

CITY OF CUPERTINO SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Teleconference meeting without a physical location.

Thursday, July 16, 2020 4:00 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

At 4:02 p.m. Vice Chair Swaminathan called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Vice Chair Vignesh Swaminathan and Commissioners Ram Mohan, Meera Ramanathan, Anna Weber. Absent: Chair Gary Latshaw.

Staff: Bill Mitchell, Chief Technology Officer; André Duurvoort, Sustainability Manager; Victoria Morin, Environmental Outreach Coordinator; Gilee Corral, Climate and Utilities Analyst; Vanessa Shin, CivicSpark AmeriCorps Fellow.

Guests: Members of the public.

Vice Chair Swaminathan read a statement regarding provisions of the Brown Act and a recent Executive Order issued by the Governor to facilitate teleconferencing to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission at public meetings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Subject: Minutes from June 18, 2020 meeting

Draft minutes of June 18, 2020 meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Weber moved and Commissioner Ramanathan seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Latshaw absent.

POSTPONEMENTS

None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Dashiell Leeds on behalf of the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter talked about Menlo Park City Council adopting a draft Climate Action Plan with a target of zero carbon by 2030 and a measure to electrify 95% of existing buildings by 2030 via a burnout ordinance.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

2. Subject: Bay Area low carbon concrete codes initiative

Chair Latshaw intended to present this item but was absent.

Vice Chair Swaminathan opened public comment and the following individual spoke:

- Dashiell Leeds on behalf of the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter spoke in support of Cupertino considering a low carbon concrete code to improve the recently adopted reach code for new buildings.

The Commission briefly discussed the topic. Questions and issues raised included:

- Embodied carbon could continue as a topic under the Climate Action Plan (CAP) update project (Weber). Staff will continue to monitor the development of the Bay Area low carbon concrete codes model ordinance and bring to the Commission updates as relevant to the CAP update process.
- Other Bay Area cities adopting a similar code (Swaminathan). Staff noted that the County of Marin recently adopted the first low carbon concrete ordinance.
- Support monitoring the codes project and how Marin's new code will affect development (Swaminathan).
- When would a low carbon concrete ordinance be considered (Swaminathan)? Staff noted that the timing of addressing embodied carbon would depend on its relative level of priority in the list of policies. Sustainability Manager Duurvoort explained that the CAP update would include a technical analysis of potential greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction measures to inform a public engagement process to prioritize various policies, including embodied carbon.

Commissioner Ramanathan moved and Commissioner Mohan seconded to close this FY 2020 Work Program item and move on to the next Work Program item. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Latshaw absent.

NEW BUSINESS

3. Subject: Sustainability Commission FY 2020-21 Work Program

Duurvoort gave a presentation on the Work Program adoption process by City Council, an overview of the Commission's scope and function per the municipal code, and types of ongoing items that staff continue to support, i.e. events such as the Speaker Series and student programs. He reviewed the two projects on the City Work Program related to the Sustainability Commission briefly:

- Single Use Plastics Ordinance: special project led by Environmental Programs Division focused on foodware. City Council expressed reluctance to impose new ordinances on businesses during COVID-19, and therefore the timeline was pushed to 2022. Commission to work on engagement and providing feedback throughout the process.
- CAP update project: adjusted budget request due to changes in forecasted city revenue. Breaking the project up in phases. Phase I is outreach, technical analyses, and use a social justice and equity lens to create the draft plan. Phase II is consideration of processes outside of the CAP (i.e. General Plan alignment) and Council adoption of the updated CAP. Duurvoort noted recently adopted carbon neutral targets from other cities, i.e. Menlo Park and San Luis Obispo.

Staff answered clarifying questions from Commissioners, including:

- Timing of the Single Use Plastics project, concerns around waiting too long to address increase in use of single use items during the pandemic (Ramanathan).
 - o Duurvoort: completion date for the item is approximate. Staff are already engaged in model code development in partnership with multiple cities. Suggested inviting Environmental Programs staff to give an update at a future meeting to address current messaging around single use items.
- If the ordinance could also cover non plastic single use items (Swaminathan).

