



SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

City Hall Council Chambers, 1000 San Pablo Avenue
Wednesday, July 17, 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: Lieberman, Smith-Heimer, Uhrhammer, Wei, Yiu, Cooper

Members Absent: Blanchard

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approve minutes from June 19, 2013 meeting

Approved.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

A. Student Member Update

Claire Griffing introduced the new Student Member Faustine Yiu, who will be a junior at Albany High School.

B. Strategic Planning Update

Griffing provided an update – Council approved a new strategic plan in June with 4 action areas: maximize park and open space, promote vital and inviting business areas, engage our diverse community, and inspire community climate action. Under the last category, the main goals are to implement the cap, the active transportation plan and speed up sidewalk repairs. The Council asked that staff present an updated CAP implementation plan for council review and direction, likely in the spring.

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

A. Outreach Subcommittee Update

Committee Member Smith-Heimer provided an update – the subcommittee brainstormed how to achieve desired behavior change. One idea is to leverage existing local environmental groups and create an Albany Green Coalition, which would start off with a meeting in the fall. The committee asked to see an agenda and desired outcomes, which the subcommittee will prepare for the September meeting.

B. Discussion of Proposed Leaf Blower Ordinance

Griffing provided an overview – Residents have approached the City over the years with complaints about noise and pollution related to leaf blowers. Committee Member Lieberman presented a report on the matter to the Committee in 2008. Several nearby cities, including Berkeley and Piedmont, currently have ordinances. Staff recommendation is for the Sustainability Committee to make a recommendation on the matter, but staff is not prepared to recommend

approval of an ordinance requiring enforcement until code enforcement staff can be hired. Committee members expressed concern over the lack of enforcement staff and discussed the validity of the proposed ordinance. Resident Chris Kent spoke about the health issues related to dust and particulate matter being blown up by leaf blowers and asked that the current codes be enforced. He explained that the Bay Friendly Coalition is currently looking into the matter. Committee Member Uhrhammer suggested an outright ban on all leaf blowers for health reasons. Committee Member Yiu suggested they look into outdoor vacuums as another option. The Committee asked the City to look further into enforcement staff, determine if City maintenance crews could work without leaf blowers, and look into ordinances that ban both gas and electric blowers.

C. Update on UC Village Mixed Use Project

Griffing showed the most recent plans for the senior housing project and the Committee discussed access to the creek and the fact that the project was over-parked. Resident Preston Jordan expressed concerns with a conflict between a bus stop on San Pablo and the cycle track.

D. Discussion of Strategy for Reviewing CCA Options and Presenting Options to Council

Griffing provided an update – Marin Clean Energy (MCE) has still not made a decision on expansion. They will be discussing the matter at their August Technical Committee meeting and hope to make a decision at their retreat in late September. The City of San Pablo has procured consultant services for a feasibility study in the case that MCE does decide to expand in the East Bay. They used CIP funds for the \$20,000 contract with MCE. The City of El Cerrito has shown interest in moving forward with MCE as well. The City of Richmond is expanding the program to all service areas and has seen a 10% opt out rate. Their deep green participation is slightly higher than Marin's average. Richmond staff explained that the termination clause in the JPA agreement allows them to leave the JPA if they desire, but that their customers will stay with MCE.

Committee members asked to see the agreement. Committee Member Lieberman suggested they put together a table with the various CCA options and the pros and cons of each. The Committee discussed setting a timeline for decision making and Committee Member Uhrhammer said that if they wait, PG&E will continue to green their product.

E. Discussion of GHG Inventory Update

Griffing provided an update – Staff is still trying to obtain the Caltrans traffic counts. Stopwaste has had other issues with the new MTC data and will be working on this in the coming months.

F. Discussion and Possible Communication to City Council Regarding Funding Strategies for CAP Implementation

The committee decided to discuss the idea of a utility users tax one-on-one with Council Members to gauge support before making a formal recommendation to Council. Committee Member Smith-Heimer will update their original report with current user data provided by staff.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Committee discussed future agenda items, including a continued discussion of CAP funding, the GHG inventory, the UC mixed use project, the proposed leaf blower ordinance, and CCA, as well as an update from the Outreach Subcommittee and the Arts & Green Festival Subcommittee.

A. Next regular meeting – September 18, 2013

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm.