



**Record of Action**

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**  
An Advisory Body to the Board of Supervisors

**August 24, 2019  
5:00 P.M.  
30 Muir Road, Martinez**

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| Howdy Goudey, Chair, At-Large, Community Group | John Sierra, Member, District 3<br>Vacant, Alternate, District 3 | Harry Thurston, At-Large, Community Group<br>Russell Driver, At-Large, Business |
| Nick Despota, Vice-Chair, Member, District 1   | Wes Sullens, Member, District 4                                  | Nicholas Snyder, At-Large, Business   |
| Shoshana Wechsler, Alternate, District 1       | Travis Curran, Alternate, District 4                             | Doria Robinson, At-Large, Environmental Justice                                 |
| Victoria Smith, Member, District 2             | Charles Davidson, Member, District 5                             | Vacant, At-Large, Environmental Justice   |
| Ryan Buckley, Alternate, District 2            | Vacant, Alternate, District 5                                    | Kim Hazard, At-Large, Education   |

**Agenda  
Items:**

Items may be taken out of order based on the business of the day and preference of the Committee

- Present:** Howdy Goudey, Chair, At-Large, Community Group  
 Nick Despota, Vice-Chair, Member, District 1  
 Shoshana Wechsler, Alternate, District 1  
 Victoria Smith, Member, District 2  
 Ryan Buckley, Alternate, District 2  
 John Sierra, Member, District 3  
 Wes Sullens, Member, District 4  
 Charles Davidson, Member, District 5  
 Russell Driver, At-Large, Business  
 Nicholas Snyder, At-Large, Business  
 Doria Robinson, At-Large, Environmental Justice  
 Harry Thurston, At-Large, Community Group  
 Kim Hazard, At-Large, Education
- Absent:** Travis Curran, Alternate, District 4
- Staff Present:** Jody London, Sustainability Coordinator  
 Demian Hardman, Senior Energy Planner, Department of Conservation and Development  
 Chris Wikler, Field Representative, Supervisor Mitchoff  
 Dom Pruet, Field Representative, Supervisor Andersen  
 Wade Finlinson, Integrated Pest Management Coordinator
- Attendees:** Wei-Tai Kwok, Linda Flower, Donna Ball, Allison Ball, Maureen Brennan, Sarah Foster, Zoe Siegel, Renee Fernandez-Lipp, Cheryl Brown, Marti Roach, Eli Krispi, Tammy Seale

1. Call to Order and Introductions
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Public Comment

*Donna Ball, Restoration Manager, Save the Bay, read a statement urging Contra Costa County to use the General Plan Update as an opportunity to advance regional work on natural solutions for climate adaptation. The statement is attached.*

*Allison Chan, Associate Director for Policy, Save the Bay, discussed the link between the General Plan and the Climate Action Plan. Chan urged the County to include natural infrastructure in the General*

*Plan wherever possible, including green stormwater infrastructure for upstream areas. Chan said green infrastructure can alleviate flood and heat risk and protect local water quality. She noted the Green Streets model ordinance from the San Francisco Estuary Project. She observed that public-private partnerships are needed.*

*Maureen Brennan, a resident of Rodeo, encouraged the County to enroll in MCE's Deep Green program. Brennan announced a Community Climate Rally on September 21, 1-3, at Civic Park in Walnut Creek.*

*Linda Flower, Contra Costa County Climate Leaders, encouraged the County to sign up for MCE's Deep Green program.*

*Jody London, County Sustainability Coordinator, noted that the Board of Supervisors determined last year to pursue energy efficiency upgrades and install solar on a number of County facilities before it enrolls in Deep Green.*

4. APPROVE Record of Action for April 22, 2019 meeting.

*Victoria Smith noted that the numbering of items in the draft Record of Action is incorrect. Pending correction of the numbering, Smith moved adoption of the Record of Action. Second: Nick Snyder. Vote: Unanimous*

5. DISCUSS Ideas for Goals for Updated Climate Action Plan and PROVIDE ADVICE Regarding Same

*The Commission discussed the ideas members developed since the last meeting regarding goals for the Climate Action Plan (CAP) update. Members reviewed the proposals published with the agenda.*

*The group debated whether the County should adopt a goal for becoming carbon-free, or carbon-neutral. Carbon free is a higher standard to achieve because one cannot offset emissions, use sequestration. Tammy Seale from PlaceWorks said an overall carbon-free goal would be difficult. The State goals are working toward carbon neutrality, with a goal of 100% carbon-free electricity by 2045 and a carbon-neutral path by 2050. State goals call for emissions by 2050 to be 80% below 1990 levels, and 2 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2e</sub>) per capita. It is unlikely our economy can wipe out industrial emissions in ten years. Seale noted that under current California policies, Gross Domestic Product is up and greenhouse gas emissions are down statewide. Seale said that the State goals are in line with the Paris Climate Agreement and are driving technological achievements.*

*Members of the Commission advocated for the County's CAP to include aggressive goals. They recommended that the CAP address climate mitigation, resiliency, and adaptation. The CAP should think broadly. It should include green infrastructure as a buffer. Specific suggestions in this area include exploring composting toilets and greywater systems, supporting local agriculture and shortening food supply chains, and considering traditional and urban agriculture.*

*The Commission brainstormed ideas for the CAP based off the information published with the agenda:*

- Agriculture
  - Urban
  - Traditional
- Resilience
- Adaptation
- Food Waste

- *Carbon neutral v. carbon free*
- *County funds to support programs such as more renewable energy, energy efficiency and renewable energy for low-income communities*
- *Financial tools*
- *Fuel switching*
- *Waste reduction*
- *Electrification (moving buildings and transportation to run entirely on electricity)*
- *Energy*
- *Align goals with the emission inventory*
- *Ensure the goals can be implemented*
- *Include a structure and resources for County sustainability work*
- *Create dense urban centers*
- *Water and water conservation*
- *Ensure equity, i.e., \_\_\_\_\_ will be available to all populations in all regions of the County*

