



MINUTES

SUNNYVALE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION May 20, 2013

The Sustainability Commission met in regular session in the West Conference Room at 7:00 p.m. with Chair Harrison presiding.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present:

Commission Chair Sue Harrison
Commissioner Barbara Fukumoto
Commissioner Andy Frazer
Commissioner Gerry Glaser
Commissioner Dan Hafeman (7:03)
Commissioner Joe Green-Heffern
Commissioner Amit Srivastava (7:32)

Council Liaison: Councilmember Pat Meyering (Absent)

Staff Present: John Stufflebean, Director of Environmental Services
Melody Tovar, Regulatory Programs Division Manager
Manuel Pineda, Assistant Director of Public Works/City Engineer
Leonard Dunn, Urban Landscape Manager
Dustin Clark, Sustainability Coordinator

Guest: De Anza College, Environmental Protection Class

SCHEDULED PRESENTATION

Leonard Dunn, Urban Landscape Manager provided the Commission a presentation regarding the City's tree removal policy. The discussion addressed tree removal policies and issues regarding commercial, residential and redeveloped properties.

Manuel Pineda, Assistant Director of Public Works, discussed current and future streetlight plans for the Mathilda Bridge and Downtown redevelopment area. Assistant Director Pineda indicated that the City is looking at alternative spacing and energy efficient alternatives as the Downtown area continues to redevelop.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Harrison opened the public hearing to public announcements.

Jeff Staudinger, Environmental Protection class instructor with De Anza College, introduced his class that were in attendance and thanked staff for accommodating the class and providing insight and information about the role of staff, Council and the Sustainability Commission in addressing sustainability.

Chair Harrison closed the public hearing.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1.A. Approval of draft minutes of Sustainability Commission meeting of April 15, 2013.

Commissioner Fukumoto moved and Commissioner Green-Heffern seconded a motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 15, 2013.

VOTE: 6-0 (Vote was unanimous. Commissioner Srivastava abstained)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Harrison opened the public hearing to public announcements.

Daniel Valencia, Sunnyvale resident, commented on the lack of a pedestrian sidewalk along Tasman between Fair Oaks and Lawrence and that it is a public safety issue because kids walk along that area and the speed limit is 40 miles per hour, but cars drive over 45 miles per hour. Mr. Valencia commented that he hopes there is funding from VTA to build a sidewalk.

Chair Harrison closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Discussion and Possible Action: Review of the City Manager's Proposed Budget

Several commissioners commented that the budget documents did not sufficiently discuss climate change as an important fiscal consideration in the future, even if the scope and scale is unknown at this time.

Commissioner Glaser commented regarding the assumptions regarding the utility tax and the prediction that the revenue from utility taxes will rise. Commissioner Glaser commented that he believes that assumption to be incorrect because as more people convert to solar energy, they purchase less power from PG&E and so the amount of revenue PG&E will get over time will decrease if rates stay the same. Commissioner Glaser commented that in the case of Community Choice Aggregation the City would no longer be working at the level of taxing a utility, but instead be on the income side and pick it up directly.

Commissioner Glaser commented on project 827690- Evaluation of Bridges and Levees in the budget and the hope that the Commission would have the opportunity to receive a report on the results of that study.

Commissioner Glaser commented on the slurry seal projects and asked whether there is an opportunity to consider using improved materials that will reduce the heat island effect. Commissioner Glaser acknowledged that this is a budget and does not discuss or go into details about implementation strategies.

Commissioner Fukumoto commented that she found reading through the projects to be interesting because it illustrated how complex it is to run a City. Commissioner Fukumoto commented that she was proud reading the budget knowing that the City is planning for 20 years in the future. Commissioner Fukumoto commented that it struck her that the elephant in the room not specifically addressed is climate change. Commissioner Fukumoto commented that it seemed to her that a funding source would be necessary to cover the new projects that come up as a result of the Climate Action Plan and suggested giving the voters a chance to tax themselves for the greater good and hopes Council will consider this option.

Commissioner Fukumoto commented that she hopes there is a way to get the Ecodistricts study done this year because it is not dependent on the Climate Action Plan, but rather that the Lawrence Station is being planned and so is Peery Park.

