

Natural Resources Commission Minutes
June 22, 2020; 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Sarah Angulo, Courtney Doss, John Johnston, Richard McCann, Greg Miller, Alan Pryor, Hannah Safford, David Abramson (alt)

Commissioner(s) Absent: None

Council Liaison(s): Gloria Partida (alt) present, starting at 8:56 pm, Lucas Frerichs absent

Staff Present: Kerry Daane Loux, Sustainability Coordinator, Community Development & Sustainability; Greg Mahoney; Assistant Director, Community Development & Sustainability

1. **Call to Order:** 6:33 pm, by Co-Chair H Safford

2. **Approval of Agenda** – Approved unanimously following discussion about adding an item for discussion of the Davis Innovation and Sustainability Center (DISC) at this meeting.
(Pryor/Johnston 7-0)
Discussion: With a request to add an item to the agenda, it was clarified that it is not possible to add new agenda items during the meeting, since it would not be noticed to the public that the topic would be addressed. Additionally, in this case, it does not fall into the ‘emergency’ category, so it can not be added in that way, without consultation with City Attorney. Chair noted that we have been given clear direction, through a letter from the City Clerk, on not adding agenda items. We have also been given direction that any further comments on the DISC need to be directed to City Council. This will be discussed further during Long Range Calendar.

3. **Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners and Liaisons**
Staff noted that Nicholas Villanueva is the Meeting Manager. A Pryor commented that the Planning Commission did not address the recommendations and issues raised by the NRC or any other commission for the DISC project.

4. **Public Comment** –
Todd Edelman, a Bicycle, Transportation and Street Safety Commissioner, commented on transparency at commission meetings. Unlike in-person meetings, the general public participants can’t see specifically who else (or even number of people) is in attendance on zoom meetings. He urged staff to consider identifying all attendants at the meeting for all participants.

The Chair closed general public comment at 6:55 pm.

5. **Consent Calendar** – Approved unanimously. (McCann/Pryor 7-0)
 - A. **May 14, 2020 Special NRC Meeting Minutes**
 - B. **June 3, 2020 NRC Meeting Minutes**

6. Regular Items

A. Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Update

K Loux, Sustainability Coordinator, gave an informational report on the status of the EV infrastructure implementation with the SACOG Green Region grant funding, which was addressed at the Utilities Commission on June 17, 2020. The staff recommendations in the staff report to UC were approved at that meeting. The Electric Vehicle Charging Plan (2017) is available on the city's website in the Sustainability tab on the front page.

No public comment.

C. Leaf-blower recommendations

The recommendation from the NRC Air Quality/GHG Mitigation subcommittee, comprised of G Miller, A Pryor and H Safford, are to ban gas leaf blowers, with a focus on the air quality impacts, both from the use of gas, and from the dust and particulate matter dispersed in the air from use of the blowers. A Pryor noted that this recommendation does have an impact on city and private commercial landscape company staff, since increased time is needed to manually rake. However, he noted there are many people who are seriously impacted by impacts of leaf blowers, such as respiratory and hearing concerns.

In the discussion of timing prohibitions for leaf blower use, there are concerns about needing to avoid the time that children are riding bikes to school. An additional concern is the impact on stormwater.

R McCann said he feels the biggest impact is particulate matter for any type of leaf blower—both electric and gas powered. While the GHG emission concerns with gas blowers are also an issue, they are less significant.

This issue should be considered and reviewed by the Recreation and Park Commission for input on the timing and cost impacts of the recommendations for city park staff, and to be sensitive to commercial gardeners needs as well.

Public Comment was opened at 7:20 by the Chair.

Todd Edelman asked the commission to consider what happens to existing equipment.

Anya McCann noted that her mother has been very involved in this issue in Los Angeles, and there is a lot of precedent for banning leaf blowers. She urged the NRC to act.

Following public comments, J Johnston noted that more outreach and research is needed before sending these recommendations to the City Council. G Miller said that there are two tracks—an urgent response before fall season, and additional outreach prior to making recommendations.

The following motion was made by A Pryor, seconded by R McCann, and approved unanimously:

The NRC authorizes the Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas subcommittee to update the Draft Leaf Blower Recommendations with feedback from this discussion, and send to staff with a request to send out to Recreation and Parks Commission and additional city staff for input.

C. ‘Sustainability Impacts’ Section in City Staff Reports:

The memo to make a staff report recommendation to City Council, from NRC short-term subcommittee comprised of H Safford, G Miller, was discussed. This memo followed a proposal from a member of the public brought to the NRC in February 2020, based on the Climate Emergency and Mobilization Efforts to Restore a Safe Climate Resolution (CC adopted March 20, 2020). Additionally, there is background research on other community’s approach to this, prepared by the Davis CivicSpark Fellow.

No public comment.

J Johnston noted some possible edits to change terms such as ‘explore’ to actions such as ‘do’. Additionally, some of the background research should be added to the document, including approaches by Albany and Berkeley. He made some specific editing recommendations.

Discussion included the focus of the recommendations, whether to be both quantitative and qualitative, and how to implement both. Level of detail and expertise needed to address GHG impacts was discussed. The Commission agreed that the memo should address ‘Sustainability and Climate Impacts’.

Following discussion, the following motion was made by H Safford, seconded by R McCann, and approved unanimously (7-0):

The NRC authorizes the subcommittee to the update the ‘Sustainability and Climate Impacts’ memo with feedback from this discussion, and send to City Council from the full Commission.

