



CITY OF CUPERTINO SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Teleconference meeting without a physical location.

Thursday, July 15, 2021 4:00 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

At 4:04 p.m. Chair Swaminathan called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

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

Staff: Jimmy Tan, Assistant Director of Public Works – Operations; André Duurvoort, Sustainability Manager; Iqraam Nabi, Innovation Technology Technician; Toan Quach, Innovation Technology Technician; Brendan Norton, CivicSpark AmeriCorps Fellow; Gilee Corral, Climate and Utilities Analyst.

Guests: Members of the public.

Chair Swaminathan read a statement regarding provisions of the Brown Act and an 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 March 18, 2021 meeting

Commissioner Weber moved and Commissioner Ramanathan seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

POSTPONEMENTS

None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Staff updates: Gilee Corral, Staff Liaison, provided brief updates:

- Fiscal Year 2022 Work Program approved by Council. Commission items include CAP Update and Single Use Plastics project with a Mayor's Cup Challenge
- Staff engaging consultant for commercial and stakeholder outreach for single use plastics ordinance development
- Environmental Day, De Anza Parking Lot A, on August 12, 8 a.m. to noon.
- Citywide Garage Sale, weekend of September 18 and 19, cupertino.org/garagesale

- Coastal Cleanup Day, September 18 at Creekside Park

Commission reports:

- Chair Swaminathan announced that the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Citizen Advisory Committee is recruiting members. He briefly explained responsibilities of the committee and current discussion topics.
- Vice Chair Mohan attended the July Mayor's Meeting on behalf of the Commission, noting that the Mayor is attending a national Mayor's conference and will highlight Cupertino's climate action and sustainability efforts, given the national focus on these issues. The Mayor has a budget of \$100 to support Commission special initiatives.
- Commissioner Weber reported on the Mayor's Meeting to select the CREST Award recipient, which she attended on behalf of the Commission.
- Commissioner Ramanathan reported on her participation in the Cupertino Earth and Arbor Day virtual festival. She gave a welcome message on behalf of the Commission and co-hosted an electric cooking demo with Rochelle Boucher.

NEW BUSINESS

Staff paused Item #2 due to technical difficulties and requested to reorder the agenda to move Item #3 before Item #2 to resolve the issue. Chair Swaminathan moved and Commissioner Weber seconded to reorder the agenda items as requested. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Subject: Highlights from the CivicSpark AmeriCorps service year in Cupertino

CivicSpark AmeriCorps Fellow Brendan Norton reviewed his project through the year and highlights:

- CAP update outreach support
- Staff equity training
- Virtual waste clean-up community event with 120 volunteers and over 200 hours of volunteer service
- Virtual Earth Day Speaker Series
- Student partnership with the Community Climate Solutions website

He recommends that staff continue momentum on these projects, continue racial equity trainings, explore the SB 1000 toolkit, and align affordable housing and transit access with the Climate Action Plan goals.

The Commission asked clarifying questions and gave comments, including:

- Expression of thanks and support (Chair Swaminathan)
- Clarification on subjects covered in equity training (Latshaw). Norton: the training covered implicit bias on a personal level and best practices for incorporating measures in government. SB 1000 highlights ways to use hard data where inequities lie in a community.
- How the site of the volunteer project was selected (Ramanathan). Norton: to increase participation across California and take advantage of the CivicSpark network.
- Suggestions on themes or goals for equity to consider for 2022 (Swaminathan). Norton: outreach consultant received compiled list of stakeholders, making sure we have language translation. Staff are considering the Below Market Rate renters and homeowners and affordable housing tenants in their outreach.
- Question on the use of Mural for outreach (Weber). Norton explained how staff used the tool during training.
- Comments and thoughts on incorporating equity into CAP planning and communications, use of inclusive language, outreach to lower income populations (Swaminathan, Latshaw)

2. Subject: Multi Factor Authorization training from the City's Infrastructure Division

Iqraam Nabi, Innovation Technology Technician, reviewed how to access the Duo app and authorize it using a mobile device.

Staff answered technical questions from the Commission on using the app across multiple devices, how the app works, etc. Staff suggested downloading the Duo app onto a smart phone or tablet that is readily accessible to authenticate instead of using a laptop. The app will work with Wi-Fi or cellular data.

