



MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 13, 2010, 7:00 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall – Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue

This Meeting Place Is Wheelchair Accessible

Chair Eggherman called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Roll Call

Present: Chair Eggherman, Members Benassini, Benjamin, Miner, Weinstein, Wong, Krueger, Rome, Brown-Lechner, Dandridge
Absent: Karineh Samkian, Ellen Spitalnik,
Also Present: Garth Schultz (Environmental Services Analyst and Staff Liaison)
Maria Sanders (Environmental Services Analyst)
Melanie Mintz (Environmental Services Division Manager)
Janet Abelson (Council Liaison)

1. Comments from the Public on non-Agenda Items

None.

2. a. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the previous meetings were not available for review. They will be made available at the next regular meeting on May 11.

b. Pledge of Environmentally Friendly Campaign Practices

The Committee and Council Liaison Abelson discussed the draft of the Pledge of Environmentally Friendly Campaign Practices. Ms. Abelson had several issues with the draft and wanted the Committee to research and review it more thoroughly prior to considering whether it should recommend that Council adopt it. Rebecca Benassini volunteered to research and return to the Committee with an updated draft for consideration.

3. Bi-weekly curbside food scrap composting collection pilot program

Staff Liaison Schultz presented a staff report about the City's plans to move forward with bi-weekly collection of food scraps and other organics combined with yard debris in green waste containers. He shared that the purpose of the new program is to help residents to reduce their environmental footprint at a low cost by using a collection mechanism that already exists. The Committee and members of the public discussed the benefits of the program and asked for clarification from staff with respect to the specific details, which are still in development. Staff reiterated that the City would like feedback or reactions about the bi-weekly approach; the Committee and members of the public did not express specific concerns about the bi-weekly schedule.

4. Earth Day outreach and coordination

The Committee discussed its outreach and involvement roles for Earth Day, specifically who will present what at the tables during the lunch celebration at the Community Center and what the details

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of the brief verbal program would be. The Committee and the members of the public discussed various other elements of Earth Day with no specific action taken.

5. Facebook page overview

Frank Wong gave an overview presentation of the unpublished draft Facebook page for City environmental activities. The point of having a Facebook page is to consolidate information and to encourage community members to help it go “viral”. The intent was to have the Facebook page ready for Earth Day, which staff initially thought was possible (since the meeting this was found to be untrue, but progress is still being made).

6. Update on New Recycling Center Project

Environmental Services Manager Melanie Mintz provided an overview regarding the redesign and reconstruction of the recycling center. She announced that City staff is planning a Community meeting on May 4, 2010 at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers and that EQC attendance would be helpful. She suggested that the Committee hold a Special Meeting during that date and time so that all of the Committee may attend. Miner/Weinstein moved and seconded to hold a special meeting on May 4 at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers to discuss this topic. After brief discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

7. Presentation on Sustainable Contra Costa

Rachel McMullin made a presentation about the non-profit Sustainable Contra Costa (www.sustainablecoco.org), for which she volunteers. She described the group’s annual sustainability awards program, which is set for Wednesday, September 29, 2010. She encouraged the public and the EQC to make nominations for sustainability awards and she handed out nomination forms. The group has a goal of 160 nominations this year. She intends to return to the Committee at a later date to seek individual sponsorships and involvement in the event.

8. Committee and liaison announcements and future agenda items

Council Liaison Abelson announced that the Council is about to start its annual budget process, and that things are much tighter than they have been in past years.

Staff Liaison Schultz announced that the Council will be hearing a presentation about PACE financing on May 3. There was brief discussion about including this as an item on the next EQC agenda. Mr. Schultz also announced that staff will bring the draft Animals Ordinance to the Committee for public comment on May 11.

Ms. Mintz announced that Bike to Work Day is May 13, with an Energizer Station at the Plaza BART on the May 13, and a bike-in movie (The Triplets of Bellville) at the Cerrito cinema the day before. She also announced that the City is doing a no-car challenge for staff during the month of May.

Paloma Pavel reported that she is exploring the idea of hosting a film at the Cerrito Cinema with the Climate Action sub-committee. Ms. Benassini said she is working to help involve other EQC film folks in this effort.

Mr. Weinstein reported that the Green Teams held a successful clean-up event on March 28, and that another one is tentatively scheduled for May 22. He also reported that his El Cerrito Paths walk was well received. Mr. Krueger agreed that the clean-ups are going very well, and that they are fun!

9. Adjournment

Chair Eggherman adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Environmental Quality Committee regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the El Cerrito Recycling Center Offices at 7501 Schmidt Ln., El Cerrito, Monday – Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.