



**Town of Atherton
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

April 17, 2017

1:30 p.m.

TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS

94 ASHFIELD ROAD
ATHERTON, CALIFORNIA

REGULAR MEETING

1. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Elizabeth Lewis
Holly Joseph
Valerie Gardner
Janet Larson

Excused: Jasenka Rakas

Staff Present: Dori Ganetsos, Assistant Planner

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Committee Member Gardner commented on the current political climate and its environmental implications. She discussed events occurring such as the March for Science, Climate March, and a Monday lecture series at Stanford University. She noted that the EPC may want to reconsider the nature of future events, and that the ECP should distribute more information about Climate Change and how it relates to politics rather than engaging in the types of sustainability dialogues that it has in the past.

Staff Liaison Lewis said that the committee could distribute factual and scientifically based information but shouldn't take a political stance. She said the committee needs to be careful about taking a political stance.

Assistant Planner Ganetsos said that the committee can distribute resources about local educational events, and can distribute educational materials about climate change if they wished to develop them.

3. **COMMITTEE AND STAFF MEMBER COMMENTS:**

a. Discuss Earth Day Progress and Staff Updates

Assistant Planner Ganetsos presented the memo and provided an update on staff action items in terms of the execution of the Earth Day event.

Committee Member Joseph requested that the Earth Day speaker provide informational materials in Spanish as well.

The Committee discussed the difficulties with the Student Challenge and suggested that in the future the Student Challenge occur later in the academic calendar year.

Committee Member Gardner said she has a contact that regularly presents to large audiences (at universities, conventions, etc) regarding Climate Change.

Staff Liaison Lewis suggested that Committee Member Gardner gauge her contact's interest in presenting at a future event (maybe 2018) in a larger venue.

Committee Member Gardner said it is hard to have a successful event without substance (in reference to the planned 2017 event) and asked if the City Council would ever approve a more substantive event. She said the EPC is currently more of a Social Committee rather than an Environmental Programs Committee.

Staff Liaison Lewis said that the Committee should consider what topic they want to highlight and promote, and then they should formulate an event around that topic. She said it was up to the Committee to present a more targeted, educational idea to the Council for approval.

Staff Liaison Lewis, Committee Member Larson, and Committee Member Joseph said they would attend and assist with the event.

Assistant Planner Ganetsos noted that the MCE employees would not be charging the EPC directly for their assistance at the Earth Day event, freeing up \$1,500 of the budget.

Committee Member Joseph asked if additional funds not used at this event would be available to the EPC in the future, or if they would go back in to the General Fund after the event.

Staff Liaison Lewis said that the EPC would keep the money.

*****NOTE – it has since been clarified with the City Manager's office that additional funds would return to the General Fund and the Committee will have to request further funds for additional events.**

The Committee discussed decoration options for the event. They decided against the use of balloons at the event since they are not environmentally friendly.

Committee Member Gardner offered her past signage to the Committee for use at the event.

4. REGULAR AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes from the March 30, 2017 Minutes

The minutes were approved as distributed.

M/S Larson / Gardner Aye: 3 Noes: 0 Excused: 1

b. Discuss Subcommittee Action and Outstanding Items to be Addressed

Assistant Planner Ganetsos presented the memo. She noted that there was an extra table if the EPC wanted to host a booth at the event. She suggested that the EPC develop handouts with scientifically based information on a topic of their choice and host the booth at the event.

Staff Liaison Lewis asked what resources the Town already has regarding green building, residential energy, and recycling.

Assistant Planner Ganetsos said that to her knowledge the Town did not have any resources or handouts regarding this.

Staff Liaison Lewis said she would ask the City Manager if the Town already has information, and said that the EPC could develop materials as long as there was no political bias.

The EPC decided it was too late to develop additional information and that they should not host a booth at the Earth Day event.

Committee Member Joseph said that she received the postcard that the EPC developed to publicize the Earth Day event. The rest of the Committee and the Staff Liaison never received their postcard.

Assistant Planner Ganetsos said that the mailing was done by the City Manager's office and that she would inform them of the problem.

Committee Member Gardner asked if there was anything environmentally focused on the upcoming City Council Meeting Agenda.

Assistant Planner Ganetsos said that a representative from Peninsula Clean Energy would present on San Mateo County's switch to 50% renewable energy provision, and that Staff would request that the Town adopts a resolution to participate in the Beacon Award Program.

The Committee requested that Staff inform the Committee on any Environmental items being taken to the City Council so that they can assist and advise as appropriate.

4. **SET/ CONFIRM NEXT MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled meeting is set for Thursday, July 20th, from 1:30 – 3:30 pm.

5. **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Dated & Posted 4/13/2017