



# MINUTES

## REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

**Tuesday, August 10, 2010, 7:00 p.m.**

**El Cerrito City Hall - City Council Chambers**

10890 San Pablo Avenue

**This Meeting Place Is Wheelchair Accessible**

Chair Eggherman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### Roll Call

Present: Chair Eggherman, Vice-Chair Weinstein, Members Rome, Miner, Benassini, Benjamin, Wong, Dandridge, Corwin, Pavel, Goudey, and Hammer  
Absent: Krueger, Spitalnik  
Also Present: Maria Sanders (Environmental Services Analyst), Melanie Mintz (Environmental Services Division Manager), Vince Ferro (Environmental Services Intern), Janet Abelson (Council Liaison)

### 1. Comments from the public on non-agenda items

Charles Burress announced [www.Patch.com](http://www.Patch.com), a local on-line newspaper. He will be freelance reporting on El Cerrito issues.

### 2. Approval of the Minutes

Approval of minutes from the following meetings has been deferred until the September meeting: Regular Committee meeting on July 13, 2010 and the Special Sub-committee meetings on July 27 and July 29, 2010. Mayor Abelson mentioned that approval of minutes from the sub-committees should be done at the sub-committee level and then advanced as an informational item to the full committee.

### 3. Welcome New EQC Members

Chair Eggherman welcomed new Committee members Howdy Goudey, Emily Corwin, Paloma Pavel, and Jenny Hammer.

### 4. Presentation on San Pablo Avenue Rain Gardens

The Committee heard a brief presentation from Environmental Services Manager Melanie Mintz on the San Pablo Avenue Rain Gardens Project. Mintz also encouraged EQC members to feel free to request similar presentations on other City projects as a way of keeping informed and being “ambassadors” for environmental quality in the City of El Cerrito. Per committee member request, this information is now posted online at [http://www.el-cerrito.org/archive/2010/attachments/17\\_report\\_100810\\_504.pdf](http://www.el-cerrito.org/archive/2010/attachments/17_report_100810_504.pdf).

### 5. Subcommittee Updates, Review, and assignments

Chair Eggherman led a discussion regarding a report prepared by Eggherman and Schultz proposing a new subcommittee structure for the EQC, in which all current standing subcommittees would be rolled into two new standing subcommittees – the Policy & Programs Subcommittee and the Community Involvement & Outreach Subcommittee. Each subcommittee would meet every other month on a rotating basis. Committee members had numerous questions about the process for agendaizing items for the Subcommittees. Eggherman clarified that any item could be added to an agenda up to a week in advance of a meeting via staff or the Chair of the subcommittee. Goudey asked if the new structure was creating an additional layer of bureaucracy that could be avoided if the Committee delegated work on a more ad hoc basis. Mintz and Abelson mentioned that ad hoc subcommittees under the Brown Act needed to be limited in time and purpose and could not contain a quorum without being noticed. Wong expressed concern that subcommittee meetings every month may present a significant time delay for critical decisions needed to be made by the full Committee. Eggherman clarified that this is a work in progress and that items did not have to go through subcommittees first. Any Committee member could work with the Staff Liaison or the Chair to bring an item directly to the EQC.

### COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION

*To request a meeting agenda in large print, Braille, or on cassette, or to request a sign language interpreter for the meeting, call Garth Schultz, Staff Liaison at 215-4354 (voice) at least FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS NOTICE PRIOR TO THE MEETING to ensure availability.*

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Members discussed how the work of each existing subcommittees would be organized under the 2 proposed subcommittees. Mintz and Weinstein engaged in a discussion to clarify the roll of the type of work the EQC could take on, using the nascent Creeks Subcommittee as an example. Mintz said that a review of the Creeks Ordinance could be delegated to the Programs & Policy Subcommittee, while stewardship, creek clean ups, docent programs could be delegated to the Events & Outreach Subcommittee. But the EQC cannot take a stance on individual land use projects. That is the purview of the Planning Commission. The following work was initially divided as follows:

Events and Outreach (aka Community Involvement): Green Teams, Creek Stewardship, Film Series, Green Biz Promotion, Strategic Outreach, Events such as Earth Day and 10/10/10. The first meeting of this subcommittee is August 24.

Programs & Policy Subcommittee: Animal Ordinance, Creeks Ordinance, Climate Action Plan, Take-Out Container Program. The first meeting of this subcommittee is September 21.

Motion to create two standing Subcommittees of the EQC, the first being Community Involvement and Outreach and the second being Programs & Policy. Weinstein/ Benjamin. Unanimous.

**6. AB 1998 (The CA Plastic Bag Ban) & AB 1343 (The Paint Recovery Act)**

Vince Ferro gave a brief report on the CA Plastic Bag Ban and CA Paint Recovery Act, legislation that is currently moving through the California legislature. Mayor Abelson noted that a resolution to support both Bills is slated to be on the Council Consent Calendar at the August 16 Council Meeting. Motion to recommend that the Council approve support of AB 1998 – The CA Plastic Bag Ban and AB 1343 – The Paint Recovery Act. Benassini/ Dandridge. Unanimous.

**7. 10/10/10 Climate Action Event**

The Committee heard a presentation from Sanders regarding potential EQC participation in a 10/10/10 Global Work Party, an international event to be held on October 10, 2010 being sponsored by 350.org. ([www.350.org](http://www.350.org)). Staff, the Green Teams and the Climate Action Subcommittees have all discussed the idea of leveraging the community-wide Garage Sale, an Un-Waste Drop-off Event, and a Free El Cerrito Compost Giveaway that will be happening that weekend to make a connection between the 4 R's (Reduce/Reuse/Recycle and Rot) and climate protection. Sanders mentioned that the 350.org website will recognize our event and use it to show grassroots support for national leadership on climate protection. Goudey mentioned that it may be a good way to highlight the new Recycling Center. Pavel also thought it a good idea to combine the event with a film showing. Motion to sponsor a community involvement event on October 10 in concert with worldwide events to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Miner/Hammer. Unanimous.

**8. Committee and liaison announcements and future agenda items**

- Mayor Abelson announced that the City of El Cerrito would have 2 candidates for City Council and one measure on the November ballot. Both she and Rebecca Benassini will be running for 2 Council seats. The City has put a ½ cent sales tax on the ballot to maintain city services and avoid staff lay-offs.
- Mintz announced that the City has taken an advertisement out in the latest EcoMetro Guide, which promotes local businesses and provides discounts at many El Cerrito businesses. She also drew attention to a community-wide mailer announcing several City-Sponsored community meetings coming up in Aug and September.
- Sanders updated the Committee on federal legislation in support of PACE Financing in response to the Federal Home Financing Agency's recent decision to tighten lending in jurisdictions with PACE programs, effectively shutting down all PACE programs in the nation.
- Weinstein announced the upcoming Green Team event on August 21, 9 AM at the Central Avenue Corridor.

**9. Adjournment – 9:03**

The Chair closed the meeting at 9:03 pm.

*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. & 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.*