



CITY OF CUPERTINO SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Teleconference meeting without a physical location.

Thursday, May 26, 2022 4:00 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

At 4:03 p.m. Chair Swaminathan called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chair Vignesh Swaminathan, Vice Chair Anna Weber, and Commissioners Sonali Padgaonkar, Steve Poon, Meera Ramanathan (arrived @ 4:04 p.m.).

Staff: André Duurvoort, Sustainability Manager; Gilee Corral, Climate and Utilities Analyst.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Subject: Minutes from March 24, 2022 meeting

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

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Staff updates: André Duurvoort, Sustainability Manager, reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission met to review a study on options for the Blackberry Farm Golf Course: make repairs and upgrades or return the golf course to natural habitat. Both options would reduce water consumption. A survey will be released this week on engagecupertino.org/bbfgolcourse to collect public feedback. This item may come before the Sustainability Commission for discussion. In response to a question from Chair Swaminathan, Duurvoort noted there was no actual project identified at this time. There will be a public forum this summer and likely mailers to advertise the survey on the options.

Commission updates:

- Commissioner Ramanathan attended the May Mayor's Meeting and gave an update on the Earth and Arbor Day Festival. She noted updates from the Mayor, including the May 15 plastics reduction form, creek cleanup day, Housing Element, and other items.
- Commissioner Padgaonkar gave a brief report on the Mayor's Cup Challenge, noting the Commission could support public awareness about this event. Vice Chair Weber also attended the event and found it informative.
 - o Commissioner Padgaonkar noted that the Cupertino Union School District will host a Fall Festival in September and would like the Commission to conduct outreach as part of these events.
- Chair Swaminathan thanked the Commissioners for tabling at the Earth and Arbor Day Festival. He reported that the Valley Transportation Authority Advisory Committee is still accepting applications for new members and gave a brief update on grants available for Priority Development Areas.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Subject: Public Review Draft Climate Action Plan 2.0 and report on outreach and engagement

Duurvoort gave a presentation on the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2.0 public review process. He requested the Commission's feedback on the draft CAP 2.0 when it comes before Council for the study session. Duurvoort reviewed key elements of the draft CAP 2.0 document and highlights from the engagement process, including:

- The CAP 2.0 focuses emissions reduction on a per capita basis. The "business as usual" forecast for per capita emissions by 2040 is 5.91 metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent (MT CO₂e). Duurvoort gave an overview of how state measures and the different sectors of measures in the CAP 2.0 would reduce these emissions to get close to carbon neutrality by 2040. Largest category of emissions is transportation.
- In addition to mitigation measures, the CAP 2.0 addresses zero waste, working with natural systems, and climate resiliency.
- The CAP 2.0 project utilized a mix of traditional and new engagement methods, and was a test project for the City's new Engagement Cupertino. The team leveraged this portal to conduct digital engagement in response to COVID shutdown. The website enabled ongoing feedback and demographic data collection, which the team used in real time to adjust its engagement strategies.
- Themes from the survey on the CAP 2.0 draft:
 - o Overall, respondents are "happy" or "very happy" with the proposed changes, with strong support for transportation measures.
 - o Support for active transportation and active transit, compost, plastics, keep focus on equity through implementation, focus on natural spaces.
 - o Of the 9 respondents who were "unhappy" or "very unhappy," most wanted the plan to go further.
- Total of 838 direct community contacts throughout the CAP 2.0 planning process, including staff and volunteers having face to face interactions via Zoom or in person.

Duurvoort reviewed next steps:

- Currently having internal discussions with other departments on how to resource the plan with existing staff and future requests for funds. Will become a cyclical process to identify current priority projects to fund for each fiscal year.
- July 7: Council considers a budget request for the electrification master plan, which would get a head start on two of the measures in this draft CAP 2.0.
- July 8: Formal 30-day California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) public comment period begins.
- June 21: Planning to bring CAP 2.0 to Council for a study session. Request today is for Commission to give a statement of support for this meeting.