- Duurvoort: currently the model code is focused on plastic foodware. State is considering a circular economy bill that would have more impact on manufacturer responsibility.
- Clarification on the process of adopting the Work Program (Swaminathan).
- Typical timeline for a CAP Update development and next adoption cycle (Weber).
 - Duurvoort: hoping to have a draft version before the end of the FY to Council. Typically, cities have a draft completed within one year. Cycles for adopting CAPs vary considerably; Cupertino's first CAP was adopted in 2015; some cities take incremental / staged approach, e.g. updating the General Plan first and then the CAP or updating the municipal portion and community portions separately. The adoption process will also be considered as part of the CAP update project.
- How other items not included in the Work Program (i.e. student green grants) would be addressed (Weber); clarification on agendizing topics for Future Agenda Items as they relate to the Work Program and Commissions scope (Swaminathan).
 - Corral: student outreach and public events are part of ongoing staff activities. The Commission will close out its 2019 Sustainability Grants for Students program. Essay contest, Speaker Series events, and other public engagement activities could be considered if aligned with the Work Program projects, depending on staff and budget capacity.
 - Duurvoort: when agendizing a topic for discussion, reference the municipal code to ensure it aligns with Commission scope and purview. If the item focuses staff time and city funds, it must relate to City Council priorities as expressed in the Work Program.
- Noted that the state of CA is interested in cities putting a cap on transportation emissions, if there is an expectation of when cities must address this (Mohan); if CAP update will include goals on mode share or shifting (Swaminathan).
 - Duurvoort: target setting will start with considering Governor Brown's Executive Order for economywide carbon neutral by 2050 goal. It's up to us how this impacts us locally and how we structure transportation measures to meet this. Part of the CAP update will be reviewing this and other legislation for alignment, as well as County level guidelines. Transportation goals are within the scope of the CAP update project.

Vice Chair Swaminathan opened public comment and the following individual spoke:

- Dashiell Leeds on behalf of the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter spoke in support of Cupertino matching Menlo Park's approach to electrification of existing buildings and adopt strong targets.

The Commission discussed timing, process, and details of the Work Program, including:

- Commissioner Weber raised the topic of timing of the Commission summer recess and logistics of working on the CAP update. Duurvoort noted that staff will kick off the planning process and will bring concrete items for discussion on the CAP update with the Commission at the October meeting. He noted the intent is for the Commission to be as actively involved as possible at key milestones. The Commission could form a subcommittee, but this is not required.
- The Commission discussed how COVID-19 pandemic is affecting public outreach, challenges, potential solutions, consideration of safety in conducting public meetings. The outreach process is likely to be mostly virtual, and staff are adapting their outreach methods accordingly. Brief side discussion on

building on public outreach equity work previously completed (raised by Swaminathan), using platforms such as NextDoor and Zoom vs other tool, i.e. surveys (noted by Ramanathan).

- Duurvoort highlighted a public engagement platform project underway. The platform introduces competition and gamifies personal actions on climate change and could be leveraged for aggregate, anonymized data to inform planning. Side discussion on communications and apps: how apps are changing behavior and how to optimize the value of these platforms (Mohan); example of QR codes on Cupertino trees as a way to communicate with City infrastructure and interface with government (Swaminathan); idea to place information in stores to educate consumers on carbon impacts of single use plastics reduction and how it reduces Cupertino's carbon footprint (Ramanathan).
- Discussion on forming a subcommittee as a means of maintaining communication with staff (raised by Weber): Commission discussed pros and cons of forming a subcommittee now versus in the fall, subject matter and topics, how to be a value-add to staff efforts, etc. Corral noted that Chair Latshaw expressed interest in serving on a subcommittee on the CAP update if it was formed. Duurvoort noted that a subcommittee focused on CAP public outreach would be most useful to staff. Staff are already actively engaged in single use plastics ordinance work. Corral advised that a natural point for subcommittee formation would be when there is a concrete question, decision, or specific project to address. Duurvoort offered to bring staff recommendations on a format, focus, and subject area for a subcommittee for Commission consideration at the October meeting.
- Vice Chair Swaminathan briefly reviewed the Work Program item for action by the Commission. He noted if any items other than the two identified projects by Council were added to the Commission's Work Program, these changes would need approval by Council. Also noted was the reduced staff capacity for extra activities and projects due to the extenuating circumstances of COVID-19.

Commissioner Weber moved and Commissioner Ramanathan seconded to adopt the Sustainability Commission FY 2020-21 Work Program as presented by staff. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Latshaw absent.

4. Subject: Email phishing campaign presentation from Chief Technology Officer Mitchell

Chief Technology Officer (CTO) Bill Mitchell gave an informational presentation on cybersecurity threats and how the City mitigates threats. He reviewed types of cyber threats including malware and phishing, how to identify and report phishing attempts, and an overview of the City's training program. During the COVID-19 period, phishing attempts went up 300%. He asked Commissioners to become a "cyber hero" and report phishing attempts. Commissioners send any questions to helpdesk@cupertino.org.

CTO Mitchell answered clarifying questions from the Commission, including:

- Send attachments to IT to confirm they are legitimate. Look for the yellow "Caution Banner," be cautious if you are not expecting an attachment.
- Check for the banner at the top of the email for verifying it was sent from an internal source. Can send questionable emails to the Help Desk.
- Hover over all links to see where the URL is sending you.
- The IT team uses software that catches most phishing emails before they get to the recipient.

