

ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Agenda

April 27, 2016 – 6:00 PM

Community Development Building, Siskiyou Room
51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

2. Consent Agenda

2.1. Minutes March 23, 2016 Commission meeting

3. Announcements (10 min)

3.1. Next Regular Meeting: May 25, 2016

3.2. Upcoming Sub-committee meetings

- Conservation Classes – 2016

3.3. Other Announcements from Commissioners

4. Public Forum (10 min to be evenly divided by public wishing to speak)

5. Reports / Presentations/Updates (15 min)

5.1. Downtown Recycling – Buck (5 min)

5.2. Bag Ban Update – Memo/ltr in packet

5.3. Council - Councilor Rosenthal (5 min)

5.4. Low Impact Living Workshop Series – Buck (10 min)

5.5. City Conservation & Operations – Deferred to May

6. Old Business (30 min)

6.1 Commission Monthly Column in Sneak Preview (5 min)

a. June – Water Conservation – Cruikshank/Weir

b. July - Conservation Classes – Buck

c. August - Climate Action Plan Update – McGinnis/Sohl/Biegel-Coryell

d. September – Living with Wildlife – Cruikshank

e. October - Meet your Commissioners - ??

6.2 Climate & Energy Action Plan – Project Update (15 min)

6.3 Rogue Valley Earth Day – Review/Re-cap (10 min)

7. New Business (10 min)

7.1 Nomination/Vote of Chair/Vice Chair (Biegel-Coryell)

7.2 Open Burning in Ashland- AMC 10.30.010 thru .080 (Buck)

7.3 Fourth of July – Commission activity?

8. Wrap Up (5 min)

8.1 Items to be added to next agenda

8.2 Adjournment (8 PM)

MINUTES FOR THE ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Wednesday, March 23, 2016
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

Chair Roxanne Beigel-Coryell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room.

Commissioners Shel Silverberg, Mark Weir, Marni Koopman, Risa Buck, and Cara Cruickshank were present. Staff member Adam Hanks, Councilor Rich Rosenthal, and commissioners James McGinnis and Bryan Sohl were absent.

2. Consent Agenda

Koopman/Cruickshank m/s to approve the minutes of February 24, 2016, as presented.
Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion Passes.

3. Announcements

The next commission meeting will be April 27, 2016.

There will be a conference on April 16, 2016 regarding pollinators and pesticides. It will be from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at SOU. The night prior will be a happy hour fundraiser at the SOU library.

On Tuesday, March 29, from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. the Chamber of Commerce will be hosting a “best practices” workshop for restaurants. Former commissioner Beam will present to restaurants information regarding the choices they make at how those choices effect the waste stream.

There will be a Hazardous Waste Disposal Day May 6th for businesses and May 7th for residential at Rogue Disposal in White City.

Firewise Clean-up Day is April 30th at the Valley View Transfer Station.

SOU is holding many Earth Week events April 18-24. Check the SOU Sustainability website for more information.

On April 20 at 6:30 p.m. Buck is teaching a class at North Mountain Park regarding recycling (where it goes and why).

4. Public Forum

Louise Shawkat – wanted the commission to know that the recycle center composting needs a rain barrel because when the water is turned off there is no water available to keep the composting going.

Huelz Gutchen – stated that at the last City Council meeting he talked about the troubles in Syria and how their refuge crisis and current war are due to gas and desalination projects. Americans make more than 50% of the carbons in the atmosphere and here in Ashland we can’t figure out whether burning things is good or bad. Now that it’s possible to have zero-net, non-connected homes building departments and officials have to learn how to deal with these. The building department says that we can’t build like that here in Ashland but he believes we can have

exceptions or even a mandate to cause all buildings in Ashland to be built to zero net energy. He wonders how long it will take us to mandate zero-net energy homes and wants to have a contest for people to guess when that will occur. Oregon is now on the map for their new renewable energy laws and requirements. Kudos are coming from across the country for this progress.

5. Reports/ Presentations/ Updates

Downtown Recycling – Buck stated that five of the baskets are up and signage will be up next week. They are still looking for three additional locations.

Low Impact Living Workshop Series – Buck stated that she met with North Mountain Park staff regarding the series and they are in support of the classes. She is now waiting for Parks staff to inform her what dates and times are best for the workshops. She is working on a flyer and is writing an article with Beigel-Coryell for the Sneak Preview.

6. Old Business

Sneak Preview Column – Group decided to swap July and August topics so that the Low Impact Living article will be closer to the expected dates of the workshops. Group discussed and agree to the request from the Sneak Preview editor to limit the articles to 650 words or less.

