



City of Emeryville

INCORPORATED 1896

1333 Park Avenue, Emeryville, CA 94608-3517

t (510) 596-4300 | f (510) 596-4389

Sustainability Committee Minutes

Regular Meeting, Monday, March 9, 2020 at 4:00pm

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Present: Ally Medina, Chair, Scott Donahue, Member, Nancy Humphrey, staff, Nancy Humphrey, Matt Anderson, Mary Grace Houlihan, Pedro Jimenez, Kim Burrows, staff. Farhad Farahmand, TRC/East Bay Community Energy, Lina Gonzales, Waste Management of Alameda County, and Eugene Tsui, resident.

3. Public Comment –

Eugene Tsui presented an alternative design to the proposed “Onni” project that has the same square footage, many amenities, and would be greenhouse gas (GHG) neutral. He also requested that the Committee look at insulation requirements in a future meeting.

Ron Freund sent a letter raising concerns about high-rise construction and its impact on the environment, attached.

4. January 13, 2020 Action Minutes Approved.

5. Action Items

5.1. Consideration of Reach Code Next Steps

Energy

Nancy Humphrey referenced technical studies on the cost-effectiveness of energy reach codes in different scenarios; these are attached. (2019 Nonresidential New Construction Reach Code Cost Effectiveness Study and 2019 Cost-effectiveness Study: Low-Rise Residential New Construction). Nancy presented data from those studies showing the cost-effectiveness of the proposed energy reach codes. Farhad Farahmand of TRC, representing work done for East Bay Community Energy, further explained the results of the studies.

Quick takeaway: all of the energy reach codes proposed by the Committee in the previous meeting are cost effective.

Dual-pathway (also known as electric-preferred) permitting for new construction means that builders can choose to build all-electric at current code; if they want to use mixed fuels (with gas), they must meet a higher efficiency threshold and build in the electrical infrastructure that will allow them to switch to all-electric operations in the future.

Cost to build and cost to operate are both considered. It's cheaper to build all-electric in all cases; in some cases it's cheaper to operate with mixed fuel, given current energy prices. Prices for natural gas are expected to go up in the future, which will change this calculation. Further, any on-site electricity generation changes the cost to operate (other than low-rise residential, which is already required to have on-site generation per 2019 code.)

Sweeping all-electric requirements as proposed by cities like Berkeley and Windsor have been the subject of lawsuits, which have led in some cases to the implementation of a series of exemptions to the requirement. Nothing has been decided on these suits.

Building Materials

Concrete accounts for 8% of GHG emissions worldwide. Lower-carbon concrete reduces this by 25%.

Steel has a lot of embodied carbon as well. Cross-laminated timber (CLT) eliminates most of that impact. CLT is currently being considered in legislation, and in general Health & Safety code §17951(e) allows the Chief Building Official to consider alternate materials, design and methods of construction methodology (AMMR). These provisions are also included in the California Building Code (CBC) Section 104.11. In summary, if a building concept or material application is not recognized by Code, the project design may be submitted under an AMMR proposal. Approval of the AMMR is case by case based on the documentation submitted and whether the Chief Building Official and Fire Marshal determine it is justifiable and defensible.

Electric Vehicle Charging

Each EV charging space leads to the elimination of 3-6 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO_{2e}) from the transportation sector each year. The incremental cost for installing chargers at the time of construction is quite low; they are five times as expensive to install after the fact. The Planning Department here is proposing more comprehensive requirements for EV charging in new construction to the Planning Commission; this Committee will allow that process to go forward and revisit this issue if the Planning Commission doesn't adopt stronger standards.

The following recommendations to Council and items for discussion were moved and approved:

Energy:

New Construction

- Recommend all-electric for strictly residential construction. Electric preferred/dual-pathway (with additional efficiency and readiness for electrification if mixed-fuel) for non-residential.
- Additional requirements for installation of solar panels/photovoltaic systems (PV) with an exception process; installed PV is currently required for low-rise residential; PV-ready construction is currently required for projects up to ten stories.

Existing Buildings

- Require the installation of a heat pump space heater system if new heating/ventilation system with air conditioning is installed.
- Require electrification-ready panel installation when panel is replaced.

Building Materials

- Require the use of low carbon concrete in new concrete construction.
- Allow or incentivize CLT in lieu of steel and concrete construction.
- Adopt International Residential Code (IRC) Appendices R and S permitting straw bale construction and light straw-clay construction

6. Information Items

6.1. Update on Cross Laminated Timber; State Building Code and Legislative Activity

Alternative Methods and Materials process for proposed CLT construction is discussed above. As to legislative action, Townsend is working with legislators, and staff will forward information from them when it is received

6.2. Green Monday Implementation Update

Amy Halpern-Laff has had staff visited most of the restaurants in Emeryville. She requests help identifying youth (a green team or environmental group) to go back to restaurants with information and encouragement.

She provided a library packet with information on Green Monday and plant-based eating, along with posters and buttons. Green Monday can also schedule presentations at ECDC, ECCL, and Senior Center.

Pedro Jimenez and Kim Burrows said that all of our meal services have a 'meatless Mondays' program, which includes dairy but no meat. The Senior Center meals are provided through a contract with Berkeley; Berkeley would have to initiate a change to a fully plant-based option.

At the Emeryville Child Development Center and the Emeryville Center of Community Life afterschool and camp programs, there are requirements to provide milk. Pedro said he's working on an RFP for a new food provider and will work with the provider to address the provision of a plant-based option.

6.3. Legislative Update

No other updates at this time.

6.4. StopWaste Update

CM Medina reported that she had a discussion recently at StopWaste about how the wind turbines at Altamont can sense eagles and shut down to avoid injuring them.

StopWaste will be working on finding a way to allow personal containers in food service.

Stopwaste is working on a regional foodware ordinance template prioritizing reusables and true compostables.

6.5. East Bay Community Energy Update

EBCE continues to procure additional renewable energy.

6.6. Grant Opportunities

The California Energy Commission's grant program for free EV chargers (CALeVIP) is rolling out; it's not open for Alameda County yet, but staff is tracking it.

Staff have heard from Community Services staff that they are working toward electrifying the 8-to-Go vehicles. Community Development and Public Works Staff are working toward an agreement to procure electric parking enforcement vehicles for the Police Department.

6.7 Check-Ins On Other Programs and Projects

The Bay Wheels program's e-bikes are deployed in San Francisco and San Jose pursuant to agreements with those cities; the three east bay cities are working together on a regional approach to this element of the bike share system.

Staff are working on making changes to the Dockless Shared Mobility Ordinance to enable Emeryville to issue permits for service. Diana Keena in Planning is working on an ordinance to regulate one-way shared vehicles like Gig cars and Revel mopeds.

Hiring is moving forward for the Environmental Programs Analyst; the Management Analyst for the parking program will be next.

7. Future Agenda Items

- Full report on CLT legislative actions
- PV installation for construction taller than low-rise
- In two meetings, check in on Green Monday implementation again.

8. Announcements / Member Comments

CM Medina noted that Tesla chargers have been installed at the Powell Street Plaza.

Staff will be looking into updating the Climate Action Plan to enable it to be a “qualified plan” for CEQA purposes.

9. Adjournment 5:18