



**MINUTES**  
**Environmental Sustainability Commission**  
**Special Meeting on June 3, 2019**

The meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m.

**Present:** John Rennels, Paul Kelley, Daniel O'Donnell, Nate Ivy, Shreya Ramachandran, Carolyn Obata, Shiva Swaminathan

**Absent:** Richard Godfrey

**Oral Communications:**

- Kelly Abreu, Mission Peak Conservancy
  - Announced that Morrison Canyon is now closed to cars and stated that its use as a pedestrian pathway should be encouraged.
  - Mentioned that three separate City studies have been done to analyze the potential of a trail along Union Pacific Railway, but that the City has not taken any action.
  - Highlighted Randy Shaw's May 11 book event at the Fremont Main Library that was sponsored by the Greenbelt Alliance, and stated that Fremont should have more infill housing to put people closer to jobs and services.
- Mala Ashwin, Citizens' Climate Lobby
  - Discussed H.R. 763, the Congressional Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019.
    - The bill was introduced to this Congress on Jan 24, 2019.
    - CCL has organized a lobbying day on Capitol Hill in June.
    - CCL has 550 active chapters, and is interested in adding Fremont as a supporting chapter
    - CCL hopes that the Environmental Sustainability Commission will consider officially endorsing HR-763 Carbon and Dividend Act of 2019.
- Ohlone Student Sustainability Club (OSSC)
  - Various student sustainability club members spoke to the Commission regarding their interest in robust climate action measures to be incorporated into the City's Climate Action Plan update, with a specific focus on the sectors of public transit, businesses, and education. Key points made include:
    - Fremont should make positive changes utilizing resources and programs already available rather than radically altering residents' way of life. Economics, ethics, and the environment (3 E's) are the core of elements of sustainability.
    - OSSC has worked with the Tri-City Urban Forestry Alliance (TCUFA), Powernet, and Don Edwards habitat restoration. OSSC has promoted these efforts to the student body and public-at-large, and

regularly uses its campus as an example for achieving inwardly sustainable microsystems and feasible micro-solutions.

- Public transportation can be made more accessible and efficient through K-12 school programs. Ideas include, rewarding sustainable trips made through a monthly raffle or extra credit in PE department. Bus routes through neighborhoods should be designed to reduce individual vehicle trips, thereby cutting traffic, improving safety, and reducing emissions.
- Education in K-12 schools should focus on building “strong children to fix broken people.” A major focus should be on zero waste, such as switching from plastic utensils, etc. to compostable products. Promote education programs in schools for zero waste. Support education programs on climate change and promote the 3 E’s.
- Incentives should be offered to local residents, including free WiFi or bus routes to public libraries. Fremont could use social media presence to highlight businesses that promote sustainability.
- Current waste management and recycling efforts could be improved to achieve a zero waste goal. Currently, common hazardous waste is not properly recycled by businesses and citizens. E-waste is sent to the landfill, which leaches carcinogens like mercury and cadmium to groundwater, but these items have a high recyclable value. Fremont should partner with organizations such as Bay Area E-Waste and Sims Middle Management to improve these processes.
- Fremont should convert existing surface parking lots into garages, using sustainable pavement and integrating in EV charging stations and solar energy production. Fremont could also advance solar by identifying land for solar community farms. In new development projects in Fremont, rooftop solar should be required.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

- Regular meeting minutes of March 7, 2019. Motion to approve by Commissioner Obata; second by Commissioner Rennels. Minutes approved unanimously.

#### **Scheduled Items:**

### **5.1 Climate Action Plan 2.0 Key Strategies Presentations**

#### 5.1.1. Mobility Action Plan & Shared Active Transportation

Sr. Transportation Engineer Matthew Boomborg presented updates on the City’s Mobility Action Plan (MAP) and Shared Active Transportation. Key points include:

- Traffic congestion is the result of a housing and job imbalance. Fremont is in the middle of major regional commute corridors, and local traffic has been exacerbated by Fremont’s geography and the use of navigation apps that have directed traffic onto local streets.
- The MAP was adopted by Council in March 2019 after 16 months of planning. It addresses traffic congestion, new and emerging technologies, safety, and

transportation mode shift. Its 7 point Action Agenda includes:

1. Traffic signal modernization – using technology to improve traffic flow within the City’s existing infrastructure.
  2. School zones and access – ½ of Fremont schools participate in Safe Routes to Schools. The goal is to expand this to all
  3. Travel alternatives – biking and walking improvements; AC Transit modernization.
  4. Traffic safety – implementing Vision Zero.
  5. New technology and smart mobility – utilizing apps, on-demand shuttle services, etc.
  6. Regional policy and projects – participating in efforts such as Plan Bay Area 2050.
  7. Organizational and funding opportunities – converting the Mobility Task Force into a Mobility Commission; identifying regional, state, and federal funding opportunities.
- Shared Active Transportation (bikeshare) will be rolling out shortly. In 2017 the City received a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to develop a local bikesharing program. In 2018 Council adopted a regulatory framework and authorized a 1 year pilot program. Currently, the City is finalizing its agreement with HOPR to roll out a shared active transportation program that will include 250 pedal bikes initially and will expand to e-bikes and potentially scooters later. The bikes will be available along the Fremont Boulevard corridor and within the City Center from Centerville to Irvington. Currently, the City is offering a no cost pilot to City employees before rolling out a paid program to the community-at-large in August.
  - Commissioner O’Donnell inquired how the City’s success with these programs will be measured. Commissioner Rennels responded that the City has been recognized nationally for its success with Vision Zero as there has been a significant reduction in the number of traffic accidents and deaths since its adoption. Mayor Lily Mei (who joined the meeting during this presentation) added that there have been higher levels of public transit ridership, with early adoption from students. Commissioner Obata added that shared mobility options like LYFT are unavailable to youth under the age of 18, but that many high schoolers use ride sharing services regardless.