Cruickshank/Weir m/s to approve Koopman’s Climate Challenge article, once the word cloud has been removed from the draft. Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion Passes.

Weir/Koopman m/s to approve Buck’s Plastics Recycling article as presented. Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion Passes.

Climate & Energy Action Plan – Beigel-Coryell stated that Koopman is now a member of the committee. Koopman gave an overview of the last meeting in which the group met with the consultant, who gave information regarding the upcoming process and spent time learning from the committee what they want from the process. There will be lots of outreach throughout and the consultant wanted a sense of what stakeholders/ sectors/ individuals in the community should be involved. Koopman stated she was glad to see two high school students attend the meeting and express interest in being involved.

Rogue Valley Earth Day – There will be many members of the commission in attendance participating in booths such as the Ashland Climate Challenge, Conservation Division, Recology, and the Pollinator Project.

7. New Business

Nomination of Chair and Vice Chair – Group discussed possible nominations. Buck would like to ask if either commissioners Sohl or McGinnis have interest in being the Chair. Koopman nominated Cruickshank as the Vice Chair, and she agreed to the nomination. Weir stated that if neither Sohl or McGinnis are interested in being Chair he is willing to fill the role for a year.

8. Wrap Up

Cruickshank requested information on city policies/regulations/projects regarding preserving farm land. Group requested follow-up on the letter sent to businesses regarding the bag ban.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Shiplet
Executive Assistant

Memo

DATE: April 24, 2016
TO: Conservation Commission
CC:
FROM: Adam Hanks, Administration
RE: Bag Ban Update

Per the original provision in the approved ordinance, City Council conducted a one year review of the bag ban ordinance in February of 2016. Council was provided with the results of the two surveys completed prior to the one year review (retailers and general public/residents), as well staff provided comments from several of the local grocers. Additionally, staff provided Council with the recommendations of the Conservation Commission encouraging maintaining the ordinance in its current form and requesting focused enforcement of the ordinance.

No changes were made to the ordinance at that time. Staff indicated that a follow up letter would be sent to all retailers summarizing the results of the one year review and serving as a reminder of the ordinance requirements. Also to be included in the follow up letter was the updated outreach bag ban register card intended to assist with communicating the requirements at the point of sale at the business.

Staff sent out the attached letter on March 2, 2016 to all retail businesses in Ashland (based on active business license data). Subsequent to that letter, several complaints were received regarding businesses not properly charging the ten cent fee. City Code Compliance staff responded and addressed the complaint consistent with compliance procedures.

City staff met with the Chamber of Commerce downtown retail task force in early April to further discuss the ordinance and to ensure that all businesses were complying with the ordinance.



March 2, 2016

Business Owner,

As you may be aware, the Ashland City Council recently conducted a one year review of the plastic bag ban ordinance that went into effect in November of 2014. As part of the review process, City staff provided feedback gathered from local grocers, retailers and community members who completed brief surveys.

After consideration of the feedback provided (go to www.ashland.or.us/bagban for feedback materials), the Council made no changes to the existing ordinance, which includes a ban on the use of thin plastic bags at the point of sale as well as a ten-cent fee for the use of paper bags, maintaining the goal of encouraging the use of reusable bags rather than plastic or paper.

The Council did request that staff address two issues relating to the bag ban ordinance;

- 1) Provide retailers with materials to assist in communicating the ordinance requirements to customers, and
- 2) Ensure consistent compliance with the ordinance provisions.

To address improved materials for customer communication, smaller and simplified message cards more suited to a retail environment were developed and are available for use. A sample message card is enclosed with this letter. A foldable "A frame" style card is also available. Both card types can be picked up at City Hall in the Utility Billing office, 20 East Main Street.

Compliance issues raised centered primarily around the concern that not all retail businesses were charging customers the ten-cent fee for paper bags. In the initial rollout of the ordinance, City staff attempted to educate rather than enforce. While the goal is always compliance, enforcement action will be utilized as appropriate to ensure a level playing field for all businesses.

Thank you for the important role you play in our local economy and community and please feel free to call or email if you have any questions about this ordinance or any other City related issue.

