

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
September 10, 2008, 11 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.
Bennett Valley Golf Course Clubhouse
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDING MEMBERS:

Nabeel Al-Shamma – Sierra Club Sonoma County	Heather Gourley – City of Santa Rosa
Chris Carrieri – Community Advisory Board	Lisa Grant – City of Santa Rosa
Colleen Fernald – Russian River Watershed Council	Cat Hare – City of Santa Rosa
Sam Pierce – Climate Protection Campaign	Elise Howard – City of Santa Rosa
Mark Armstrong – City of Santa Rosa	Frank Kasimov – City of Santa Rosa
Steve Brady – City of Santa Rosa	Rachel McCormick – City of Santa Rosa
Peter Brown – City of Santa Rosa	Rita Miller – City of Santa Rosa
Nicole Dorotinsky – City of Santa Rosa	Dell Tredinnick – City of Santa Rosa
Barbara Firestone – City of Santa Rosa	Jennifer Tuell – City of Santa Rosa
	Tasha Wright – City of Santa Rosa

Introductions: Dell Tredinnick welcomed all the attendees to the September kickoff meeting and tour at the Bennett Valley Golf Course Clubhouse. Members and guests introduced themselves going around the conference table.

Aquatic Biomass to Algae Project: Catherine Hare discussed the goals and status of the aquatic biomass to algae project at Laguna Treatment Plant (LTP). She explained that she first approached Dell in 2005 about the use of channelized aquatic scrubbers to produce energy and polish waste water effluent. Some possibilities included production of ethanol, methane, and biodiesel and reduction of nitrates and metals and biocontaminants. She said that methane gas production is the most viable option. Cat stated that as the waste water passes through the channels, it gets progressively cleaner. She added that side by side digesters have been constructed at the Plant and they are trying different combinations of biomass to see what works best.

Algae Project: Rachel McCormick, lab analyst at LTP and master student at San Francisco State University, discussed her algae project that she is working on for her thesis. She stated that she is looking to remove endocrine disruptors in the waste water. Rachel explained that she has one control, water, and two samples, pre algae effluent and post algae effluent and uses incubated fish to measure the production of protein, a predictor of endocrine activity. She is using algae mats in the effluent channels to remove the metals in the waste water, because algae has outer negative ions that stick to metals and removes them from the water. Dell suggested that other communities without secondary treatment of their waste water could benefit from this process.

Thermometer Exchange Program: Heather Gourley, Environmental Compliance Inspector for the City of Santa Rosa Utilities Department, discussed the Mercury Fever Thermometer Exchange Program that has been a huge success in our community. She passed out an informational handout and digital thermometers to each attendee. She explained that mercury is toxic to humans and animals and can be recycled if properly disposed of. Heather said that September 15th through the 21st is Pollution Prevention Week, and that several locations listed on her handout are participating: mercury thermometers should be sealed in two plastic bags to prevent spills and can be traded for a new digital one.

Community Advisory Board (CAB) Update: Chris Carrieri reported that the CAB was busy reviewing grant applications.

Environmental Champs: Elise Howard explained that every other month three people, citizens and employees, are selected to receive Environmental Champion Awards, in recognition of the things that they do that are good for the environment and for the general good. They receive them at the last City Council meeting of every other month. Elise asked for suggestions and directed members to the City Wide Environmental Website where they could make nominations.

Biosolids Management System: Elise reported that the City of Santa Rosa signed up with the National Biosolids Partnership two years ago. She said that we are seeking third party verification of our Biosolids Management System. She added that, in doing so, we are supporting the national effort, and we are producing a verifiable high quality product. Elise stated that the certification audit will take place in November 2008.

Solar Sonoma County (SSC) Update: Tasha announced the Solar Sonoma County (SSC) and Solar American Cities Kickoff event on the 18th of September at Sonoma Mountain Village in Rohnert Park from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM. She stated that the speakers include Department of Energy Solar Program Manager, John Lushetsky, State Senator Pat Wiggins, State Assemblyman Mark Leno, a representative of Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, and mayors of many local cities. She said that this would be an opportunity to hear what SSC is all about. Tasha added that next year there will be a Solar Fair at the Finley Center.

Tasha discussed the SSC's public/private collaboration to promote solar energy and energy efficiency throughout Sonoma County. She enumerated the goals that include: looking at policy issues, offering community outreach and educational

opportunities, standardizing the permit process throughout the County, providing solar mapping, removing financial barriers, and becoming a resource for local residents with support before and after solar installation.

Dell stated that an energy study by the Utilities Department revealed that energy used by residents to heat household water exceeded that of pumping, collecting, treating, reclaiming, and sending to the Geysers Facility. He attended a solar thermal workshop hosted by the DOE and said that the bottom line is the need to make it cheaper for residents to heat water.

How to Maintain the Effectiveness of the Environmental Committee: Dell discussed the 2008 goals of the Environmental Committee and its structure. He explained that it is one of 13 committees directed by the City Council to advance the environmental mission in Santa Rosa. He stressed the need to inspire participation in the Committee meetings. Chris Carrieri suggested that the Committee focus on what would benefit the City Council in their policy making. Steve Brady recommended ways to boost attendance including: asking Departments to host meetings and to give tours that focus on their environmental efforts and asking non participants to speak on a variety of agenda items. Members expressed interest in seeing the new clean fuel vehicles at Transit, in seeing the Garage and hearing about their EPP efforts, and visiting the new fire hall that was built green.

Announcements:

Colleen Fernald stated that there will be an event on September 13th, Want Fish? Russian River Fisheries- Past and Present, sponsored by the Russian River Watershed Council and others. She said that she will send information on it to Barbara for forwarding to the Committee.

Peter Brown discussed updating of the General Plan by the Planning Department in 2009 and amending the goals and policies to address greenhouse gas emissions. He invited members to send their ideas on updating existing policy or inserting new policy to him by the 19th of September. Peter talked about his background in urban planning, green building, and affordable housing.

Chris Carrieri announced that the Grand Opening of the Rohnert Park City Hall will be on the 11th of October. He said that it is the first LEED certified City Hall in the U.S. He suggested that members go to donotmail.org to help reduce unnecessary mail

Tour of Bennett Valley Golf Course Clubhouse: Margo Zatkovich, the Banquet Leader, led the committee members on a tour of the Clubhouse which was completed one year ago. She stated that Marc Richardson, Assistant City Manager, pushed for LEED certification. She pointed out the many environmentally preferable features that she said were specified at the design phase of the LEED silver project. Margo said that they used many post consumer products in the project, and that 75% of the construction waste was recycled. Some of the features shown included carpets, wall insulation, glass tiles, and wood beams made of recycled materials. The walls were environmentally preferred birch, they used concrete containing fly ash, the rocks were obtained within a 300 mile radius, and they used low VOC paint, paint that contains little volatile organic compounds. She added that the plumbing is automatic, and the lights automatically adjust to the amount of daylight. Margo took us outside and pointed out the geothermal fields on the golf course that provide stored heat that helps reduce the electrical demand for heating and cooling of all of the buildings and the electric golf carts stored on the lower level of the Clubhouse and discussed their water efficient cart washing system. She added that there is a 21 KW photovoltaic array on the roof of the Clubhouse that supplements the energy demand of the facility. She said that they are working on using recycled water and low water plants in the landscaping. Margo demonstrated that the community facility integrates green building principles, provides a healthy environment for its users, and shows the City's commitment to help reduce greenhouse gasses.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, October 8, 2008 at 11:00 A.M. at the Transit Building in the Training Room.