#### 5.1.2. Urban & Community Forestry Grant

Parks Planning and Design Manager Roger Ravenstad presented on the City’s recent receipt of an \$860,000 grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) for Urban & Community Forestry (Proposition 68 funds). This grant will change the way in which the City manages its trees, including the creation of the City’s first ever inventory of its urban forest. The total project value is \$1.2 million over a three year term, and it will support:

1. Conducting a thorough inventory and assessment of over 70,000 public trees throughout the City streets and parks, assessing their height, condition, and size;
2. From that data, creating an Urban Forestry Master Plan that will have a 40 to 60 year horizon, with policies to preserve and protect the tree canopy.

3. Expanding the urban tree canopy according to CAL FIRE goals of 10% by 2030 and 35% by 2050.
  4. Planting 250 new trees in the next 2 years, 84 of which will be in economically disadvantaged communities (DAC) in Fremont.
  5. Holding training programs on proper tree care for landscape contractors doing business in Fremont.
  6. Developing a community Tree Advisory Committee that will assist with education and outreach to the community on the benefits of City trees, including energy savings, clean air, crime reduction, etc.
- The City is currently recruiting an Urban Forester to implement the grant, lead outreach, manage consultants, and serve as a citywide staff resource.
  - Commissioner Kelley asked about how violations of the existing tree ordinance are handled as he sees trees cut down regularly without oversight. Staffmember Ravenstad responded that there are violations, but that the City has two full time staff people that review tree permits, and that the 50-50 tree program offers financial incentives for cooperation. Under the grant, the City will be reviewing its existing ordinances and discuss improvements with the public with a focus on education around compliance.
  - Commissioner Rennels inquired about how non-public trees (such as within HOAs) will be included in the programming, especially focusing on proper pruning habits. Staff responded that there will be a contractor training component of the program.
  - Commissioner Ivy inquired about how the inventory will be shared with the public, to which staff responded that there will be an interactive GIS map. Commissioner Ivy suggested that other data be incorporated into this, such as the State's CalEnviroScreen data of disadvantaged communities.
  - Commissioner O'Donnell highlighted that a number of horticultural groups have data on trees, and that this information should be cross-referenced. Staff responded that this can happen under the resources supplied by the grant.
  - Commissioner Ramachandran inquired about community workshops, to which staff responded that there will be well-advertised public opportunities for community involvement.
  - Public comment included concern over the proliferation of new committees, the importance of youth (esp. Elementary and Middle School level) education, use of social media for promotion of efforts, and opportunities for direct High School student participation in the form of data collection and Change Projects.

### 5.1.3. Math Science Nucleus Open Space Preservation

Dr. Joyce Blueford of the Math Science Nucleus presented on MSN's open space preservation and habitat restoration work in Fremont. MSN started its work in 1982 as a group of scientists developing curriculum with an environmental focus. The Math Science Nucleus (MSN) is a Fremont-based non-profit educational and research organization composed of scientists, educators, and community members. MSN offers unique, content-based programs that integrate science and math with the arts, reading and writing, and social sciences. MSN also maintains the Tule Ponds at Tyson Lagoon Wetland Center and manages the Children's Natural History Museum in Fremont. Dr. Blueford walked through some of the data it offers in its interactive website, and

discussed that many Irvington High School students work with MSN for their Change Projects. MSN has offered 15,000 service hours for kids, including regular field trips for over 150 classes.

- Commissioner Ivy asked Dr. Blueford what goals she would have for the City's CAP update. Dr. Blueford responded that there are many misconceptions of science. For instance, we have the best aquifer in the Bay Area. There is significant carbon sequestration potential through reforestation efforts along the Hayward fault where there is significant groundwater.
- Commissioner Ivy noted that some school districts are pioneering K-12 climate/environmental literacy plans, but that FUSD has not stepped forward. He suggested that the City host a joint FUSD and Council meeting to align environmental literacy goals.

## **5.2 Staff Updates**

- 2019 California Building Code will go into effect Jan. 1, 2020. Staff will highlight energy and green building reach code opportunities for the Commission at the next meeting.
- The City received a \$245,000 grant from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to conduct a Municipal Fleet Electrification Study. The City issued an RFP and received 12 responses. Staff will be bringing its recommendation for the selected consultant to Council this summer. The project will take approximately 1.5 years to complete.
- The City's annual Earth Day event happened on April 20 at Washington Hospital, and had good turnout. Next year, Earth Day will be celebrating 50 years.
- The City will be looking for consultants to assist with stakeholder engagement and technical analysis of Climate Action Plan update measures. Over the coming months, staff will define the scope of services it is looking for and begin the selection process.

## **5.3 Commissioner Announcements**

- Shreya Ramachandran
  - Participating in the Intel pre-college science fair with over 1,800 international students, sharing research on soil microbiome effects of greywater usage.
  - One of the top 20 students worldwide in the Google Science Fair.
- John Rennels
  - Recognized himself and Commissioners Obata and O'Donnell as original members, and gave recognition to City staff for their continued efforts. Stated that this meeting felt special in that we are shifting into a higher gear, and acknowledged holistic community sustainability improvements on many levels.

Adjourned at 6:10pm.

APPROVED BY:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rachel DiFranco", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Rachel DiFranco  
Sustainability Manager