*The group agreed the goals should be visionary and name the desired end state.*

*Several members of the public comments on the CAP goals.*

*Wei-Tai Kwok said that he recently replaced all natural gas in his house. Kwok observed that policies and rebates are not aligned to help with building electrification. Demian Hardman, County Energy Planner, noted that the California Public Utilities Commission recently authorized a policy change that should address this problem. Wes Sullens said that he's been working with Hardman and community member Marti Roach on a policy that would recommend electrification of all County buildings and establish a reach code for new commercial buildings.*

*Allison Chan said the CAP should include green elements. For drought resilience, Chan suggested the CAP include stormwater capture to recharge groundwater and help with fresh water supplies. Chan said greening the built environment helps with active transportation and goals for shifting the forms of transportation people use. Chan observed the list generated by the Commission should include flood resilience, which could perhaps be substituted for drought resilience. She also suggested the CAP encourage green roofs, which can help with insulation and cooling and create spaces for urban agriculture and/or parks.*

*Marti Roach asked for the status and location of details on the emissions inventory and accomplishments to date. Roach said the vulnerability assessment will be important. She agrees goals should be aggressive, especially with respect to transportation and buildings. Roach provided a handout (attached).*

*Jody London observed annual reports are posted on the Sustainability Commission web page. Tammy Seale said the General Plan Briefing Book includes the emissions inventory, and the vulnerability assessment should be available by the end of October.*

*The Commission directed London to coordinate with members Russell Driver, Wes Sullens, and Howdy Goudey to refine the CAP goals and strategies.*

6. **ADOPT Environmental Justice Assessment Tool Developed by the Commission's Environmental Justice Working Group and RECOMMEND Its Use in Updating the County's General Plan.**

*Nick Despota described the environmental justice assessment tool. The idea is the tool would be used by County departments to assess programs and be in compliance with the County's environmental justice*

policy.

*Motion to approve: Nick Despota Second: Victoria Smith*

*Vote: Unanimous*

7. RECEIVE UPDATE on proposal from Member, District 1, to Recommend Use of Carbon-Neutral Building Materials in County Projects.

*Nick Despota provided an overview of the memo included in the agenda. Despota noted that the County's Public Works Department prefers to wait for State guidance on using less carbon intensive materials in County construction projects. Wes Sullens said that Marin County is nearing completion on a model policy on this topic. It should include different thresholds for use of different materials. The group suggested this could be a topic for the CAP.*

8. AMEND Sustainability Commission Bylaws to Extend Term of Service for 60 Days or Until an Appointment is Made to a Vacant Seat

*The Commission discussed the proposed Bylaws amendment to extend the term of service for 60 days or until an appointment is made to a vacant seat.*

*Motion: Wes Sullens Second: Kimberly Hazard Vote: Unanimous*

9. REVIEW Proposed Polystyrene Ordinance

*The Commission discussed the polystyrene ban, which is going to the Board of Supervisors on September 24. The Commission observed that the proposed ban does not define "recyclable" and "compostable." They suggested this could be defined as what is accepted by processors in the vicinity. The Commission noted that the item on food service ware should use the word "shall" instead of "may." Members wondered whether "raw meat trays" are excluded. Despota noted there is a bill in the Assembly that would phase out single-use plastic.*

10. APPOINT One Member of the Sustainability Commission to the Contra Costa County Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee

*Wade Finlinson, County Integrated Pest Management Coordinator, described the schedule for the IPM Advisory Board. Kim Hazard volunteered to be the Sustainability Commission delegate, pending her schedule availability.*

*Motion: Nick Despota Second: Russell Driver Vote: Unanimous*

11. RECEIVE Reports from Sustainability Commission members and alternates, and PROVIDE DIRECTION as needed.

*Kim Hazard reported on community meetings for the CAP. There are meetings scheduled for September 19 in Walnut Creek, September 26 in Crockett, and October 15 in Antioch. The format will likely follow the format used for General Plan outreach meetings, where data boards are placed around the room, as well as posters with recommended CAP goals and strategies. The idea is to allow people to interact with the data.*

*Doria Robinson suggested it would be useful to hold a meeting in Richmond and offered to help coordinate that.*

*Wes Sullens asked the Commission whether it wishes to encourage the Board of Supervisors to adopt a climate emergency resolution. The Commission discussed whether there would be funding tied a*

*resolution, the value of declaring a climate emergency in motivating people, and the potential of resolutions to formalize dialogue between government bodies across the region. The Commission requested this be placed on the next agenda.*

12. RECEIVE Report from Sustainability Coordinator.

*Jody London reviewed the information provided in the agenda. Demian Hardman described in greater detail the decision by PG&E to stop funding the East Bay Energy Watch (EBEW) energy efficiency program. Hardman said the EBEW members had concerns with PG&E's process and its new focus on municipal buildings rather than community-facing programs. The EBEW response to the request for abstract focused on needs in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. EBEW was not selected to move forward.*

*Hardman also reported that it is likely the California Public Utilities Commission will issue a decision in the next two months that will hopefully authorize permanent status for the Regional Energy Networks, including the BayREN.*

13. RECEIVE Report from Sustainability Commission Chair and IDENTIFY TOPICS for next report to Sustainability Committee.

*The Commission delegated the identification of topics to the Chair.*

14. The next meeting is currently scheduled for October 21, 2019.

15. Adjourn