

Natural Resources Commission Minutes
July 25, 2022; 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Michelle Byars, Jacob Byrne (Alt), John Johnston, Richard McCann, Tom Rost, Meg Slattery (Chair), Keara Tuso

Commissioner(s) Absent: Nayelie Quezada

Council Liaison(s): Lucas Frerichs absent

Staff Liaison Present: Kerry Daane Loux, Sustainability Coordinator, Community Development & Sustainability

1. **Call to Order:** 6:32 pm, by Chair M Slattery.
2. **Approval of Agenda** – Moved by M Byars, seconded by R McCann. Approved (7-0)
3. **Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners, and Liaisons**
R McCann noted that he sent informational materials and website links to the full Commission. California needs to triple the current decarbonization rate to meet State greenhouse gas reduction targets. There are turf removal incentives available now. UCLA prepared a statewide heat stress map.
4. **Public Comment**
Todd Edelman commented that he included the NRC on an email about the 4th of July fireworks and asked that the Commission put an item in the Long Range Calendar. He said that fireworks are dangerous, and believes that Davis can change to drone shows and implement actions to reduce 'DIY' fireworks.
5. **Consent Calendar**
The April and May minutes were approved unanimously (7-0) on a motion by M Byars, seconded by K Tuso.
 - A. **April 25, 2022 Minutes**
 - B. **May 23, 2022 Minutes**
6. **Regular Items**
 - A. **Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) Progress Update**
Staff provided an informational update on the progress of the 2020-2040 CAAP process, in advance of release of the Administrative Draft CAAP for public review in early August 2022. Commission-appointed representatives of the Bicycling, Transportation and Street Safety Commission (BTSSC), Civic Arts Commission (CAC), Open Space and Habitat Commission (OSHC), Planning Commission (PC), Senior Citizen Commission (SCC), Tree Commission (TC), the Unitrans Advisory Committee (UAC) and the Utilities Commission (UC), were invited to participate in the discussion, provide feedback as needed, and report back to their respective Commissions on recommendations by the NRC to the CAAP process. Tom Cronin, BTSSC and Trisha Ramadoss, UAC were present.

J Johnston noted that he would like to discuss an NRC recommendation to extend the CAAP public comment period to the end of October to ensure that UC Davis staff, faculty and students have a chance to respond.

R McCann noted that he would like to see the NRC provide an introductory narrative for the CAAP to provide a vision for 2040 and identify how 'things fit together'.

The Chair opened public comment.

Todd Edelman addressed his concern about the two month time frame for CAAP comments, and that UC Davis will not be back in session by September 28. He would like to see the time frame extended.

The Chair closed public comment.

J Johnston repeated his concern about the deadline for public comments and said that he felt it was more important to extend the deadline than it was to complete the CAAP and get City Council approval by December 2022.

J Byrne noted that there have been significant opportunities for public input on the actions in the CAAP, through workshops, the on-line comment forum and monthly NRC meetings. He understands the concerns about having adequate opportunity to comment, but feels that the urgency to get the CAAP completed and approved is significant

M Slattery noted that all of the CAAP information is online now, and there are opportunities to promote review through the Davis Enterprise, NextDoor, etc. Perhaps a mid-October extension would address these concerns.

M Byars said that if faculty is notified of the CAAP progress and deadlines, they can assign CAAP review and comments to students at the beginning of the quarter.

A motion was made by J Johnston, seconded by R McCann, "The NRC advises City staff and City Manager to extend the CAAP public comment period to the end of October to maximize UC Davis participation." The motion passed 6-1 (J Byrne voted against).

B. Downtown Plan EIR

The NRC discussed the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Downtown Davis Specific Plan (DDSP), to determine whether to provide additional comments or recommendations from the NRC to City Council. The DDSP EIR Notice of Availability (NOA) and Form Based Code were linked on the City's website for a 60-day public review period from July 14 to September 16, 2022: [Environmental Review | City of Davis, CA](#). Previous NRC comments on the DDSP were attached in the materials packet.

The Chair opened public comment.

Todd Edelman commented that having the public comment period for the DDSP EIR during summer months only while many Davis residents and UC Davis faculty, staff and students are away is a mistake.

The Chair closed public comment and asked Commissioners and liaisons for their input.