D. Regional Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory Technical Memorandum and Data

Staff gave an overview of the GHG Inventory prepared by consultant, Ascent Environmental, for the county-wide agencies (Yolo County, Cities of Davis, Winters Woodland), and invited commissioner input. The baseline year for the inventory is 2016, based on being comparable to the recently completed Yolo County GHG Inventory, and with an acknowledgement of possible lack of available data for a more recent effort. Also, the contract with Ascent was specifically meant to give participating local agency staff the ability to use the GHG Inventory as a template, which provides all the information necessary in the Technical Memorandum, to complete annual updates by staff (without the need for a consultant).

J Johnston noted a number of issues with the transportation data. Where is the modeling from and does it accurately reflect Davis’ mode share and transportation data? For example, the SACOG on-road transportation modeling approach may not have the same mode share mix, so the resulting data for Davis would not be accurate.

Staff clarified that the inventory does not include UC Davis, as they do their own annual GHG Inventory with an established protocol. It also does not include up to date data for West Sacramento, as they did not participate in the regional inventory. For that reason, the county-wide data includes information from West Sacramento’s 2011 GHG Inventory, which is the most recent data available publicly.

R McCann noted that the State of California’s most recent inventory is with a baseline year of 2017, so it is not possible to do an inventory more recent than that, which makes the 2016 baseline for this inventory make more sense. Using this Regional GHG Inventory as a template

for annual updating or for a specific topic area such as Davis' completion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) improvements, the Woodland-Davis Water Project, or implementation of Valley Clean Energy, all after the completion of this 2016 baseline, would be valuable.

Several commissioners noted however, that the granularity of this Regional GHG Inventory is inadequate to provide information as a template for further updates. More information on data input and output, including the modeling source and approach, data sources, and work papers for the inventory are needed in order to have the ability to annually update the inventory. The consultant had noted in conversations with staff that the 'template information would include details down to who to contact for data in each sector, what to ask for and how to incorporate it into the data spreadsheet. This has not been provided. As noted by H Safford, 'Fundamentally, we did not receive what was intended in the contract.'

C Doss noted that a good test would be to take a single issue, such as the WWTP upgrades from 2018, and try to incorporate them into the inventory. Is that possible with the 'template' that was provided? Additionally, the solid waste data does not seem to reflect Davis' organic Loose in the Streets and composting information that began in 2016. Staff noted that the waste information was provided by city staff to the consultant, but we can follow up on that component with the consultant.

There was no public comment.

Following discussion, the following motion was made by H Safford, seconded by J Johnston, and approved unanimously, with D Abramson voting as regular member, since C Doss had left the meeting momentarily (7-0):

The NRC states that the Regionally Integrated GHG Inventory provided by the consultant to Yolo County on behalf of the county and selected cities within the county does not have sufficient detail for data and modeling in order to enable independent replication of further updates. Specifically, the consultant needs to provide granular data such as work papers, data sources and modeling information.

E. Subcommittee Updates

- i. Plant-based diet recommendations: Sustainability and Resilience Subcommittee
R McCann gave an overview of the subcommittee's discussion on this topic, and noted that they would have recommendations ready for the next NRC meeting. S Angulo noted that they had expanded the approach to not just plant-based foods, but to a broader approach to sustainable choices for foods. D Abramson added that the goal is also for implementable sustainable actions for food choices at city venues and events.
- ii. Energy subcommittee: Coordination with Utility Commission Energy Subcommittee
R McCann noted that this effort will be to coordinate with the proposed UC energy subcommittee. There is not currently any recommendations from the UC, but the concept of their subcommittee seems to provide opportunity for collaboration without overlapping with NRC purview. The subcommittee will report next month on any further action.

- iii. Subcommittee planning and assignments: During discussion it was agreed that the current subcommittee structure and participation is working for now. All commissioners are satisfied with their assignments. It may be advisable to align subcommittees more with implementation of the CAAP project at the appropriate time in the near future.

7. Commission and Staff Communications

A. Long-range Calendar

A discussion was had about how to respond to the DISC recommendations from the NRC, and whether to authorize a subcommittee to summarize comments and send to City Council, or to have an NRC Special Meeting prior to the June 30 CC meeting. Gloria Partida, Council Liaison, asked if the intent was to prioritize the previously made comments, and give background on why they were made, for CC information and action, and the Commission agreed that was the purpose.

The NRC appointed a subcommittee to compile comments on DISC to send to CC, comprised of R McCann, J Johnston and A Pryor. These comments will be discussed at a Special Meeting at noon on either Friday, 6/26 (first choice) or Thursday, 6/25. Staff will verify availability of a staff meeting manager and the zoom license to facilitate one of these times, and confirm with the NRC. No motion was needed for setting up this meeting.

Since there was some dissatisfaction on the part of NRC members toward city staff, K Loux 'made a plug' for support of city staff, in that everyone is doing their jobs and taking commission input into consideration to the best of their ability, as well as a compliment to the NRC and other commissions for their input and expertise, and willingness to provide their time on these important issues.

On the Long Range Calendar, it was noted that the July meeting will have items for the 'Sustainably-based Diet', for a Transportation Update from city staff, if available, and for a report from Cool Davis. EV Charging and Greywater items are not necessary.

B. Upcoming Meeting Items / Events

No further meetings or events were discussed.

8. Adjourn: 9:58 p.m.