The Commission discussed the item and asked clarifying questions. Themes from the discussion included:

- Consider including buses or common transportation for local schools in the plan (Padgaonkar)
 - o Duurvoort: noted actions currently in the draft plan that could relate: Measure TR-1, Measure TR-4, identifying active and transit program funding via a local tax, etc. In response to follow up questions, he clarified that the team avoided targeting actions specifically to schools because the City does not have operational or jurisdictional control over school policy or functions. The team could consider adding clarifying language to acknowledge schools as partners in implementing actions.
 - o Noted similar jurisdictional and operational barriers that came up in a past Commission effort to work on waste reduction at schools, supports adding language to call out schools as partners (Ramanathan)
 - o Supports addressing student traffic and associated issues with safety and emissions (Poon)

- City can control its own right-of-way and assets; can influence school districts but they have their own facilities and board. Noted most Cupertino schools are within ten-minute biking or walking distance, so City is encouraging using bike lanes. Supports adding language to draft CAP to encourage schools to use common transportation (Swaminathan)

Commissioner Padgaonkar made a motion to add language to the draft CAP 2.0 to encourage students to travel to local schools via a common form of transport. Commissioner Ramanathan proposed a friendly amendment to the motion to recommend the Council approve the CAP 2.0 with a suggested amendment to add language to encourage student common transportation into the transportation portion.

The Commission discussed the motion and CAP 2.0 content. Themes and issues raised included:

- If language could be added to the CAP to address the lack of labeling for vegetarian and vegan foods in restaurants and businesses, and to promote vegan and vegetarian options in Cupertino, noted the climate benefits of a plant-based diet (Swaminathan)
 - Duurvoort: City could influence and promote meat-free or vegetarian diets, but unsure if the City could enact policies to require private businesses to offer options. Noted that the City plans to create a municipal climate action strategy which will address procurement and City events.
 - Chair Swaminathan proposed a friendly amendment to Commissioner Padgaonkar's motion to include education for encouraging local businesses to label vegan and vegetarian foods and for restaurants to include vegan and vegetarian options to their menu.
- In response to questions from Commissioner Ramanathan, Duurvoort reviewed the waterfall chart of GHG emissions reduction in the presentation. He explained that the chart shows an 80% reduction by 2040 but this CAP does not have all the specific measures to get us to zero emissions.
- The CAP states a goal to get to zero by 2040 with the intention to update the plan when technological and policy changes make the carbon neutral city goal more feasible. Couldn't provide this evidence for achieving carbon neutrality by 2040; however, the Commission is interested in updates to the Climate Action Plan to potentially move this carbon neutrality date earlier.
- Timing and frequency of CAP progress reports (Ramanathan) and GHG inventory updates (Weber).
 - Duurvoort: continue regular updates to Council and conduct GHG inventories every two to three years. Next inventory assessment will begin soon, using data from the year 2020 or 2021. If not showing significant progress towards CAP goals, may need re-assess the CAP to get us back on track to ensure the CAP remains a legally compliant document. Exploring different ways to report out on progress to be more accessible to the public and Council, e.g., a platform to track progress in a visual and interactive way on the City website.
- If inventory includes leakage from utilities, if any smokestacks in the community besides the quarry (Swaminathan). Duurvoort: inventory estimates natural gas leakage. Water leakage is also assessed by staff, but is not part of emissions estimates. He is unaware of any smokestacks in the community. He noted the release of an air monitoring system coming soon. The City also uses real-time air quality monitors near the quarry.
- If CAP includes plan for individuals to address household climate impacts and develop individual plans to move to electrification (Padgaonkar)
 - City supports this via education, grants, rebates and speaker presentations (Swaminathan)
 - Duurvoort: noted Cupertino Climate Challenge and briefly showed the portal and how it works, cupertinoclimatechallenge.org

- Brief discussion on conversion of existing buildings to electricity, tear down and rebuilds, how addressed in the Green Building code (Swaminathan and Ramanathan)
 - o Duurvoort: existing building discussion will begin soon as the City begins to scope out this plan, and will involve cultural affinities, opinions, questions of fairness, equity, and cost.
- Duurvoort explained the phasing of actions in response to a question from Commissioner Padgaonkar.
- “Wonderful” draft plan, expression of thanks to staff over the past couple of years, supporting the Commission with information and dedicated time (Weber, with Commissioner Padgaonkar and Chair Swaminathan supporting)
 - o Acknowledged the challenge of achieving this during the pandemic (Chair Swaminathan).

Commissioner Padgaonkar accepted Commissioner Ramanathan’s and Chair Swaminathan’s friendly amendments to her motion. Commissioner Padgaonkar’s motion as amended: recommend the CAP 2.0 be moved forward to the City Council for adoption, and recommend two changes to the content of the CAP 2.0:

- The addition of language directing the City to coordinate with local K-12 school districts to encourage student common transportation around school pick-up and drop-off
- The addition of an action to encourage local businesses to label vegetarian and vegan foods and for restaurants to offer vegan and vegetarian options.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ramanathan and passed unanimously.

The Chair gave closing remarks of thanks for the staff efforts, and Duurvoort expressed appreciation of efforts of the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Vice Chair Weber and seconded by Commissioner Padgaonkar. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.