Sincerely,

Adam Hanks
Management Analyst



ASHLAND FIRE & RESCUE
OPEN BURNING PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES
Wildfire Fuels Reduction

1. The Ashland Municipal Code, Chapter 10.30, Sections .010 through .080, provide procedures and regulations under which open burning may be conducted. The pursuit of alternatives to open burning is strongly encouraged. Chipping, composting or transport of material to a transfer station or biomass utilization facility is encouraged. The following guidelines are provided to assist with the regulation of Open Burning in the City:
2. The open burning season within the City of Ashland is March 1st through the beginning of fire season (usually June), and two weeks after fire season ends in the fall. The issuance of burning permits may be suspended when atmospheric conditions, such as high winds, do not support safe burning practices.
3. All open burning will be conducted during daylight hours only during periods when the Jackson County Open Burning Advisory air quality index is 401 or above. For a recording of the ventilation index, call 776-7007. To obtain burn permit information, call the Fire Station during business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 482-2770. It is understood that due to the characteristics of the material being burned that glowing embers may continue throughout the night time hours. Permittee will be responsible to ensure that fires do not “creep.”
4. To open burn, a permit must be obtained from the fire department. Burn sites will be inspected by fire department personnel prior to the commencement of burning. Burn permits must be activated each day prior to conducting a burn by calling the fire department at 482-2770.
5. Adequate fire safety measures must be taken to insure that burning is performed safely:
 - A. All burning must be attended and supervised by an adult.
 - B. Piles should be constructed away from roots, stumps, and leave trees.
 - C. A non-combustible perimeter of 10' shall be maintained from the burning area when possible.
 - D. Pile size will be determined by location. Piles shall not exceed 4 feet in height or 5 feet in diameter. Additional material should be fed slowly to reduce smoke.
 - E. Drip torches may be used to fire piles. Plastic used to cover piles should be removed prior to ignition.
 - F. If water is accessible, it shall be on site for extinguishing piles and preventing fire spread.
 - G. Each person working the fires shall have at least one hand tool – shovel, rake, Macleod, Pulaski – to help with fire control.
 - H. Permittee is responsible for checking burned piles to ensure that the pile is completely extinguished.
6. The burning of any material which emits dense smoke or noxious odors, including but not limited to, petroleum products, rubber, plastic, styrofoam, household garbage, is prohibited. Burning in barrels is prohibited. Please be a good neighbor.
7. Acceptable materials for burning are restricted to native "woody debris" only. This means that no other materials will be allowed under the permit process, i.e., construction debris, etc.
8. All efforts shall be extended to insure materials are dry and readily ignitable to facilitate low smoke densities.
9. Permits will not be issued for piles which can reasonably be disposed of by another means. For example, one or two piles within 50 feet from a road could be carried to the road to be chipped or hauled away. Determination will need to be made on whether a wildfire hazard exists. For example, one pile in the middle of an empty lot 100 feet from structures or roads does not create a wildfire hazard.
10. Failure to abide by these open burning guidelines may result in permit revocation and may be considered an infraction punishable as prescribed in Section 1.08.020 of the Ashland Municipal Code.

ASHLAND FIRE & RESCUE
OPEN BURNING PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES
Noxious Weed Abatement - Blackberries

The Ashland Municipal Code, Chapter 10.30, Sections .010 through .080, provide procedures and regulations under which open burning may be conducted. The following guidelines are provided to assist with the regulation of Open Burning in the City:

1. The open burning season within the City of Ashland is March 1st through the beginning of fire season (usually June), and two weeks after fire season ends in the fall. The issuance of burning permits may be suspended when atmospheric conditions, such as high winds, do not support safe burning practices.
2. All open burning will be conducted during daylight hours only during periods when the Jackson County Open Burning Advisory air quality index is 401 or above. For a recording of the ventilation index, call 776-7007. To obtain burn permit information, call the Fire Station during business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 482-2770. Fire shall be out and cold to the touch by dark.
3. To open burn, a permit must be obtained from the fire department. Burn sites will be inspected by fire department personnel prior to the commencement of burning. Burn permits must be activated each day prior to conducting a burn by calling the fire department at 482-2770.
4. Adequate fire safety measures must be taken to insure that burning is performed safely:
 - A. All burning must be attended and supervised by an adult.
 - B. Piles should be constructed away from roots, stumps, and leave trees.
 - C. A non-combustible perimeter of 10' shall be maintained from the burning area.
 - D. Pile size will be determined by location. Piles shall not exceed 4 feet in height or 5 feet in diameter. Additional material should be fed slowly to reduce smoke.
 - E. Drip torches may be used to fire piles. Plastic used to cover piles should be removed prior to ignition.
 - F. If water is accessible, it shall be on site for extinguishing piles and preventing fire spread.
 - G. Each person working the fire shall have at least one hand tool – shovel, rake, Macleod, Pulaski – to help with fire control.
 - H. Permittee is responsible for checking burned piles to ensure that the piles are completely extinguished.
5. The burning of any material which emits dense smoke or noxious odors, including but not limited to, petroleum products, rubber, plastic, styrofoam, household garbage, is prohibited. Burning in barrels is prohibited. Please be a good neighbor.
6. Acceptable materials for burning are restricted to **blackberries**. This means that no other materials will be allowed under the permit process, i.e., construction debris, yard trimmings, wood, etc.
7. All efforts shall be extended to insure materials are dry and readily ignitable to facilitate low smoke densities.
8. The pursuit of alternatives to open burning is strongly encouraged. Chipping, composting or transport of material to a transfer station or biomass utilization facility is encouraged.
9. Failure to abide by these open burning guidelines may result in permit revocation and may be considered an infraction punishable as prescribed in Section 1.08.020 of the Ashland Municipal Code.

