

OFFICIAL MINUTES  
CULVER CITY SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE  
OF THE CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
CULVER CITY SUSTAINABILITY  
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

November 29, 2022  
6:00 p.m.

**Call to Order & Roll Call**

The special meeting of the Sustainability Subcommittee of the City Council was called to order at 6:04 p.m. in the Dan Patacchia Meeting Room at City Hall.

Present: Daniel Lee, Mayor  
Yasmine-Imani McMorris, Council Member

Staff Present: Yanni Demitri, Public Works (PW) Director  
Sean Singletary, Environmental Programs  
Operations (EPO) Manager  
Daniel Pankau, PW/EPO Management Analyst  
Francisca Castillo, Recreation Services Manager  
Alicia Ide, Management Analyst

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**Pledge of Allegiance**

The Sustainability Subcommittee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**Items from Subcommittee Members/Staff**

None.

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**Public Comment for Items NOT On the Agenda**

Council Member McMorris invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

David Coles noted that the leaf blower ordinance had taken effect, but nothing had changed; he urged staff and the City Council to spread the word; noted a lack of public awareness; the importance of educating residents; reporting violations; and bringing people into compliance; he proposed that the Subcommittee agendaize a discussion of plastic recycling and disposal; discussed City literature; lack of a viable market; green-washing; truth in advertising; legislation at the state level preventing labeling items as recyclable if they are not; and changing public demand for better materials in the economy.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Coles, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding complaint-based enforcement; staff agreement to address complaints received; educating homeowners; and the difficulty of finding places where it is economically viable for the City to recycle plastic items.

Patricia Bijvoet thanked the City for bringing up indigenous gardening; discussed green boxes; community gardening; connecting to biodiversity; and providing a better connection with the landscape.

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**Receipt and File Correspondence**

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, indicated that no correspondence had been received.

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**Order of the Agenda**

No changes were made.

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**Consent Calendar**

Item C-1

**Approval of Minutes for the September 27, 2022 Sustainability Subcommittee Meeting**

MOVED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MCMORRIN, SECONDED BY MAYOR LEE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2022.

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**Agenda Items**

Item A-1

**Receive and Discuss a Presentation Regarding Indigenous Gardening**

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, introduced the item; discussed additional resources available on the Subcommittee page and introduced presenters Lisa Fimiani and Neysa Frechette.

Lisa Fimiani, Loyola Marymount University (LMU) Center for Urban Resilience, provided background on herself and a presentation on Native American indigenous plants used by the Tongva Gabrielino, Chumash, and Cahuilla Indians; she read the LMU Land Acknowledgement statement; discussed Ballona Discovery Park; the Tongva Memorial; the Swimmer Medicinal Plant Garden; herb walks; Friends of Ballona Wetlands; visitors from all over the world; signage; litigation and controversy surrounding Playa Vista; education; the garden of medicinal plants used by Native Americans; local resources; the Osprey Pole; Playa Vista Elementary School; developing trust; compromise; teaching opportunities; music; events; training sessions; collaboration with Robert Dorame; appreciation for the indigenous experiences through the years; honoring Native American ancestors; community events; Mary Leighton Thomson; restoration of the dune habitat; Girl Scout events; basket weaving; sacred Tongva plants; the UCLA American Indian Studies Center; the importance of getting to know local elders when embarking on native plantings; the Historic Sacred Site of the Gabrielino Tongva Village; she provided a list of local indigenous resources; noted that the Ballona Watershed is a sacred site; she encouraged everyone to view the land as a relative rather than a resource; discussed the Tongva philosophy and way of life;

collaboration between Friends of Ballona Wetlands and LMU; Ballona Creek Renaissance; information and signage; changing the country; creating homegrown parks organizations; the warning signs of declining bird species around the world; and beautifying the City.

Neysa Frechette, Friends of Ballona Wetlands, provided background on herself; discussed education programs about native plantings; appreciation to Robert Dorame; benefits of the relationship to the program; the Gardening Club at Ballona Discovery Park; providing inspiration for the community to grow native plants in their own yards; beautification of the park; education; Grow Native events; and sharing resources with those who want to create wildlife habitat.

Discussion ensued between staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding processes in place with Public Works; native vs. indigenous plants; invasive species; the permanent drought; advocacy for plants that require less water; community gardens; a suggestion for a presentation at Stoneview Nature Center; helping people get rid of their yards; and the relationship between the indigenous people and coyotes.

Additional discussion ensued between Lisa Fimiani, staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the upcoming presentation on the three year study of coyotes in Culver City; providing a presentation at the Stoneview Nature Center or at the opening of the Community Garden; having a gardening club; partnerships with non-profits; collaboration; edible plants; volunteers from the Master Gardener program ready to help; benefits to weaving in native plantings with edible gardens; implementing ideas on vegetative swales; stormwater treatment measures; and appreciation for the presentation that will be included on the City website.

