

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 8, 2012, 7:00 p.m.

El Cerrito City Hall - City Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue

This Meeting Place Is Wheelchair Accessible



Corwin called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Roll Call

Chair Corwin, Vice Chair Miner, Members Benjamin, Dandridge, Eggherman, Goudey, Huang, Krueger, Solari, Spitalnik and Weinstein

Absent: Pavel

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

1. Comments from the public on non-agenda items

No public comments.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Eggherman made the motion to adopt the minutes of the Regular Committee meeting held on April 10, 2012 seconded by Miner. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Climate Action Plan Update

Maria Sanders presented information on the greenhouse gas emissions strategies included in the City's forthcoming Climate Action Plan. It is anticipated that staff will release a draft for public review later this summer or fall and for council consideration by the end of the year. In addition, Sanders circulated a list of the draft Goals and Strategies included in the CAP, along with an exercise intended to have EQC members rank the cost-effectiveness of each strategy. Members of the Committee agreed to provide feedback on the cost-effectiveness within 2 weeks. Weinstein asked to add natural habitat, open space preservation, and creeks to list of strategies. Sanders agreed that these should be included, especially since the City was just awarded a grant to develop a comprehensive urban greening plan. Several members had questions regarding how staff was able to account for emissions reductions from Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and increased density along major transportation corridors. Sanders explained that she used findings from urban design research that indicated that TOD and higher densities, especially if located close to major job centers and accompanied by smart parking demand management strategies, pedestrian-scale design and business activity, decreased "vehicle miles travelled" by as much as 25%. Because of its 2 BART stations, easy access to job centers, and its current proactive stance on TOD, El Cerrito is well positioned to achieve the maximum VMT reductions associated with the transportation and land use strategies by 2035. Abelson requested that

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 559-7684 (voice) at least FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS NOTICE PRIOR TO THE MEETING to ensure availability.

the documents be e-mailed to the committee to make it easier to read. Given that the discussion had to be cut short due to time, the Committee agreed to host a longer study session at a future meeting.

4. Educational topics for future meetings

Solari presented a list of educational topics. The purpose is to educate, inspire and engage (activity). The structure of the program would consider 3 venues. 1) Agenda item at EQC meeting (15 minute presentation) 2) Activity at Environmental Resource Center 3) Present at El Cerrito High School. Benjamin, Spitalnik & Solari would be on the committee. Solari asked for feedback and asked Schultz about logistics. Schultz is interested but did not have an answer at the moment. Possibly overlap green teams and film series and how to market a plan and find an audience. Goudey asked how to structure business meeting with event. Corwin asked to support the proposed structure, would the meeting be an adhoc meeting. The planning part would be approved at regular meetings. There needs to be a way to configure how small group can make the planning. Benjamin made the motion to move the task aspect to an adhoc group and to delay a plan for the education series that includes speakers at EQC meetings, continuing education at Recycling Center and ECHS with 4 topics of speakers just for the next 4 EQC meetings, seconded by Kruger. Motion passed unanimously. Solari proposed for Greg Golson a teacher from ECHS who runs the auto shop program be added to a future agenda.

5. Eco Film Series Update

Goudey gave an update about the Eco Film Series. On, Friday 4/13 “Mad City Chickens” was shown at City Hall’s Council Chambers. 25-30 people attend the film and it was a smaller turn out than usual. The film was a light hearted. After the film, an all creatures Veterinarian spoke about poultry health. The next film shown will be “Green Fire” on Tuesday, May 22nd, from 7 pm – 9 pm at City Hall’s Council Chambers. The film is about the birth of land management and ethics and the beginning of the conservation movement. The featured speaker will be one of the producers of the film. Goudey encouraged the EQC to invite people to this film showing. Goudey also mentioned that a business meeting didn’t work at previous film showings. Goudey saw the film “Yert” at the Berkeley Ecology Center. The film is about 3 people who travel the country with well known people. Goudey proposed to show “Yert” in June. He also shared that they have had good results with Saturday showings from 10 am – 12 pm. The film would be shown in late June and the date would be determined with Suzanna Iarla and Schultz. Kruger made the motion to show film in late June, seconded by Weinstein.

6. Green Team Update

Robin Mitchell presented about community gardens. Krueger/Weinstein made the motion to approve City parks clean-up event on May 20th, passed unanimously. Considered a motion to approve educations program talk by Gordon Frankie, UC Berkeley professor and Entomologist who has a native garden on campus for California native bees. Judith spoke about Frankie’s garden. Frankie has had the garden since 2003 and it’s only open on garden tour dates. He brings a small sample of California native bees to his talks. Judith has been in communication with Frankie via e-mail possibly to speak in El Cerrito in August. He requests a \$150.00 honorarium fee for his educational talks. 70% of Native bees live in the soil. They are efficient pollinators and he talks about habitat and what flowers attract bees. Weinstein was not in favor of the \$150.00 honorarium fee for the speaker. Kruger was concerned that fee sets a president and a tone for speakers and would like more time to decide. Due to the professor’s busy schedule a decision needed to be made at the meeting in order for Frankie to commit. Robin Mitchell proposed to co/sponsor with EC Garden Club to split the \$150.00 fee. Spitalnik considered looking at the budget and the budget of the Education Committee. Shultz, no budget has been approved for the next fiscal year. Weinstein made the motion for an event in August with Frankie as the speaker with the place to be determined, seconded by Benjamin, passed unanimously. Robin Mitchell proposed EC Garden club will cover the total \$150.00 speaker fee.

Judith presented a project proposal for the Shevlin-to-King nature trail. It is the nicest trail in town with a series of steps, and very broad steps on Shevlin Drive. The trail would be a demonstration garden for wildlife, bees, butterflies, etc. with several benefits to the community. The garden would enhance wildlife (remove the weeds and ice plants), beautify the area, provide a visible example of the EQC's goals about wildlife. Robin Mitchell would take Judith's proposal to the next Parks and Recreation meeting. Public works involvement with measure W money only allocated once a year in February. Motion made by Weinstein to give conceptual support to the trail project, seconded by Spitalnik, passed unanimously.

7. Announcements and future agenda item

Abelson reported the council has had simple meetings and closed sessions on employment issues. The City Awarded a Management Partner with a contract for a strategic plan, general plan, climate action plan, and service priority. Earth Day was a success and the amount of food was exceeded. In the future, there needs to be a better way to distribute water. There was public interest in community gardening and scotch broom pulling.

Schultz announced he could not attend the Board Commissioner's dinner but encouraged committee members to attend. The Recycling Center has been open for 2 weeks. The first Sunday open, the center had 575 visitors. Bike to work day is on Thursday, May 10th from 7 am – 9 am at the El Cerrito Plaza Bart Station. May 31st there will be a public meeting about the Ohlone Greenway. Melanie Mintz, Environmental Services Manager was selected to attend the Urban Sustainability Leadership Academy by the Institute of Sustainable Communities in Denver on June 6-8. Shultz has been working on the styrofoam ban but has been busy with the new recycling center. The Recycling Center won an award submitted by Pankow from the Design Build Institution. Prop 84 for urban greening to fund urban parks, the city was awarded a \$280,000 grant written by Mintz. In August, a film will be shown about the history of the Recycling Center.

Dandridge announced she will be speaking at the next city council meeting in June opposing the War in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Weinstein announced on Thursday, June 21st at 6 pm there will be a historical talk at the Recycling Center with some of the originals who started the Recycling Center.

Miner reminded EQC when and who would be sent to the Green Business Program meeting next month in June.

8. Adjournment

Corwin adjourned the meeting at 9:13 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 - Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.