Commissioner Green-Heffern commented that based on the budget document there appears to be a vision in terms of fiscal management, labor contracts, BPAC and infrastructure improvements, but there doesn't appear to be a vision around sustainability. Commissioner Green-Heffern commented that in evaluating the projects, is the City achieving long term sustainability goals or not. Commissioner Green-Heffern commented that there needs to be a sort of placeholder to capture the long term environmental goals. Commissioner Green-Heffern commented that the issue is not whether Council and staff will have to filter and sift what the priorities are or not, but that when sifting projects for what is funded or not there should be a metric or goal about long term environmental or sustainability goals. In other words, sustainability was considered in the choosing of projects.

Commissioner Green-Heffern commented that it would be valuable for the City Manager's Budget Transmittal Letter to include a note to Council raising their awareness of some emerging future climate change issues, like sea level rise, that the City will be facing in the next 20 years. Commissioner Green-Heffern commented that even though the City does not specifically have a plan or budgeted items for climate change issues Council should stay tuned. Commissioner Green-Heffern commented that if some future climate change issue could, for example, drive the cost of the WPCP up \$5 or 50 million dollars, but not zero, it would be worth acknowledging and being attributed to the issue and not buried in the cost of the WPCP, given the unknown costs.

Commissioner Hafeman commented about the need for bike lanes to be included in both the Fair Oaks Bridge and Mathilda/101 Bridge projects and for public input on the matter. Commissioner Hafeman commented that while the budget is a 20-year plan, there was no mention or discussion of planning for sea level rise. Commissioner Hafeman commented that 20 years is a reasonable time frame that sea level rise will be occurring so it seems like it should be showing up in the 20-year budget or at least a discussion should be started, but one wouldn't know it based on the budget.

Commissioner Frazer commented on Commissioner Fukumoto's idea of the need for a utility user tax. Commissioner Frazer commented that that is a good idea, but his understanding is that a new utility tax cannot be earmarked for a specific project and must go into the General Fund.

Commissioner Frazer commented on something he learned about the 20-year budget forecast in a discussion with the City Manager. Commissioner Frazer commented that he learned that one of the benefits of a 20-year forecast is that when future projects are programmed into the 20-year plan, once there is buy-in early and because it is in the long range forecast, it makes it more difficult for a future Council to change the plan and put something else in. If a Council chooses to put an alternative project in, unless they have new revenue for the project, they are going to have to identify exactly where they will take away from. Commissioner Frazer commented that a project in the 20-year plan gives a little extra momentum to protect that project, but the reverse is that it is difficult to slip a project in in year three unless there is a spike in revenue. Commissioner Frazer commented that if the Commission or City hopes to add new future climate oriented projects it is better to get them in early, even if unfunded.

Chair Harrison opened the public hearing to public comments.

There were no comments.

Chair Harrison closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Glaser made a motion and Commissioner Green-Heffern seconded that a summary of the Commission's comments regarding the proposed budget be forwarded to Council immediately after review by the Commission Chair.

VOTE: 7-0 (Vote was unanimous)

2. Discussion and Possible Action: Community Condition Indicators

The Commission reviewed and discussed the Community Condition Indicators (CCI), which are included as part of the annual budget document. The Commission expressed interest in identifying new Community Condition Indicators related to sustainability for inclusion in the CCIs in the future.

Commissioner Fukumoto made a motion and Commissioner Glaser seconded to recommend to Council that the City post the Community Condition Indicators prominently on the City website.

VOTE: 7-0 (Vote was unanimous)

3. Discussion and Possible Action: Proposal of Study Issues

No action was taken

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

Commissioner Oral Comments

Commissioner Glaser reported that he will be attending the WEST Summit 2013 on Thursday, May 23 at NASA Ames Research Center.

Commissioner Glaser reported that the Precourt Institute of Energy will be hosting the Silicon Valley Energy Summit on June 28, 2013 at Stanford.

Commissioner Srivastava reported attending a wind/solar conference in Chicago.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dustin Clark, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator

Reviewed by: John Stufflebean, Director of Environmental Services
Melody Tovar, Regulatory Programs Division Manager