MINUTES



REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 13, 2011, 7:00 p.m. El Cerrito City Hall - City Council Chambers 10890 San Pablo Avenue

This Meeting Place Is Wheelchair Accessible

Vice Chair Weinstein called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Roll Call

Present: Vice Chair Weinstein, Krueger, Benjamin, Dandridge, Huang, Miner, Goudey, Corwin

Absent: Chair Egherman, Pavel, Spitalnik

Also Present: Garth Schultz, Environmental Analyst and Staff Liaison, Janet Abelson, Council Liaison

1. Comments from the public on non-agenda items

Kathy McKinley spoke about the Rodoni property at 1715 Elm Street which has a creek that runs through this property and the proposed plan for this property. Mr. Biggs would like to cover the creek and build condo units on top of the land. In order to move forward with the proposed plan, there would have to be a zoning change to go though the City Council. A zoning change would violate the City's creek ordinance. Cathy is in favor of preserving the creek. She helped work on the city's creek ordinance.

Robin Mitchell announced the Community Gardening meeting at City Hall on Saturday, September 17^{th} , 2011 from 10:00 am -12:00 pm.

Tom Panas also spoke about the creek ordinance regarding the Rodini Property. He is also in favor of preserving the creek. The proposed developer is working with the city. If the EQC could not do anything about this issue, he encouraged them as residents to bring this issue to the City Council and also to work with city staff.

<u>Weinstein</u> stated due to the Brown Act, there are limitations of discussion on non-agenda items. <u>Kruger</u> proposed putting this issue on the EQC's agenda soon for further discussion regarding chapter 19 - zoning ordinance and creek restorations.

Renee Solari attended her third EQC meeting. She is interested in being on the committee and plans to be interviewed to fill a vacant seat. The subcommittee interviews the prospective candidate and council makes the appointment. An interview by the subcommittee needs to be on the agenda.

2. Approval of the Minutes

<u>Kruger</u> made the motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held on August 14, 2011, seconded by <u>Goudey</u>. Comment by <u>Corwin</u>, she would like her food ware comment to be added to the minutes of August 14th. Motion amended and passed unanimously.

3. EQC Environmental Film Series, Update and Event Approval

<u>Goudey</u> announced Saturday, October 29, 2011 "Bag It" will be shown at the Rialto Cinemas. Nice selection of panel speakers to speak in a 30-40 minute discussion after the film. Chris Lehon from Recyclemore to speak

COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION

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about the regional plastic ban plans. "Plastic State Of Mind" a three minute short will also be shown. Actors from the short film will also be panelist in the discussion. The screening fee to show "Bag It" costs \$150.00 for this event. Miner made the motion to pay the \$150.00 screening fee to show the film, seconded by Corwin. Passed unanimously.

<u>Miner</u> suggested for attendees to take a call of action such as filling out a post card and telling local businesses to use bio food ware. <u>Kruger</u> suggested having EQC members commit to attending event to ensure a good turn out and to spread the word to ECHS students, teachers, clubs, etc. <u>Corwin</u> asked if film was appropriate for small children. <u>Goudey</u> answered saying there is a scene with seals and plastic bags but is not too graphic.

4. Committee goal activity and project updates *Policies and Programs*

Miner reported that the State bill to ban styrofoam food ware failed. On Wednesday, September 21 there will be a community meeting with local business owners about a future food ware ordinance. An invitation letter was sent to local food service businesses from City Manager, Scott Hanin. There was an application form to receive a \$110.00 incentive to buy biodegradable food ware for the first 20-25 businesses who signed up. The price gap is narrowing between styrofoam and biodegradables. Some of the businesses visited were enthusiastic such as the Shutter Café. A Chinese restaurant tried another food ware other than styrofoam but switched back for customer safety especially with hot soup and also the price costing less. The EQC broke the city into 5 zones visiting local foodservice businesses and speaking with owners/staff. It took about an hour to visit 13-14 businesses.

Community Involvement and Outreach

<u>Weinstein</u> reported on Green Teams and habitat restoration regarding the chorus frogs in wetlands along the Ohlone Greenway. There will be an event in December during the frogs mating season. Would like green teams to be involved in other type of events than just clean ups. <u>Kruger</u> suggested calling schools to see if they would be interested in working with green teams. Robin suggested planting in the fall and pulling broom in the winter. <u>Goudey</u> suggested on making events more meaningful and to work with friends of five creeks. There was also discussion of utilizing the new City's Environmental Programs Manager, Stephan Pree in the EQC.

5. Committee and liaison announcements, members announcements, and future agenda items

Abelson, the city council is still on a summer schedule and has not been meeting a lot. The City of El Cerrito is a sponsor for *Taste of El Cerrito* at the Community Center on September 18th, from 4:30 pm – 8:30 pm. There are two new businesses in El Cerrito, new Safeway store and Elevation 66. Safeway as agreed with the city to give money to redevelopment for the Ohlone Greenway project but not until Bart is finished retrofitting. Elevation 66 is a new Brewery/Pub that also has food service and serves organic food grown locally. The State budget does not look so good, program cuts to come later this year.

<u>Schultz</u>, Smart Home Workshop II on October 12 at Richmond City Hall. October 20th, Bike Town Hall Meeting and changes to bike ordinance. Recycling Center construction is moving fast. Concrete has been laid down. When the new center opens, hard to recycle items such as CFL's, carpet, paint, e-waste, syringes, pharmaceuticals plan to be accepted.

<u>Weinstein</u> announced future agenda items. EQC and Planning Committee issues on pending projects such as creek restoration and what EQC's role should be and should actions be taken. Resolution of compostables for City events.

6. Adjournment

Weinstein closed the meeting at 8:56 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.