



City of Davis
Climate and Environmental Justice Commission Meeting Minutes
23 Russell Boulevard, Davis, CA 95616
September 23, 2024
6:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Gerald Braun, Jacob Byrne, Jim Cramer, Alana Gamage, John Reuter, Keara Tusó

Commissioners Absent: Jordan Blough, Michelle Byars, Ann Daniel, Colin Walsh

Council Liaisons Present: Bapu Vaitla

Staff Present: Kerry Loux, Sustainability Manager, CEJ Staff Liaison
Kelly Stachowicz, Assistant City Manager
Katie Yancey, Economic Development Director

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chairperson Cramer at 6:04 p.m.

2. Appointment of Chair

J Cramer recommended selecting J Byrne as Chair.

Moved by K Tusó, seconded by A Gamage to appoint J Byrne as CEJC Chair for term ending June 30, 2025. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Braun, Byrne, Cramer, Gamage, Reuter, Tusó

NOES: None

ABSENT: Blough, Byers, Daniel, Walsh

3. Approval of Agenda

J Cramer moved, seconded by J Reuter to approve the agenda. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Braun, Byrne, Cramer, Gamage, Reuter, Tusó

NOES: None

ABSENT: Blough, Byers, Daniel, Walsh

4. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners, and Council Liaisons:

New Commission member G Braun introduced himself as the CEJC alternate appointed by City Council. Staff noted that the alternate will participate in all Commission discussions, and will vote as a regular member if one or more regular Commissioners are absent.

Katie Yancey, Economic Development Director, briefly introduced herself to the Commission.

5. Public Comment

Todd Edelman: Expressed concerns about the removal of trees at his apartment complex. Requested that the MyDavis app should be more strongly promoted by the university. Expressed concern about providing garbage disposals in new developments. Stated the education from City of Davis related to eliminating food

waste from the wastewater stream is good but not adequate. Offered support for an official approach and support of programs such as the Freedge to provide food resources to Davis residents.

Anya McCann: Introduced herself as a former Natural Resources Commissioner (NRC) and founder of Cool Cuisine in 2013. Outlined organization support for “planet friendly food”, also called vegan or plant-based food. Supporting events with local restaurants to highlight planet friendly food choices, build community and support the food industry, especially in light of COVID impacts.

Richard McCann: Formerly on the NRC, is part of a group preparing a presentation on making sustainable food a basis for economic development in Davis. Information was sent information to all Commissioners, and expressed interested in time on a future meeting agenda. Group goals in Davis are to support innovation for food development and distribution, improve necessary infrastructure and food service/delivery locally and sustainably, and to attract sustainability-oriented tourism.

Alan Hirsch: Commented on cultural attitudes towards trees in community and the need to ensure that 1) trees remain healthy/well-maintained and 2) newly planted trees meet established City standards at time of new construction. Stated concerns that City staff do not conduct background research to see if there have been community concerns or comments in the past as part of the approval process for new development sites such as shopping centers.

Matt Williams: Stated that there is a missed opportunity in Davis for collaborating with UC Davis. Suggested that the commission can support and look for bridges to UC Davis. Offered Healthy Davis as an example of a “win”.

6. Regular Items

A. Presentation: Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) Update

Staff made a presentation on the CAAP process and progress since adoption on April 18, 2023.

Discussion of the Commission included:

- Asked if a budget has been set to implement CAAP actions between now and 2040. Staff indicated that CAAP actions would cover multiple budget years and many subject areas under the oversight of many City departments.
- That Valley Clean Energy (VCE) and Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) offer opportunities for building/transportation decarbonization.
- Asked about the metric for community engagement outcomes, including how many people participated during CAAP process and what should the City aim for regarding outreach. Staff outlined CAAP participation opportunities that were offered. Councilmember Vaitla expressed appreciation for the note that it is important for the City to employ a diverse array of engagement efforts.

- Whether an analysis had been completed on impacts Davis implementing their CAAP might have on surrounding jurisdictions.
- Implications of California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) decision on changing net metering rates for rooftop solar installations. Clarification was provided that although the City does not have a lobbyist, the City Council legislative subcommittee may look to address lobbying opportunities in the General Plan process.
- Clarification on the approach to building decarbonization actions. Staff indicated that the City is working in collaboration with Yolo County to develop a pilot program for the Home Energy Score (HES) to determine residential property readiness for electrification.
- Interest in learning about climate action efforts in other communities.
- The note that soft infrastructure is a crucial component of CAAP implementation. The Climate Dashboard will be an important tool for staff, Commissions and community.

B. Consider Council Subcommittee Proposed Process to Place Tasks/Items on Commission Agendas

K Stachowicz introduced the proposed Commission-initiated task process and asked for feedback from the Commission. She indicated that staff would compile feedback from all commissions to share with the Council Subcommittee on Commissions.

Discussion of the Commission included:

- Appreciation for the process to ensure that Council look more closely at the work of each commission, however concern that commissions may want to explore issues that should not be blocked by the Council, especially given Council's limited bandwidth and capacity to be involved in each commission's workplan. Concern also of lost momentum for topics when the commission must wait at least a month for Council direction.
- Agreement that the City Council should provide direction for commission efforts, but commissions should also have the opportunity to weigh in on the interest and capacity of the commission for work.
- Noted the distinction between tasks/products and discussions/ presentations/ information. This consideration should be made as part of this proposal so that Commissions have the freedom to pursue ideas and recommendations that do not require staff time and cost.
- Although a potentially workable framework, concern that the process depends on how it's implemented.
- Reiterated concerns related to timing. Included the suggestion that commissions continue to set their own agendas until Council has tested the process for six months.
- Concern that this top-down proposal puts City Council in the position of a thumbs up – thumbs down on Commission topics. The commissions should be more in the middle, with both bottom up and top down opportunities.

- Concern about the lack of detail.
- While Council bandwidth is an important issue, an emphasis that the timing of response from Council would be important. Indicated that an added step to this process should be that City Council articulate why an issue or topic is not recommended for a Commission discussion or recommendations, and publicly state the reason.

This item was opened for public comment and two comments were received:

- Alan Pryor: Executive Committee member of the Yolano Sierra Club and former NRC member, said that this proposal is an ill-advised top-down solution. He recommends a bottom-up process, as has worked with previous Commission proposals, such as developing Valley Clean Energy as the local community choice electricity provider, discussions about reach codes and integrated pest management.
- Elaine Roberts Musser: Said that this is an effort by City Council to block initiative by Commissions, which is wrong. Stated that City Commissioners provide expertise, they consider innovative solutions, they have the public interest in mind. Asked what is this proposal trying to solve.

At the close of the discussion, J Byrne moved, seconded by J Cramer:
Motion: The CEJC moves to support the new process put forward by the City Council subcommittee to place tasks/items on Commission agendas, but requests the opportunity to review and provide input after six months. Secondly, the CEJC recommends a separate process for approving informational tasks/items as opposed to Commission recommendations to City Council.

Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Braun, Byrne, Cramer, Tuso
NOES: Gamage, Reuter,
ABSENT: Blough, Byers, Daniel, Walsh

7. Discussion of Potential Tour Opportunities

Moved by J Reuter, seconded by J Cramer, to continue item to a future meeting.

Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Braun, Byrne, Cramer, Gamage, Reuter, Tuso
NOES: None
ABSENT: Blough, Byers, Daniel, Walsh

8. Upcoming Meeting Dates

- Next meeting - Monday, October 28, 6 p.m.
- November 25 meeting - The regularly scheduled meeting is during Thanksgiving week. By consensus, the commission will meet Monday, December 2, 2024.

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 9:15 p.m.