. We need to be stewards of the earth and protect it for everyone, but it is also going to affect our individual families. While we may not be climate refugees in NE Ohio, our children or other people we know and love might live in places and will be climate refugees.
- For environmental justice, we should all recognize we are a room of privileged, white people. Environmental justice is something we need to educate ourselves about and do a lot of listening to other communities before we make decisions for other communities. It's a different lens to look through.
- We have to acknowledge structural racism and that we're dealing with inequities that were created by policy and need to be broken down by policy. It's affecting us now, but will affect us even more in the future. The redlined areas still exist in terms of water quality and money distribution to create change.
- The redlined districts in Cleveland have significantly less green space and more concrete which causes heat islands, water run-off and affects quality of life.
- How do we affect policy to focus on red-lined areas to improve those areas?
- Need to consider the farmers and the farming practices that need to be adapted to climate change, some which have been. They are an impacted group of people as well. The moral aspects of all of these things are indisputable.
- Importance of trees in the inner city. A study discussed if you can plant more trees, you would cut down on the anger (when people are hot they are more apt to erupt into fights). There are simple things that can be done.

Question 2: How have you personally been affected by changes in our local/regional climate? Have you experienced any of these effects: tree loss, crop/garden changes, storm water issues, new diseases/health effects for this area, changes in animal/bird species that you observe, loss of pollinators....?

- Emerald ash borer: lost a lot of ash trees on my property, and is similarly the case around Hudson and throughout Ohio
- Echo above; lost 30 trees in my yard to emerald ash borer
- Last summer was one of the worst years in terms of yield for plants growing in my small home garden, and also my CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) yield. Size of plants, lack of pollinators, etc. there was a marked difference to previous years. In talking with the farmers running the CSA, I learned they have been trying some innovative farming methods as a result.
- Lived on 26 acres in Hudson for many years and there were vast changes during this time: standing water, tree deaths, changes in plant life, animal life, insects, and pollinators.
- Changes in our area are slow; we don't always realize them because they are gradual.

Question 3: What do you see as the impact of these effects continues and increases in number and intensity?

- We need to start small: we started researching more native plants that will absorb ground water and are more resistant. Do more research on what to plant and where to plant it.
- I see changes in farming, driving by the corn fields at Szalay's, they are underwater a lot more than they used to be.
- Organic farmers are researching more innovative methods regarding what to plant with what, where to place plants (i.e. to observe more surface water).
- We have to do more planning. Look at our land development code to see what can be changed to move Hudson into a better place
- Riparian zone planting, like shrubs and trees, to keep the soil on the land when we have storm events. Unaware whether the land development code in Hudson specifies riparian zone protection as an objective.
- We should be looking at everything through an environmental lens. Then we can make necessary changes. When we put forward the Phase II plan, the environmental lens was not applied.
- Need to look at all consequences across the whole domain. One thing that has been learned is that economic health cannot exist unless we manage the system that produces the goods and services sustainably.
- Consider global warming – maybe the trees that have been successful here in the past are not the trees we ought to have going forward.

DISCUSSION THREE: WHAT CAN WE DO HERE IN HUDSON, SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO?

Question 1: What actions/trends do you see that give you hope that we can do somethings to adapt to, lesson impacts or pursue alternative?

- I see hope in our youth.
- There is a "Silver Cloud" in Covid, it has shaken us to our core. We're open in our thinking about a lot of things now, it seems the time is right.
- We need to emphasize the economic aspects of this. People are concerned about this for a lot of reasons, but conservative perspectives focus on the economics. There are a lot of economic

impacts. We need to find solutions together focused on economic solutions, for example, the Carbon Fee and Dividend Act. It's not a tax, but a fee that producers of carbon energy products would be charged and then this money is refunded back to the American people based on their carbon usage. If we have to pay a lot more for energy, we'll be a lot more innovation. These are the kinds of solutions we need to focus on.

- We've focused a lot on larger policy sort of questions when it comes to reducing carbon, but there are things we all can individually be doing right now. One of the most impactful things people can do is eat less meat and have fewer children. This can be polarizing or controversial, but we're underestimating the collective impact this can have.
- It's interesting there is a point in time when electric cars will not cost any more than gas powered cars. The use of electric cars and vehicles is very hopeful.
- When auto makers announce that they're switching over to make electric cars

Question 2: What do you think might be possible actions Hudson can take to combat climate change and its impacts?

- We should be looking at everything we do with an environmental lens. When we're going to deal with the land development code, we should be applying that lens. That would show community commitment.
- Hudson has, in words, a commitment to sustainability. We need to figure out what that really means for us as a community.
- The trail and connectivity plan needs to be implemented rapidly. I try to walk to the store and would like to do more of that, but it is not safe.
- Let's allow solar panels on the fronts of homes. We have some demonstration projects in town and we need to extend that possibility.
- We need to talk about the health aspects. We don't measure the health costs we're paying for by virtue of not responding to a lot of these things.
- Why do we have to pave everywhere, like the parking lot at Hudson Springs, why don't we look at alternatives?
- We need electric car charging stations (Hudson has committed to this).
- Our building codes are primarily county wide and not Hudson-based. The way we build and how we build and where we build is another aspect of it. We can do some things like planned unit developments to cut down on the required road space, sewage, etc. and still permit the greening around a community. Hudson has ducked away from that and it's an important thing we should be looking at.
- Hudson can partner with the county to initiate needed changes.

Question 3: How are you willing to become more invested in finding solutions or ways to make a real positive difference?

- Have we looked at the plan for Cincinnati? The plans are available online (and on LWV Hudson website).

We ran out of time!