



City of Sunnyvale

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Sustainability Commission

Monday, September 16, 2019

7:00 PM

West Conference Room, City Hall, 456 W.
Olive Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Paton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the West Conference Room.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chair Paton led the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Chair Bruce Paton
Vice Chair Kristel Wickham
Commissioner Stephen Joesten
Commissioner Douglas Kunz
Commissioner Shana Padgett
Commissioner Murali Srinivasan
Absent: 1 - Commissioner Steven Zornetzer

Council Liaison - Nancy Smith (present)

Council Liaison Nancy Smith arrived at 7:05 p.m

Commissioner Zornetzer's absence is excused by general consent.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Paton welcomed Ralph Kenton, Chair of Parks and Recreation Commission, who is looking to compile best practices from different Board/Commission meetings.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1.A [19-0966](#) Approve Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes of August 19, 2019

Commissioner Joesten moved, and Commissioner Srinivasan seconded, a motion to approve the consent calendar. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Chair Paton
Vice Chair Wickham
Commissioner Joesten
Commissioner Kunz
Commissioner Padgett
Commissioner Srinivasan

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Zornetzer

STANDING ITEM: CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (CAP 2.0) UPDATE

Nupur Hiremath, Environmental Programs Manager, shared that staff is planning the implementation of the Climate Action Playbook's Next Moves, and is also working on implementing the Sustainability Speaker Series.

STANDING ITEM: CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL STUDY ISSUES

2. [19-0955](#) Encourage Decarbonization Readiness During Electrical Upgrades

Commissioner Kunz provided an overview of this Study Issue, which was intended to leverage the point of application for a permit for an electrical panel upgrade to set the stage for future electrification of existing homes.

Chair Paton opened the public hearing.

No public comments were made.

Chair Paton closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Kunz observed that the staff response did not accurately interpret three key aspects of the proposed Study Issue topic: (1) Policies cited in the staff response focused largely on new construction, whereas the intention of the Study Issue was to address electrification of existing buildings; (2) Electrical panel upgrades associated with the installation of electric vehicle chargers or solar, as cited in the staff response, do not always trigger upgrades to electrical panels beyond the needed capacity and, therefore, do not always enhance panel capacity adequately for electrifying other energy needs in the future (e.g., electric space or

water heating); and (3) The Study Issue was intended to encourage larger panel sizing during major upgrades of building electrical systems, rather than minor electrical repairs as indicated in the staff response. Staff clarified that the Green Building Program does offer incentives to encourage electrification during remodels of existing buildings.

The Commission discussed challenges in understanding what products and incentives exist for homeowners and the need for significant education before the homeowner applies for a permit. Nupur Hiremath, Environmental Programs Manager, shared that Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE) is in the process of creating an online Customer Resource Center where customers can see many of the available options for home electrification.

Based on the discussion, the Commission made the following changes to the Study Issue topic: (1) removed the sentence about requiring panel upgrades; and (2) added text to state that strategies such as education, incentives, and policies may be evaluated to prepare for electrification.

Commissioner Kunz moved, and Commissioner Padgett seconded, a motion to propose and sponsor this Study Issue, as amended. Chair Paton offered a friendly amendment to change the motion to proposing the Study Issue without sponsorship. Commissioners Kunz and Padgett accepted the friendly amendment. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Chair Paton
Vice Chair Wickham
Commissioner Joesten
Commissioner Kunz
Commissioner Padgett
Commissioner Srinivasan

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Zornetzer

Vice Chair Wickham and Commissioners Padgett noted that this Study Issue topic may overlap with some Next Moves in the recently adopted Climate Action Playbook. The Commission discussed whether it was appropriate to sponsor a Study Issue on this topic, given anticipated demands on staff time. Given this, Chair Paton, with general consensus, tabled this discussion with a proposal to revisit it

later in the meeting after discussing other Study Issue topics.