Nabi advised the Commission to set up their React Account to enable them to unlock their account if needed. If a Commissioner plans to travel abroad, please let the Chair know so the Chair can alert IT, to avoid their account being locked out.

4. Subject: Staff update on drought and water conservation programs

Sustainability Manager André Duurvoort presented an update on the City's response to the drought. Topics covered included:

- City response for municipal property (Stage 4 drought conditions)
- Valley Water Landscape Rebate Program participation
- Climate Victory Gardens Pilot: first of its kind in Northern California. The pilot supports property owners through the process of converting turf to drought tolerant landscaping and accessing Valley Water rebates. On track with targets, about 30,000 sq feet of turf conversions and 600,000 gallons of water saved annually.
- Drought restrictions: Explained the wholesaler, retailer, and consumer relationship and enforcement of water restrictions. Cupertino's two water retailers, California Water Service (Cal Water) and San Jose Water (SJW) will attend an upcoming Council meeting agenda topic on the drought.

The Commission asked clarifying questions and gave comments:

- Question on water audits for a property (Mohan). Duurvoort: Valley Water offers a free Water Wise Survey. Can also inquire with the water retailer that serves your home.
- Use of purple pipe / recycled water, and if car washes are closed as part of restrictions (Ramanathan). Duurvoort: car washes are not currently prohibited. Cupertino is part of a working group of local agencies who are discussing ordinance changes as the drought progresses. Purple pipe is an important long terms solution; however the current focus is on actions that will reduce immediate demand on potable water supply.
- Plans to update water meters, noted an example of tech that uses Wi-Fi (Latshaw). Duurvoort: would be interested to see a solution for residential meters. The City does not control the water metering infrastructure in the community but is considering submetering for City properties.
- Climate Victory Gardens marketing, question on tree planting assistance (Weber).
 - o Jimmy Tan, Assistant Director of Public Works – Operations, noted the City's policy to replant any tree if it is removed. Duurvoort: countywide effort to promote planting trees. Tree cover important for climate response. Arborist team still watering trees as we reduce in other spaces.

- Duurvoort: Climate Victory Gardens was advertised once via social media and the participant list was filled in two weeks. Currently the pilot has 80 properties on the waitlist and staff are considering options for expanding the pilot due to the demand.
- Clarification on who owns the water pumps (Swaminathan). Duurvoort: SJW operates Cupertino water system, likely the pump station is also operated by SJW.
- Comments on severity of the drought, if any forecast on how long it will last (Swaminathan).
Duurvoort: we can bring this to water retailers for a response in the upcoming Council study session.

Chair Swaminathan opened public comment and the following individuals spoke:

- Rob Seeley, Community Affairs Specialist for Cal Water, spoke on the development of a system to understand which pipes need replacement. He explained Advanced Metering Infrastructure briefly and noted that Cal Water is continuing to work this as a solution in the long term. Noted that Apple Campus has a purple pipe system and comments on barriers of installing purple pipe and benefits of expanding it as part of a new construction process. Noted sources of water and locations in the system.
 - Commissioner Latshaw asked the speaker a follow up question on drip irrigation. Seeley explained a free program including incentives to support watering landscape system tune ups. The program incorporates the list of “prohibited uses” in the tune up.
- Susan Cordone, Conservation Coordinator for Cal Water, introduced herself.

Chair Swaminathan expressed appreciation for staff and the water retailers for their efforts.

5. Subject: Staff update on Climate Action Plan update project

Duurvoort gave an update on the Climate Action Plan (CAP) project and timeline, covering various topics:

- Technical work is underway, including a partial refresh of data for the 2018 greenhouse gas inventory and reporting to the CDP Cities public platform
- CAP Report to Council is in development to cover 2019 and 2020 actions and lessons learned from implementing the current CAP
- First stakeholder meeting: co-hosted with staff and the CAP Update Subcommittee, with 24 attendees from various sectors: businesses, agencies, nonprofits. Approach for stakeholder outreach is to focus on equity and solicit feedback from underrepresented groups. Educate the group to be more knowledgeable about the process so they could generate more interest to public workshops. Used Mural to create a Vision Board – what would you like Cupertino to look like in 2050?
- First virtual public workshop scheduled for July 29: using polls, surveys, free text comments, raise hand and talk to encourage participation. Releasing a toolkit soon for promotion.
- [Cupertino.org/climateaction](https://cupertino.org/climateaction): will become a virtual community participation forum.