J Byrne noted that he focused on the transportation chapter. The findings of the DDSP do not match up with other City plans and priorities such as the Bicycle Beyond Platinum plan, which specifies greater separation of bikes and pedestrians from vehicle traffic. The transit priority area included in the DDSP seems to be subject to lighter CEQA review. It should tie in with the triggers in other sections. The DDSP EIR is VMT-based (Vehicle Miles Traveled). However, residents in downtown will have lower VMT than the rest of Davis, so these calculations may be skewed, and he recommends looking at travel based on population, which would be more effective and representative. In the Table on page 20, mitigation measures for greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction and air quality (AQ) should be added in the transportation section. This could result in the reduced VMT rates for residents and employees, since the VMT/person in downtown is less than Davis average. Finally, it is important to note that the City of Davis travel demand model is based on 2019 data, which is pre-COVID.

R McCann said that the sustainability measures included in the DDSP are not consistently applied/required throughout the EIR. These implementation measures, which are suggested in the DDSP, should be required as part of the EIR, and specifically reflected in the Energy, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas sections. Additionally, the EIR needs to be reconciled with the most current GHG Inventory (completed in 2020; baseline year 2016).

K Tusso commented that she had no comment on the Water Quality and Utility sections but felt that the Land Use and Planning chapter did not adequately address jobs-housing ratios.

Tom Cronin, BTSSC, added that Table 4.11-3 on page 279 shows that the largest income category is 'above moderate', which doesn't seem appropriate.

M Byars commented that in the Air Quality chapter, p 4.2-26, the project is noted as 'exceeds standards consistent with legislation'.

M Slattery said that we should be aware that many of the concepts in the DDSP can be transferred and supported with the CAAP. She noted that the urban tree canopy is important.

J Johnston noted that the alternatives analyzed, as required by CEQA, are limited (5-27, page 379). He expected more alternatives. The identified 'environmentally superior alternative' does not meet project goals. He also commented on the relationship to the CAAP. The DDSP EIR refers to the 2010 CAAP, since the 2020-

2040 CAAP is not yet adopted, but there really should be reference to the CAAP soon to be adopted. The DDSP should note that there is a need for revision and updating once CAAP update is adopted. Perhaps approval of new developments in downtown should wait until the CAAP is adopted.

M Byars commented on the environmentally superior alternative, and asked if this addresses just the Downtown Plan area, or is it for the full community? In other words, GHG would be reduced because the mix is there.

Once all Commissioners had commented, a motion by J Johnston, seconded by R McCann was approved unanimously (7-0):

“The NRC recommends the following in response to the DDSP EIR:

- *Delay final approval of projects in DDSP area until the 2020-2040 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan is adopted by City Council*
- *Incorporate sustainability measures identified in DDSP into the mitigation measures shown in the DDSP EIR, especially for GHG and AQ chapters, rather than stating ‘Significant but Unavoidable’. These sustainability measures are tangible ways that the DDSP EIR can mitigate impacts.”*

As a reminder, all Commissioners can also use the DDSP EIR public comment form for additional input and thoughts.

C. Commission Goals, Workplan and Subcommittee Mid-Term Review

Subcommittees:

Some of the NRC task specific subcommittees provided reports and updates:

J Johnston said that he spoke with Stan Gryczko and the Cool Parking/2x2 meetings are again delayed, but are anticipated to restart at the end of August.

M Slattery said that the Transportation Demand Management subcommittee will be working on educating the NRC on TDM, and providing resources for CAAP information.

J Byrne, the NRC’s liaison to the Tree Commission to discuss the Urban Forestry Management Plan (UFMP) noted that the consultant and staff are working on the following:

- Resource summary (existing tree conditions)
- Fact Sheet (1 page)
- Presentation which addresses tree distribution and urban heat island impacts
- Data includes the current 26% tree coverage in Davis, with a proposal to get to 47% coverage as a result of the UFMP
- Quantifying carbon sequestration, and identifying the data gap related to shade/cooling impacts from trees
- Focus on equity issues
- Habitat value of tree species will NOT be addressed

M Slattery commented that the habitat value issues can be lost if there is no data to support it. Additionally, the UFMP should address increasing shading on bike paths.

R McCann said there are ways to calculate this, including energy savings from trees, so NRC could recommend this.

J Johnston said that the next Unitrans Advisory Committee meeting will be next Thursday. New electric buses are coming this summer.

Work Plan and Mid-term Review:

- The NRC discussed the issue of fireworks raised by T Edelman, and said that this should be added to a future agenda for discussion. The Commission should be prepared with data and information about recommendations related to drone shows, costs, and/or integrating and reducing number of fireworks.
- Wood smoke: There are no interested Commissioners to further address woodsmoke issues
- Water: There is an interest in possibly addressing a greywater ordinance and rainwater capture at a future meeting

There were no further reports.

8. Adjourn: 9:47 p.m.