



SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

City Hall Council Chambers, 1000 San Pablo Avenue
Wednesday, September 18, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cooper at 7:35pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Blanchard, Smith-Heimer, Uhrhammer, Wei, Yiu, Cooper

Members Absent: Lieberman

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approve minutes from Jul 17, 2013 meeting

Approved with minor edits.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

None.

6. DISCUSSIONS AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

A. UC Village Mixed Use Development - The 6.3-acre project site in University Village is located to the northwest and southwest of the Monroe Street/San Pablo Avenue intersection. The proposed project includes a 27,000 square foot grocery store, 17,000 square feet of associated retail space, and a 175-unit senior housing project. The purpose of the agenda is to provide the applicants an opportunity to present the sustainable development features of the project.

Recommendation: the applicants request the Committee make a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission in support of the sustainable development features of the project.

Jeff Bond introduced the UC Village Mixed Use Development project, which will include a grocery store, mixed retail, and a senior housing development. Marian Keeler, representing Thornton Tomasetti, gave a presentation to the committee outlining the LEED checklist for the Belmont Village senior housing project. The project is using LEED for Homes to obtain LEED Gold certification. Committee members expressed concern with the fact that the project was too focused on the LEED checklist and urged the development team to focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. They also requested an analysis of the proposed 1% solar facility on the roof and asked if there was roof capacity for more solar generation.

Kevin Flynn of EcoDeep outlined the planned sustainability measures of the Sprouts grocery store, which included insulation and lighting efficiency measures. The committee recommended that he recalculate his solar cost estimate and encouraged the use of refrigerants with low-GHG potential. They also suggested less parking. The committee as a whole was disappointed by the presenters, especially the one representing Sprouts, and found the content of both presentations to be unsatisfactory.

chair Cooper requested that the committee receive regular updates on the sustainability measures of these projects.

B. CCA Update

Claire Griffing provided an update – The Marin Energy Authority (MEA) will make a final determination on expansion at their board retreat on September 25th. The World Wildlife Fund is offering 3 competitive grants of up to \$30,000 each for CCA. Staff is working with the City of El Cerrito to submit a grant application for a joint feasibility study to join MEA. The City of San Pablo has set aside Capital Improvement Funds for their feasibility study. There will be a staff report outlining the Marin Energy Authority option at the next meeting. PG&E's green option is on hold due to a lawsuit.

C. Funding Update

Vice Chair Wei spoke with Marge Atkinson, who said that Council would consider raising the Utility User's Tax if there was clear support from the community. Committee members agreed to speak to their Council members and reach out to community groups before the next meeting and report back.

D. Outreach Subcommittee Update

Committee Member Smith-Heimer provided an update – the subcommittee is planning a meeting to bring together sustainability groups in Albany and discuss community outreach. Staff asked the committee to bring the item to the City Council for approval. The committee agreed to have the subcommittee update the report and send to committee members for comments before taking the item to Council.

E. GHG Inventory Update

Vice Chair Wei provided an update – the subcommittee determined that there have been reductions in Albany GHG emissions and projected that there would continue to be reductions. They estimated that 85% of the reductions were due to state mandates rather than City policies. The City's biggest influence on GHG reductions is from solid waste. Natural gas is a big part of GHG emissions and reducing heating demand in existing buildings could make a difference. The committee will discuss adopting a methodology for the transportation section of the inventory at the next meeting.

F. Discussion of whether to form a subcommittee to organize the 2014 Arts and Green Festival

The committee agreed to form a subcommittee to plan the 2014 Arts and Green Festival. Chair Cooper and Committee Member Yiu volunteered to join the subcommittee.

G. Discussion of Proposed Leaf Blower Ordinance

Griffing provided an update – There is concern that the City will not have the capacity to enforce an ordinance of this nature. City maintenance staff currently use leaf blowers and worry that banning them will create hardship. Committee Member Uhrhammer said that some cities have banned them in residential areas but not commercial ones, and some have banned both electric and gas powered blowers. He expressed concern about the potential health risks posed by the dust and particulate matter circulated by leaf blowers, and said that rakes can be just as effective in certain cases. He offered to research rake effectiveness and discuss this again at the next meeting.

H. Report from Staff on Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) Codes & Standards Regional Forum

The committee agreed to push this item to the next meeting.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Committee discussed future agenda items, including a continued discussion of leaf blowers, the GHG Inventory, CCA, the BayREN Forum, and CAP Funding as well as updates from the Arts and Green Festival Subcommittee and the Outreach Subcommittee.

A. Next regular meeting – October 16, 2013

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10pm.