Upon revisiting this discussion, the Commission discussed moving forward with sponsorship. Commissioner Kunz moved, and Vice Chair Wickham seconded, a motion to propose and sponsor this Study Issue, as amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Chair Paton
Vice Chair Wickham
Commissioner Joesten
Commissioner Kunz
Commissioner Padgett
Commissioner Srinivasan

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Zornetzer

3. [19-0958](#) Subsidized Public Transit

Commissioner Joesten shared an overview of this Study Issue to engage the City to adopt a program to subsidize transit costs. He observed that numerous cities, such as Portland and San Francisco, were already implementing such programs.

Chair Paton opened the public hearing.

No public comments were made.

Chair Paton closed the public hearing.

Chair Paton noted that, discounted transit pass programs, such as one recently offered by Sunnyvale Community Services, are well utilized when offered to the community. The Commission discussed the challenges with existing transit infrastructure and offerings, and whether subsidies could alleviate these and encourage greater ridership.

Commissioner Padgett moved to propose the Study Issue. Commissioner Joesten proposed a friendly amendment to modify the motion to both propose and sponsor the Study Issue. Commissioner Padgett accepted the friendly amendment. Commissioner Joesten seconded the motion to propose and sponsor the Study Issue. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Chair Paton
Vice Chair Wickham
Commissioner Joesten
Commissioner Kunz
Commissioner Padgett
Commissioner Srinivasan

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Zornetzer

4. [19-0960](#) Create a new city commission or citizen group focused on mobility issues, especially commutes into and out of the city. Increase transparency of decisions affecting mobility.

Chair Paton explained that the intent of this Study Issue was to create a new advisory group to take a more holistic approach to mobility issues in the City, to encourage greater collaboration with staff, enhance transparency of the City's transportation policies and programs. Commissioner Kunz noted that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission (BPAC) was focused on two modes of mobility only, bicycle and pedestrian, and that a Commission that considered all modes of transportation more holistically would be beneficial to the City.

Chair Paton opened the public hearing.

Ralph Kenton, Sunnyvale resident, observed that creating a community advisory committee may be more appropriate than a new Commission, as such committees have more flexibility.

Chair Paton closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed the limitations with the responsibilities of current Commissions in addressing the intention of this Study Issue topic.

Chair Paton noted that his original idea of to develop a mobility strategy had not been incorporated into the Climate Action Playbook. Nupur Hiremath, Environmental Programs Manager, clarified that this was because staff had determined that the Playbook's Strategy 3: Decarbonizing Transportation and Sustainable Land Use in conjunction with the City's upcoming Active Transportation Plan would lay out the City's broader mobility policies, and that a separate policy document was not needed. The Commission generally agreed that creating a new Mobility Commission would serve as a bridge to address any gaps in the implementation of the strategies

contemplated in the Playbook and Active Transportation Plan.

Chair Paton moved, and Commissioner Kunz seconded, a motion to propose and sponsor the Study Issue. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Chair Paton
Vice Chair Wickham
Commissioner Joesten
Commissioner Kunz
Commissioner Padgett
Commissioner Srinivasan

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Zornetzer

5. [19-0965](#) Utilization of Kirby Canyon Landfill Gas

Vice Chair Wickham provided an overview of the Study Issue to examine the possibility of utilizing landfill gas from Kirby Canyon for electricity generation.

Chair Paton opened the public hearing.

No public comments were made.

Chair Paton closed the public hearing.

Vice Chair Wickham shared that Kirby Canyon representatives had provided her with information that they are evaluating two possible solutions for utilizing their landfill gas: (1) injecting landfill gas into the existing natural gas distribution system; and (2) utilizing landfill gas to fuel their vehicle fleet.

Vice Chair Wickham understood that the City has limited influence on policies at the Kirby Canyon landfill and that Sunnyvale is a substantial distance from the landfill, as noted in the staff response to this Study Issue topic. For these reasons, the Commission agreed that a Study Issue on this topic was not needed.

6. [19-0963](#) Community Condition Indicators for Environmental Health

Vice Chair Wickham provided an overview of the Study Issue on considering inclusion of Community Condition Indicators (CCIs) for environmental health in the City's Budget and website. She explained the background for this Study Issue, noting that during the Commission's annual review of the City Manager's

Recommended Budget in May 2019, the Commission observed that the CCIs listed were limited in scope and did not reflect key metrics to address climate change.

Chair Paton opened the public hearing.

