

ENVIRONMENTAL TASK FORCE MINUTES

July 21, 2011 5:30 P.M.

Police and Fire Community Facility

420 15th Street Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

In attendance: Environmental Task Force co-chairs Councilmembers Amy Howorth and David Lesser; ETF Members Andy Cobb, Audrey Judson, Greg Monfette, and Daniel Salzman; and City Staff Public Works Director Jim Arndt, Maintenance Superintendent Juan Price, Utilities Manager Raul Saenz, and Environmental Programs Manager Sona Kalapura.

2. BUSINESS ITEMS

Environmental Programs Manager Kalapura started the meeting with several announcements including the upcoming deadline for South Bay Business [SEED Award](#) Nominations (due July 22nd). She also mentioned brainstorming ideas for an upcoming annual outreach event for the 350 organization, titled this year as [Moving Planet](#).”

Kalapura then began introductions of the ETF and public in attendance before continuing on with the ETF timeline and project deadline below.

ETF Timeline:

September 6th – Present recommendations/progress to City Council

September 15th: ETF Meeting – Kickoff outreach programs; advertise at Hometown Fair and 350 “Moving Planet” event

October 20th: ETF Meeting – Run programs (Neighborhood Conservation Contest, Green Business Challenge, Mulch Pilot Program, Sustainable Landscape Checkup)

November 17 & December 15: ETF Meetings – monitor initial program results, develop final recommendations for City Council

December 20th – Provide final status report and recommendations to City Council

3. ENVIRONMENTAL TASK FORCE ITEMS

[Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy](#) (Energy Work Group members: Andy Cobb, Stacia Costa, Audrey Judson, Kim Matsoukas, and Daniel Salzman)

Presentation:

- a. **Community-wide greenhouse gas emissions target:** Daniel Salzman started off the group’s presentation by stating the City’s initial commitment to reducing its carbon footprint (7% below 1990 levels), progress made with the greenhouse gas inventory and partnership with the South Bay Environmental Services Center to complete the community-wide inventory. He reviewed the community-wide inventory results and stated that based on the City’s CO2 reduction commitment, a community-wide carbon emissions reduction target would be 302,547 metric tons CO2 equivalent by 2020.
- b. Programs recommended for ETF approval to help meet emissions reduction goal:
 - i. **Neighborhood conservation contest:** Daniel gave an update on this program proposal, stating the goal, outcome, and process to begin soliciting residents to participate based on outreach through the schools. The ETF will recruit 100 families in Manhattan Beach, representing all sectors of the community, to monitor their energy and water bills for 3

- months. The ETF will provide resources and tips, in partnership with local utilities, to assist the participants in lowering their energy and water consumption. The ETF will identify prizes of community value to congratulate the winners of the contest who are able to lower their consumption the most (e.g. dinner with the Fire Department).
- ii. **Green business challenge:** Daniel gave an update on this program, but the program proposal will come back to the ETF in September for final approval before being recommended to City Council on September 20th. The goal of the program is to invite Manhattan Beach businesses to inventory and then improve upon their environmental activities at the workplace. The ETF is designing a program to rank businesses that participate in the challenge and award those that qualify a “green” seal of approval.
 - iii. **Proposal for a solar education display in Metlox Plaza:** Andy Cobb made the presentation on the solar project proposal, describing the details of the project, costs, and potential funding. The installation consists of a 4.7KW bi-facial solar system in the common area of Metlox Plaza, above the escalator to the parking garage. The project will cost an estimated \$30,000 and the funding has been verbally committed to by private owners in the Metlox development. The goals of the project are two-fold: (1) to show that solar can be aesthetically designed into existing architecture, and (2) to show the community how easy solar power can be generated in Manhattan Beach. The solar project will produce enough power to offset the electricity use of the escalators, Metlox fountain, and the City’s weekly Farmers’ Market – likely making the MB Farmers’ Market the first carbon-neutral market in California. Educational tips and information on solar generation will be easily visible to the community on LCD TV screens throughout the Plaza, as well as available for viewing online. The next step is to take this project to City Council for approval on September 6th, and if approved then release the solar project out to bid for the purchase and installation of the project.
 - iv. **Solar Feasibility Audit:** Recommendations regarding the municipal solar feasibility audit will be presented in September but Andy let the group know that he is working with staff to identify several sites in the City’s previous energy audit that will make good financial sense to install solar. The City will then be able to take the financial analysis and obtain funding or power-purchase agreements with solar companies to install solar on municipal facilities.
- c. Recommendations will be evaluated based on: cost, value to the goal, and sustainability of the program: Public Works Director Jim Arndt reiterated that each program will be evaluated using this criteria and program recommendations will come to City Council with this information so the Council may approve the programs.