Lisa Fimiani, LMU, invited staff and Subcommittee Members to take a tour of Discovery Park.

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Item A-2

**Receive and Discuss a Presentation Regarding Community Gardening**

Francisca Castillo, Recreation Services Manager, provided a summary of the material record; discussed the relocation of the Community Garden; collaboration with the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission Subcommittee; ensuring equitable and inclusive opportunities; the existing model; providing different opportunities for community members; identification of potential locations; community engagement and feedback; the network of individuals involved in community gardens from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and next steps.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding community activities; available space; space in Culver City Park; issues related to Bill Botts Park; grass around City Hall; allowing people to interact at the place where decisions are made; providing a regular community space; use of public space; gardening programs at schools; collaboration with the School District; potential resources; opening up City space; schools that serve as parks on the weekends; public/private partnerships; innovative thinking to provide opportunities for everyone; churches; Culver Palms United Methodist; relieving financial burden; and providing support.

Council Member McMorris invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Michelle Weiner encouraged the Subcommittee to examine all resources available; discussed Ishihara Park in Santa Monica; food produced; the Master Gardener who oversees plots in the multiple gardens in Santa Monica; the Master Gardener program in Los Angeles county; support for use of land at City Hall; proximity to the pre-school; the garden next to the Natural History Museum; using space for education; Blanco Park; support for using an equitable model; testing the ground before going too deeply into the process; reclaimed oil field land; and remediation.

Discussion ensued between staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding a potential presentation on Santa Monica Community Gardens at the next meeting; hydroponic development; and drought tolerant agricultural and gardening.

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Item A-3

**Receive and Discuss a Presentation Regarding Culver City  
Residentially Zoned Parkway Planting Guidelines**

Joe Susca, Senior Management Analyst, provided a summary of the material of record; discussed history of the guidelines; objectives; helping change traditional lawns and the parkway to species that use less water; irrigation; clarification that a permit is not needed if guidelines are adhered to; focus of the guidelines; free review of plans to redo parkways; the proposed plant palette; plant compatibility; ensuring that fallen fruit on sidewalks will be picked up to prevent tripping; irrigation; ensuring proper design of rain gardens; walkability; car to sidewalk access; maintaining tree health; water efficient plantings; creation of the 2016 Parkway Guidelines; the "how to" guide; allowing edible plants in multi-family dwellings; allowable non-plant items; maintaining visibility; allowable edibles; drought tolerant plants; prohibited plants; potential parkway designs; percentage of softscape and permeable pavement; and additional information available on the City website.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding permits; visibility; Caltrans requirements to preserve driver views; similar guidelines in other cities; edible plantings in City parkways; plants that do not require mowing; plants that do not require a lot of water but that may be used; distributing information beyond GovDelivery; distribution of flyers through the schools; planting season; letting people know what is allowable; and appreciation for the presentation.

Council Member McMorris invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Michelle Weiner discussed the efforts of Transition Culver City to create a video to help people reimagine parkways; creating rain gardens with the addition of curb cuts; absorption into groundwater with swales; expediting the process; and she questioned whether a homeowner could apply for curb cuts if the design was well-done and appropriate.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding inclusion of more detailed rain gardens in the guidelines; use of curb cuts in the design; required use of a landscape architect in the permitting process; widening the parkway; ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessibility; state and federal requirements; repurposing original materials; reiterating information; messaging around the policies; programs and rebates available through Golden State Water and the West Basin Water District; the water conservation webpage: [culvercity.org/waterconservation](http://culvercity.org/waterconservation); piggybacking on informational flyers distributed for recycling events; sustainability information available on the City website; and providing a resource that brings everything together in one place.

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#### **Public Comment for Items NOT on the Agenda**

Council Member McMorris invited public participation.

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, indicated no additional requests to speak.

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#### **Items from Subcommittee Members/Staff**

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the date of the next meeting; new Council Members; Subcommittee assignments; a proposed presentation to the Subcommittee planned by Apple; outreach to larger companies regarding sustainability programs; the sustainable business certification program; coordinating purchasing to save money; research to find jurisdictions doing well with leaf blower notification; education; the goal for compliance rather than ticketing; incentive programs for transitioning leaf blowers; not having the resources to monitor environmental policy; waiting for the industry to change; and including information on leaf blowers in annual flyers distribution.

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**Adjournment**

There being no further business, at 7:55 p.m., the Sustainability Subcommittee of the City Council adjourned.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Bocchino", written over a horizontal line.

Jeremy Bocchino  
SECRETARY of the Culver City Sustainability Subcommittee of  
the City Council Culver City, California

APPROVED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yasmine-Imani McMorris", written over a horizontal line.

Yasmine-Imani McMorris  
COUNCIL MEMBER, Sustainability Subcommittee of the City  
Council Culver City, California