Outdoor Burning Requirements

Outdoor burning is limited in the city of Ashland and **always requires a permit**. With a permit, there are two times per year that burning is allowed:

- Spring - March 1 until fire season begins
- Fall - For two weeks after fire season ends

Before requesting a permit for outdoor burning, please read the following:

Outdoor burning throughout the city of Ashland will be limited to materials resulting from Wildfire Fuel Reduction efforts and Noxious Weed abatement.

How do I know if I can burn?

You must meet **both** of the following conditions (A and B) to be considered for a burn permit:

A. Material must be Wildfire Fuels or Noxious Weeds

Wildfire Fuels Reduction is the cutting or thinning of native woody vegetation that is sufficiently flammable during the summer months. The vegetation must constitute a threat to property or structures to be considered as wildfire fuels. In order to burn wildfire fuels, your property must be in the City's [Wildfire Hazard Zone](#).

It is a good idea to consult with us before you cut wildfire fuels to determine what to cut and how you will dispose of the debris once it's cut. See our Firewise Program or call the Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator at (541) 552-2231 for a field consultation.

Noxious Weeds are those weeds listed on the Oregon State Department of Agriculture's A,B, or T lists. Common weeds from these lists found in Ashland are (but not limited to):

- Himalayan blackberry
- Star thistle
- Scotch Broom
- Dalmation toadflax
- English Ivy
- Spanish broom
- Spotted knapweed
- Puncture vine
- Japanese knotweed

A complete list of noxious weeds can be found at:http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/docs/weed_policy.pdf

Noxious weeds can be burned anywhere in the city once a permit is issued. WEEDS MUST BE PILED. NO WEED BURNERS (TORCHES) ARE ALLOWED.

B. Burning is the only option for disposal of biomass material

The biomass to be disposed of has to be in a place where chipping or hauling of the material is not feasible, or (as in the case of some noxious weeds) chipping or transport of the material would spread noxious weed seeds beyond the area of current infestation – i.e, blackberries cut along a creek side or Scotch broom with seed pods still attached. In situations where removal by chipping or hauling is feasible, burning will be seen as a last option.

Alternatives to Burning

There are many alternatives to burning debris in Ashland. Here are some suggestions:

- Recology Ashland Sanitary Service offers yard debris recycling pick up.<http://recologyashlandsanitaryservice.com/>
- Biomass One in White City has a sort yard where debris can be dropped off.http://www.biomassone.com/wood_waste_yard.php
- Rent or Hire a chipper through local businesses
- Compost the debris. Check with local extension office at 776-7371 if you are unfamiliar with composting.

How Do I Get a Burn Permit?

If you meet the conditions stated above, you need to schedule a burn permit inspection with Ashland Fire and Rescue by calling 482-2770 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Burn permits are only valid on days when air quality allows burning and during the two times of year permitted in the city of Ashland – March 1 until fire season begins and for two weeks in the fall after fire season ends.

Once a permit is obtained, refer to the burning regulations PDF file below, and as directed by the inspecting fire crew. Follow the instructions on your permit to activate your permit each day that you burn.

Residents living in the Wildland-Urban Interface need to be especially attentive to reducing wildfire fuels on their property Learn more about Wildfire Safety for Ashland Residents.

When does fire season begin and end?

Fire season is the time of year when outdoor fuels are prone to fire. Fire season is weather dependent, but typically begins in June and ends in October.

Why is burning so restricted in the city of Ashland?

In 2007, the Ashland City Council amended sections of the Ashland Municipal Code that regulate outdoor burning within the City of Ashland. The Council was responding to tightening air quality standards in the Rogue Valley and concerns raised by citizens with respiratory problems who are impacted by smoke from open burning.