Discussion:

The discussion and questions focused mainly on the solar proposal. Questions and comments included clearly defining the goals of the project for City Council approval, explaining how the power generated would offset other operation at Melox, and whether or not a program could be created to allow individuals to purchase renewable energy credits to offset personal travel, etc. to reduce their carbon footprint. The idea of purchasing credits based on the solar display is something that Andy said could allow the City to generate funds for future projects. Councilmember Howorth also pointed out that the energy savings from the project would likely cover any minimal maintenance/labor costs. The Councilmembers agreed that good progress on the projects have been made, and that the recommendations have value and will be exiting to the community.

[Water Conservation](#) and [Sustainable Landscaping](#) (Water Conservation work group members: Paul Beswick, Julie Gonella, Ann Lin, Greg Monfette, and Gretchen Renshaw)

Presentation:

- a. **Community-wide water conservation target:** Greg Monfette reviewed the water conservation target, falling in line with the State's goal of reducing water consumption 20% by 2020. For Manhattan Beach this is approximately 5,280 acre feet. The City will calculate residential water consumption in gallons/day through Urban Watershed Management plan process, and the ETF will use this data in outreach to the public.
- b. Programs recommended for ETF approval to help meet water conservation goal:
 - i. **Pilot mulch program:** Greg reviewed the pilot program, including the potential locations. The goal of the program is to provide free, organic mulch to the community to aid in weed reduction, moisture retention, and reduction of water use and runoff. The ETF will vet tree trimmers who can participate in the program by delivering mulch to the designated area. The location that has staff support is at the Public Works Yard on Bell Ave. Two parking stalls would be utilized to house a small pilot mulch mile. The location is ideal because it is easily accessible to the public, and it is close enough for Public Works staff to monitor and maintain as needed. The next step is to work with staff to finalize a delivery contract with a mulch provider and prepare the recommendation for City Council approval on September 6th.
 - ii. **Sustainable landscape checkup program:** Greg reviewed the concepts of sustainable landscape and described the program proposal and goal, which is to make free landscape audits available to the community so they can understand what change they can make to their properties to be more water efficient. He also described what other cities were doing in this area, such as Santa Monica's landscaper certification program, which would be a sufficient way to vet landscapers that want to participate in the program. He also talked about the free landscape classes offered by the City of Long Beach as an example of something Manhattan Beach could offer. He discussed other criteria to vet potential landscapers (e.g. business licenses, certifications, etc.), and said the ETF has already defined a strong list of landscapers willing to participate in the program. The next step is to seek Council approval for the project on September 6th.
 - iii. **Municipal sustainable landscape goal:** A recommendation will be developed for the ETF and City Council in September, but Greg addressed some ideas surrounding replacement of high-water use municipal turf areas with drought tolerant plantings. An example was given of the grass area in front of the Joslyn Center and Post Office.
School-wide water conservation slogan contest: A recommendation will be developed for the ETF and City Council in September.
- c. Recommendations will be evaluated based on: cost, value to the goal, and sustainability of the program

Discussion:

The discussion centered on the landscape checkup with questions about advertising the program (how does Santa Monica promote their program?), listing of specific landscapers on city billing notices, charging landscapers a fee to receive training, making sure the landscaping materials and goals are available in Spanish, and preparing a water use/conservation messages for residents to

think long-term beyond 2020. Questions on the mulch pilot focused on the location, its impact to the Public Works department if any, and visibility to the residents. Jim Arndt, stated that since the potential site at the Public Works Yard is set back from the street, it is not highly visible; and that the intended parking spots are located in a low-traffic area, which will not impact Public Works operations. Lastly, there was discussion surrounding the replacement of turf areas with low-water use plants. Juan Price said the City can develop a listing of property areas that would be good candidates for this project, and that staff was supportive of this change. Audrey Judson suggested involving the students in completing drought-tolerant plantings on campus. And Greg stated that group plantings are a good way to build camaraderie and a sense of community. Councilmember Lesser asked if funding could be obtained, similar to the project at the City Hall entrance. Sona Kalapura replied that the City was being awarded another grant to do more drought-tolerant landscape, and that as funds become available staff would apply for future grants.

4. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Leo Shaw, Patch.com; Jeremy Hyde, SBESC; Laura Oczachowski; Gary McCullough, resident/Manhattan Beach Boy Scouts; Craig Cadwallader, resident/Surfrider; Gerry O'Connor, resident; Bob Scott, resident/ETFI; Carolyn Miller, resident/Transition South Bay; Mike Garcia, Enviroscene; Kiran Magiawala; Jeanne Jackson, resident/Greenbelt Restoration Project; Jim Fasola, former Planning Commissioner attended the ETF meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The August ETF meeting will be canceled. The next ETF meeting will be held on Thursday, September 15th at 5:30 PM in the Manhattan Beach Police Fire Community Room: 420 15th St., Manhattan Beach, CA 90266.

Regular meetings of the ETF are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Meeting information will also be posted on the Going Green webpage at www.citymb.info.