

INC APRIL DELEGATES MEETING 4/8/2023 MINUTES

Location: Holy Transfiguration of Christ Orthodox Cathedral

9:15 **Meeting called to Order. Welcome and Introductions:** 40 people at the meeting (including 27 on line and those in person at the venue).

Land and Equity Acknowledgement was made by Shaina Oliver, Native American with Navajo family roots from southern Colorado. Acknowledge of ancestors' tribal lands (48 tribes) and observed a moment of silence.

9:30 **Air Pollution in Denver** (Drew Dutcher)

9:30 Drew Dutcher: Introduction about the problem of air pollution. Candi Ce Debaca from District 9 spoke first and noted the lawsuit brought by her family against Arsarco for pollution many years ago (the first). She participated in the passage of the air monitoring bill. Continuing to work with nonprofit groups to monitor air quality. Suncor Refinery has been a focus.

9:37 (i) Mom's Clean Air Force (Shaina Oliver) – multi-lingual, national organization (Mom'sCleanAirforce.com) focused on speaking and acting for clean air policy. Environmental justice focus with groups throughout the areas in which they are active to promote funding for communities (including air quality monitoring projects). It is easier for cities to obtain grants in this area than it is for tribal organizations, so the organizations work with the other environmental justice groups to promote policy changes and actions to promote community action to improve community access to resources. Also noted water quality issues that have impacted the ability to eat fish and wildlife due to Pfast (a "forever chemical") that does not break down in the body and which is being ingested in wildlife from drinking the water and then transferred to people who eat those animals. Also working on Ozone regulations, HB 1261, action plan to reduce air pollution.

(ii) Cultivando (Laura Martinez, Manager of Environmental Justice). Has been focused on research in the areas in the areas around Suncor Refinery. Explained research on particulate matter PM 2.5 which is harmful to breath. Hydrogen sulfide and benzene were also measured by Boulder Air. Findings of research in Commerce City Air Quality Study show high variability with time, day/night and seasonal behavior and which show the oil and gas pollutant concentrations around the Suncor refinery. Cultivando (Boulder Air) did research differently than Suncor's own monitoring and which show that levels are much higher in certain areas close to Suncor (Commerce City as compared to Broomfield) and which may cause cancer and other illnesses. Concerned neighbors have left the area as a result. Also discussed mobile site. INC will provide a link on its website for the actual study presentation, which is also on Cultivando's website. There are other companies (propane, etc.) in the area that contribute to the problem (in addition to Suncor Refinery), so all have contributed to the problem. Cultivando is seeking funding for continued monitoring and community education and involvement in advancing policy changes.

9:50 Esther Sullivan, UCD, professor of sociology. Working on social justice and environmental quality in Denver. Did research on air quality, especially impacting the northern most neighborhoods of Denver (where I70 was expanded) Globeville, Globe, Clayton and Elyria-Swansea, which neighborhoods are over 40% low income and people of color. Discussed the history of redlining which impacted these area greatly and where the zoning allowed refineries and industrial businesses such as Purina to locate. The results show that these businesses produce high levels of air pollution which then negatively impacts those neighborhoods. The use a Atmotube PRO device and app which is

a small device that can be carried by people in the neighborhood to measure air quality. People in these neighborhoods were asked to carry these mobile air quality monitors for 30 days and then those participants reported greater acknowledgement of the air pollution in their areas (including in their homes). They then participated more in addressing the problems, including identifying new issues such as noxious odors from local smelters and polluters, including smoke and smells in their own homes (cigarette and pot smoke, cooking oils etc.). The study found that those using the air monitors actually influenced behaviors, including using air filters, moving some polluting actions outside etc. These people also became so aware of the issues that they sought out more information – more options to address the problems as well as more ways to alleviate the known air pollution in their own homes.

10:15 Shelly Miller, UCD, professor with UCD in the air pollution science area. She describes the problems of air pollution as a global problem. But Denver recognized the problem beginning in 1889 when residents in Denver started experiencing health issues related to living in areas where air pollution was higher, including that resulting from smelting works in the city center areas. Currently working on air sampling and had residents and others collect samples whenever there was an order suggesting pollutants were present. Samples showed high samples of benzene and other air pollutants particles. But industrial odors, by themselves, was not sufficient to put together policies on odor alone, but there were clear (statistically significant) results showing that cleaner smelling air led to a perception of a higher well being and quality of life. This impacted policy in that Denver later adopted an odor policy after neighbors complained about the Purina dog food manufacturing facility in north Denver. Other studies show clearly that air pollution is higher in many areas of the city where there are large areas of auto traffic congestion. Also talked about how easy it is to make a DIY air cleaner at home.

