



MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 14, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

10890 San Pablo Avenue

This Meeting Place Is Wheelchair Accessible

Call To Order: 7:04 PM

Roll Call: Chair Goudey, Vice-Chair Schaadt, Members Hargrove, Milliken, Miner, O'Connor, Pavel, Spitalnik, Solari, Weinstein

Absent: Mackie, Solari,

Also Present: Janet Abelson, Council Liaison; Maria Sanders, Staff Liaison

1. Council/ Staff Liaisons Announcements and Reports –Goudey welcomed Councilmember Janet Abelson to the EQC. Councilmember Abelson made several announcements, including:

- The City Council is currently holding interviews to seat new members on various commissions;
- Construction of Hana Gardens Apartments next to City Hall has started;
- There are several new developments proposed for various sites along San Pablo Ave;
- The Human Relations Commission is considering recommending that El Cerrito become a Sanctuary City.

Sanders announced that Trina Mackie will be taking an extended leave of absence from the EQC as she is very soon expecting a new baby. Sanders also announced that EQC Chair and Vice Chair elections will be held in March. She requested that any nominations be sent to her. Spitalnik thanked both Members Goudey and Schaadt for their service as the current Chair and Vice Chair of the committee.

2. Comments from the public on non-agenda items – Richmond resident Cordell Hindler announced the new show “Well” is now showing at the Contra Costa Civic Theatre.

3. Approval of the Minutes – Motion to defer approval of the October 10 and January 10 minutes until the next meeting (O'Connor, Weinstein, Unanimous).

4. Biological Control of Cape Ivy– Dr. Patrick Moran and Dr. Scott Portman, both research entomologists at the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS), provided a presentation on research to biologically control Cape Ivy, which is an invasive plant from South Africa that is currently outcompeting native vegetation throughout Coastal California. For the past 20 years, the USDA-ARS have been conducting extensive research on the Cape Ivy gall-forming fly, which is the natural predator of Cape Ivy. USDA-ARS has released the fly at other test sites in California in order to help control the spread of cape ivy. Release of the fly has received approval from the California Department of Food and Agriculture, including a CEQA review, and received a required US Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) permit. The research team approached the cities of El Cerrito and Albany on the recommendation of Friends of Five Creeks and Friends of Albany Hill, as these organizations are interested in using the fly to control the ivy at several possible test sites on Albany

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 Maria Sanders, Staff Liaison at 215-4361 (voice) at least FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS NOTICE PRIOR TO THE MEETING to ensure availability.

Hill and the Hillside Natural Area. As the property owners, both the City of Albany and El Cerrito will need to provide permission for this work to take place. EQC Members asked various clarifying questions about the APHIS permit and CEQA processes, the long-term safety of releasing the fly, including on plants other than Cape Ivy. Dr. Moran explained that the fly is hardwired to only attack Cape Ivy; tests of types of crop plants and even closely related plant species revealed no damage from the fly. Margot Cunningham from Friends of Albany Hill provided information that the city of Albany has provided a conditional approval of the release of the fly on their test site as long as the other parties, namely El Cerrito, also agree. Ralph Boniello spoke on behalf of Friends of Five Creeks, mentioning that they were also in favor of using the fly to control Cape Ivy. He indicated that Friends of Five Creeks spends a lot of time trying to control this ivy in the areas where they work. Doug Johnson of the California Invasive Plant Society also spoke and indicated his support for the release of the Cape Ivy fly. Goudey thanked members of the public for their comments. Members agreed that they would devote a portion of their March agenda to gather more input from the public. Sanders indicated that she would verify next steps with city staff regarding providing permission.

5. **EQC Member Appointment Process**—Motion for Goudey and Schaadt to sit on the ad-hoc interview subcommittee for Rebecca Miller, who is interested in joining the EQC. They will meet March 14 at 6:30 (O'Connor, Spitalnik, Unanimous).
6. **EQC Work Plan**— Goudey provided the final updated EQC Work Plan for 2017 including new language provided by Spitalnik and Weinstein during the last meeting in February.
7. **EQC Budget and Calendar of Events**
 - Green Teams:
 - Del Norte Area Clean-Up (January 14): O'Connor reported the event at the Del Norte Area Clean-up went very well and that they had a good turnout, including Councilmember Paul Fadelli.
 - Motorcycle Hill (February 25): Weinstein provided information regarding the logistics for this event.
 - Madera Broom Pull (March 18): Goudey will lead this event and provide information for outreach to Sanders.
 - Cerrito Creek Spruce Up – Weinstein reported this event will occur on April 8.
 - Earth Day (April 22nd)—Goudey reported that he spoke with Peter Beasley, PG&E's Integrated Vegetation Management Program Manager, who indicated the PG&E is still committed to having an Earth Day event on their Moeser Lane properties. Goudey will be the EQC lead for this particular Earth Day work party. The EQC also determined that they would like to have a clean-up on San Pablo Ave. near Central Avenue. Weinstein and O'Connor will take the lead on this work party.
 - National Drive Electric Week (September 9-17)—Milliken reported she would not have the band-width to make this an El Cerrito event. As part of her job, she will be organizing this event in Berkeley and invited the El Cerrito EQC to co-sponsor.
 - Hillside Festival (May 21)—Weinstein proposed that the EQC appropriate up to \$1500 for expenses related to putting on the Hillside Festival, allocating up to \$600 of that amount to be paid to Trail Trekkers for expenses that require expedited payment or point of sale purchases. Motion to approve (Weinstein, Miner, Unanimous).
8. **Climate Action Plan Implementation**—Milliken said that the 100 x 100 Deep Green Push is now live on the MCE website. She is coordinating with City staff to get out the word through City outreach mechanisms. Motion to allocate up to \$175 for printing of additional 100 X 100 postcards (Milliken, Miner, Unanimous). Miner provided information that there are currently no businesses in El Cerrito that are Deep Green champions. He asked that members consider contacting their favorite businesses and ask them to get involved. Milliken also mentioned that MCE will help the City analyze the cost of going Deep Green.

9. **Trail Trekkers' Grant Proposal Regarding Interpretive Signage in HNA**— Weinstein reported that Trail Trekkers provided a letter of interest to the local Rotary for a grant to develop interpretive signage along a trail segment in the Hillside Natural Area. The letter of interest was accepted and advanced to the next level, where they will be submitting a more detailed proposal. Weinstein will provide the full proposal for the March meeting.
10. **Announcements and Future Agenda Items:** Miner announced he won't be able to attend the March Meeting. He expressed interest in serving as an officer. So if he is nominated, members should feel free to accept the nomination even though he can't be present.

Consideration of Upcoming Agenda Items

- 1 USDA presentation on IVM and the Cape Ivy predator fly – TBD in March
- 2 EQC Chair and Vice Chair Election - March
- 3 Drones in Hillside Natural Area – TBD
- 4 Invite John Gioia – TBD
- 5 City Purchased Vehicles
- 6 Changes to Federal Environmental Policy

11. **Adjournment – 9:05**

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 + Environmental Resource Center Administrative Office at 7501 Schmidt Lane, El Cerrito, Monday - Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.