No public comments were made.

Chair Paton closed the public hearing.

Chair Paton requested clarification from staff regarding whether a Study Issue was necessary for the Commission to review, evaluate, and suggest revisions to CCIs for the Budget book, as suggesting sustainability metrics for the City to track and report on had been done by the Commission several years ago. He observed that such actions would be a part of the Commission's regular business and that this topic should be added to the Commission's 2020 Work Plan, rather than being considered as a Study Issue.

Staff will obtain additional clarity on the process and provide information to the Commission at the October meeting. The Commission decided to propose the Study Issue but to wait to sponsor it until staff provided the requested clarification.

Vice Chair Wickham moved, and Chair Paton seconded, a motion to propose this Study Issue. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Chair Paton
Vice Chair Wickham
Commissioner Joesten
Commissioner Kunz
Commissioner Padgett
Commissioner Srinivasan

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Zornetzer

7. [19-0964](#) Fossil Fuel Infrastructure and Equipment

Vice Chair Wickham provided an overview of the Study Issue, which aims to examine whether the City's currently planned investment over the next 20 years in fossil fuel infrastructure, such as underground gas tanks and distribution lines, can be pivoted toward a greater investment in renewables.

Chair Paton opened the public hearing.

No public comments were made.

Chair Paton closed the public hearing.

The Commission and staff discussed the need to balance the timing of shifting infrastructure need to meet current requirements and future demands. The Commission requested staff and Councilmember Nancy Smith to clarify whether this topic would be more appropriately considered as a Budget Issue; staff stated that the process for the Commission to submit this idea would follow the Study Issue process, and staff may later determine if this topic would more appropriately be a Budget Issue instead.

Based on the discussion, the Commission made the following changes to the Study Issue topic: (1) changed the title to “Accelerate Retirement of Fossil Fuel Infrastructure and Equipment;” and (2) modified item 3 to read: “Use current funding to replace existing infrastructure with electric or renewable energy infrastructure, in alignment with the Climate Action Playbook’s priorities.”

Vice Chair Wickham moved, Commissioner Srinivasan seconded, and a motion to propose and sponsor the Study Issue, as amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Chair Paton
Vice Chair Wickham
Commissioner Joesten
Commissioner Kunz
Commissioner Padgett
Commissioner Srinivasan

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Zornetzer

NON-AGENDA ITEMS & COMMENTS

-Commissioner Comments

Vice Chair Wickham shared that Commissioner Zornetzer was recognized by NASA Ames for his work in championing the Sustainability Base Building, and that a conference room in the building had been named in his honor as the Steven F. Zornetzer Leadership in Sustainability Conference Room.

Vice Chair Wickham also shared that Reach Codes are being considered by many cities across the Bay Area and that 11 cities had submitted a letter of intent to SVCE, including Sunnyvale. She observed that most cities were aiming for Council votes on Reach Codes in November or December. She also shared that the Sustainability Speaker Series subcommittee has met two times to identify topics for the 2020-2021 Sustainability Speaker Series, and is looking forward to sharing them with the Commission next month.

Commissioner Kunz shared that his home will be featured in a local news story on building electrification to be aired on NBC on September 17, 2019 at 5 p.m. He also noted that he will be a speaker on a panel at the City of San Jose's Bay Area Home Electrification Expo on October 12, 2019.

Commissioner Paton shared that he is in the process of electrifying his home and observed that both the heat pump water heaters recommended by SVCE as a part of their pilot program were not available at local hardware stores. He also mentioned attending State of the City and shared that the Mayor had highlighted the Climate Action Playbook very early on in his speech.

-Staff Comments

Nupur Hiremath, Environmental Programs Manager, announced that the agenda for next month would include the following items: Study Issue on CCIs; a presentation by the Sustainability Speaker Series Subcommittee on the draft proposal for the 2020-2021 Sustainability Speaker Series; a presentation by Chair Paton on "Climate Resilience and Adaptation Plans for Bay Area Cities;" and an initial conversation of the 2020 Annual Master Work Plan.

INFORMATION ONLY REPORTS/ITEMS

[19-0967](#)

Updated Annual Work Plan September 2019

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:09 p.m.