The CAP Update Subcommittee reported on its participation to date:

- Chair Swaminathan and Latshaw provided feedback on the stakeholder workshop:
 - Went well overall, nicely run (Swaminathan, Latshaw)
 - High-level brainstorming and goal discussion was valuable, should stick to high-level discussion rather than getting too far into specific issues (Swaminathan)
 - Commissioner Latshaw noted an email re Menlo Park being aggressive on natural gas; Corral will forward to the Commission for information.

Chair Swaminathan opened public comment and the following individuals spoke:

- Dashiell Leeds on behalf of Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter noted his positive experience attending the stakeholder meeting and appreciation for the CAP update public process. He supports an aggressive plan and strong targets.
- Gwyn Azar on behalf of Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action noted her positive experience attending the stakeholder meeting and appreciation of the inclusion of diverse voices. She supports a more ambitious target than the current 2040 draft carbon neutrality goals.

Chair Swaminathan asked about equity efforts and progress to date. Duurvoort noted staff are requesting demographic information at multiple checkpoints and will report back on statistics for the public workshop.

6. Subject: Staff update on student programs and youth engagement

Staff presented an update on the intern program and student engagement:

- Duurvoort reported on projects completed by the Sustainability and Environmental Programs youth interns: single-use plastics field research to grocery stores, and student involvement in the Earth and Arbor Day Virtual Speaker Series.
- Staff presented an overview of the Cupertino Climate Challenge. Norton recruited Youth Environmental Power Initiative (YEPI) to launch a challenge for students to sign up for the platform from July through October.
- Duurvoort reported that two recipients submitted invoices for reimbursement for the Sustainability Grants for Students Program. He requested feedback from the Commission on themes, ideas for the next cycle of the program, noting a budget of \$2,000 to support a contest and \$700 for waste audits.

The Commission asked clarifying questions and gave comments:

- General expressions of support for involving youth and the next generation in climate action.
- If the program can be scaled up and recruit more students through a "teach the teachers" program (Mohan). Duurvoort: staff would love to pursue an expanded effort, key challenge is limited staff capacity.
- Great learning experience for youth; young people can be effective in bringing climate messages to Council meetings (Latshaw)
- Noting distinction between the experiences of Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z (Swaminathan)

Chair Swaminathan opened public comment and the following individuals spoke:

- Gwyn Azar on behalf of Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action offered feedback from her group and noted her positive learning experience from participation in the Speaker Series event.

The Commission gave feedback and comments, including:

- Appreciation for the youth program, hope it will tie into behavior change, i.e. with the water shortage. Suggested the next challenge could be a behavior change effort (Ramanathan). Duurvoort: noted challenges of introduce programs at scale and making the most of digital tools and funding. He requested ongoing feedback from the Commission on the youth program.

- Can promote the City's social media toolkit via his personal TikTok channel (Swaminathan)

FUTURE AGENDA SETTING

Corral noted the upcoming CAP update July 29 public workshop and all Commissioners expressed interest in attending.

The Commission discussed changes and additions to the Future Agenda Setting List:

- Suggestion to add an item to increase the awareness of sustainability and climate change among youth and schools (Mohan)

Chair Swaminathan moved to add a discussion to raise awareness of sustainability and climate change among students to the Future Agenda Setting list and approve as amended. Commissioner Latshaw suggested adding "and adults" to the discussion item. The Commission discussed the wording of this discussion and whether to split it to two different items. Chair Swaminathan withdrew his first motion.

The Commission agreed to amend the future agenda setting list to read as follows:

- Sustainability Grants for Students / essay contest
- Discuss hosting a public workshop on carbon reduction ideas
- Discuss 2021 Earth & Arbor Day event ideas
- Zero Emission Vehicles discussion
- Building electrification discussion
- Discussion on raising awareness of sustainability among youth
- Discussion on raising awareness of climate change among adults

A motion was made by Commissioner Latshaw and seconded by Vice Chair Mohan to approve the Future Agenda Setting list as reflected above. The motion carried unanimously.

The Commission briefly considered scheduling a Special Meeting in August, but as there were no urgent issues to discuss, did not schedule it. The CAP Update Subcommittee meeting will meet before the next Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Chair Swaminathan and seconded by Commissioner Weber. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.