10:25 Bill Oberman: DDPHE: “Love My Air” program – an air program supervisor in the Denver Department of Public Health. The environmental section of the CDPHE operates the program called ‘love my air’ which monitors air quality in schools. They are also looking at data from other monitoring organizations so that they can assess air quality data from around the city. But they work at the STATE level.

10:35 Joel Minor: CDPHE – this is the STATE level department. Slide: Advancing Environmental Justice in North Denver Disproportionately Impacted Community Rulemaking. CDPHE now has a dedicated ‘Environmental Justice Program’ (team of 11) which is one of the only a few state programs of its kind. Really focusing on programing (and including language justice) in the most impacted communities. Specific Rulemaking discussion: After legislation is made, then rule making is assigned to the AGENCIES to implement. Many of these actions are then taken to independent boards and commissions to assist in adopting rules and regulations (although any person may propose a rule), commissions are the largest actor in this environmental justice space. Then the Air Pollution Control Division proposes a draft rule which will work through a hearing process (including the final briefs); many lawyers are involved and represent the ‘parties’ in the hearing process. Many lawyers act in this space as pro bono attorneys (Earth Justice has attorneys that are often involved). What are disproportionately impacted communities (defined under bill 21-1266) include demographic census blocks which include those groups that are more than 40% low-income, people of color, housing cost burdened (more than 30% of income goes to housing). Cumulatively impacted communities with Colorado EnviroScreen scores above the 80th percentile. So what now? With new air pollution permits, the applicants must address the environmental justice issues and, if the permits are applied for in disproportionately impacted (“DI”) communities, then they have to do more monitoring, pay for others

to assist in other monitoring, pay fees for off-site monitoring, pollution modeling, etc. Then they require emissions reduction programs – requiring reasonably available control methods (i.e., the most current available reduction technologies and engineering for facilities). This is going above and beyond what is required, so they are now applying this to EXISTING facilities. How to get involved? Submit comments to cdphe.aqcc-comments@cdphe.colorado.gov. They are expanding the opportunity to provide public comments before the air quality commissioners, and are allowing alternatives for comment. The types of comments which are most important to understand the actual stories of the people who live in these PI communities, why they care, whether they support/oppose and explain why.

10:50 Rocky Piro: Healthy Cities: How Can Planning Address Pollution? – THIS PRESENTATION IS BEING POSTPONED AND BROUGHT FORTH LATER. Note that there is a ‘Planning to Thrive’ symposium coming up on planning issues.

10:35 AUDIENCE DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS

9:10 **INC Financial Report** (Greg Sorensen, Treasurer)

INC Committee Reports:

Transportation (Joel Noble) – called attention to the Sidewalk Initiative and The Parking Program Rules and Regulations changes (hearing on May 5th). Also reported on the vote result supporting the resolution for neighborhoods calling for a pause on the I25/Broadway Interchange Project

Climate and Sustainability (Adam Meltzer and Amber Kraska) sustainablemeltz@gmail.com

Education (Joanna Rosa-Saenz) reported on the INC Youth civic award program which will showcase 8 students who will receive an award. Working with DPS on walk/bike/roll to school day. Work on a safe school initiative.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (LaMone Noles) – Reported on December meeting with Justin Cooper who gave his report. She is planning to reconvene a committee; a mission statement is in process. Need to work on goals. Mentioned the East High statement. Need people to become involved in what the DEI work is going to work to implement DEI work. May Delegate meeting will be focused on DEI and will include a presentation on the Elks club implemented DEI.

10:45 **Announcements and Events:**

Announcement: Film: *Watering the West* (Jane Potts)

Keith reported on Kia and Hyundai updates to make those cars more secure.

May Meeting: Location: Elk’s Club, Highlands. Topic: Strategies and Successes Increasing Diversity & Membership in Neighborhood Organizations

June Meeting: Location: TBD. Topic: Denver Moves, Bike Infrastructure, Vision Zero

11:15 **Adjourn**