5. Subject: Staff update on Sustainability and Environmental Programs volunteer program planning

Victoria Morin, Outreach Coordinator for Environmental Programs and Sustainability, gave a presentation on plans in progress to create a volunteer program. Staff created an online survey to gauge interest in sustainability and environmental topics and preferences from potential volunteers. The survey was emailed to registered Earth Day volunteers, Sustainability newsletter, Cupertino Youth Climate Action group, and was posted on the City website. The survey received 39 respondents. Most respondents were students and could contribute 3 to 4 hours per week. There was highest interest in social justice and lowest interest in water as subjects. After the survey, staff organized an Open House Webinar to inform the community on the plans and receive feedback, with 31 people in attendance. The recording was posted to the City YouTube channel.

The Commission asked clarifying questions and provided feedback on the plans. Topics / questions raised included:

- Great to see interest in these topics, curious why not as much interest in water (Swaminathan).
- Questions about the survey: make up of respondents (Weber), how long it's open (Swaminathan).
 - o Morin: survey was open to the public, roughly 21 responses were received from posting on the City website. Survey closes tomorrow.
- Questions re what tasks volunteers could perform, how aligned with staff's regular work, if education is part of outreach (Swaminathan).
 - o Morin: There was interest in all sectors from the survey, so staff intends to create a range of activities. In normal times, volunteers would go door to door to conduct outreach and can provide education if accompanied by a staff member. Tasks will need to be refocused on writing articles, social media posts, letters, etc. Hope to harness the energy to augment Climate Action Plan (CAP) outreach.
- Consider the goal of the program, what it will accomplish, ensure it is well thought out and comprehensive plan (Mohan).
 - o Corral: Environmental Programs has used volunteers in the past. Part of the motivation to create this program for Sustainability was individuals and groups approaching staff to request more involvement. Part of the development in this planning stage is getting feedback from the Commission on the priorities.
- "Fabulous" idea, would like to see something like a Neighborhood Block Leaders, creating ambassadors that could receive feedback and do outreach (Ramanathan).
- Thinks it's great that this will bring together a community of people in with different levels of interest in sustainability, ages, etc. (Weber).

6. Subject: Presentation from CivicSpark AmeriCorps Fellow

Vanessa Shin, CivicSpark Fellow, gave a presentation on her AmeriCorps service year with the Sustainability Division. She offered reflections and insight on her experiences, including participation in Power Safety Shutoff Event canvassing for the Emergency Operations Center, Earth Day Festival planning, supporting the volunteer webinar, creating data dashboards, service projects, etc. She answered questions from the Commission, gave an overview of the CivicSpark Program, and shared next steps for her career in the Bay Area.

Vice Chair Swaminathan opened public comment and the following individuals spoke:

- Tiffany Vu asked about Shin's favorite experience. Shin said she was inspired by the people she met and worked with during her fellowship.
- Evan asked about Shin's experience with green businesses. Shin noted the challenges face by businesses this year and opportunities to support them in becoming more resilient. She said the green business framework helps green businesses with resources to be able to act on their willingness to become more sustainable.

The Commission and staff provided comments on the presentation, including:

- Vice Chair Swaminathan noted his desire to have the resiliency of local businesses as part of the Commission's work and interest in how the California Green Business program can support this.
- Corral noted the importance of the CivicSpark program to the Sustainability Division's work.

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Staff updates: Valley Water's \$5,000 mini grant program now open for nonprofits, student groups, etc.

Commission updates: Vice Chair Swaminathan noted Valley Water has a new CEO with a priority to highlight displacement of minority communities in flood zones. He gave an update from VTA that BART opened service to Berryessa and Milpitas. VTA is looking into different options to address its financial issues.

FUTURE AGENDA SETTING

The Commission briefly discussed if Future Agenda Setting item can be moved to the beginning of the agenda. Corral answered technical questions about the process for suggesting items and rearranging the order of agenda topics. Commissioner Mohan left the meeting at 6:53 p.m. The Commission agreed to add two items to the Future Agenda Setting list:

- Sustainability Speaker Series
- Sustainability Grants for Students / essay contest

A motion was made by Commissioner Weber and seconded by Commissioner Ramanathan to include the items above to the Future Agenda Setting list. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Latshaw and Commissioner Mohan absent.

Vice Chair Swaminathan asked a clarifying question on the process for discussing the quarry at a future meeting. Corral noted that the process would depend on the topic; it would have to be within the scope and purview of the Commission, and if this criterion was met, there may be a requirement for a noticing period.

ADJOURNMENT

7. Subject: Adjourn to October 15, 2020 Regular Meeting

A motion to adjourn to the October 15th Regular Meeting was made by Commissioner Ramanathan and seconded by Commissioner Weber. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Latshaw and Commissioner Mohan absent. Meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.