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CULVER CITY GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CULVER CITY GENERAL PLAN
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

December 10, 2020
7:00 P.M.

Call To Order & Roll Call

The regular meeting of the Culver City General Plan
Advisory Committee (GPAC) was called to order at 7:06 P.M.

Members	Patricia Bijvoet, Member
Present:	Cicely Bingener, Member
	Peter Capone-Newton, Member
	Diana Hernandez, Member
	Scott Malsin, Member
	Ken Mand, Member
	Wally Marks, Member (arrived at 7:40 PM)
	Yasmine-Imani McMorris, Vice-Chair
	David Metzler, Member
	Paavo Monkkonen, Member
	Kristen Torres Pawling, Member
	Freddy Puza, Member
	Denice Renteria, Member
	Frances Rosenau, Chair
	Claudia Vizcarra, Member
Members	Diana Hernandez, Member
Absent:	Jeanne Min, Member
	Laura Stuart, Member
	Jamie Wallace, Member
	Andrew Weissman, Member
	Noah Zatz, Member
Staff	Lauren Marsiglia, Associate Planner
Present:	(Secretary)
	Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director
	Lisa Pangelinan, Senior Management Analyst
	Christopher Minniti, Planning Intern
Consultants	Eric Yurkovich, Raimi + Associates
Present:	Walker Wells, Raimi + Associates
	Sami Taylor, Raimi + Associates
	Jeff Caton, Environmental Science Associates

Public Comment for Items NOT On the Agenda

Secretary Marsiglia invited public comment. No attendees requested to speak.

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Action Items

Item A-1

1. PRESENTATION ON AND DISCUSSION OF EXISTING SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONDITIONS IN CULVER CITY

Secretary Marsiglia introduced Eric Yurkovich of Raimi + Associates for the presentation on existing sustainability and climate change conditions in Culver City.

Yurkovich thanked Secretary Marsiglia and the GPAC Members for attending the meeting, introduced himself and his associates, explained the presentation's focus on sustainability and greenhouse gas reduction, and invited Walker Wells of Raimi + Associates to lead the presentation.

Wells thanked Yurkovich; explained his background working on sustainability projects with other cities and groups including Los Angeles County and Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority; how sustainability compares to the environment, environmentalism, and ecology movement; the sustainability field's history and notable research and events that strengthened the ecology movement like the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill and Rachel Carson's book Silent Spring; the environmental laws passed or strengthened in the 1970s like the National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Water Act, Toxics Use Reduction Act, and formation of the South Coast Air Quality Management District; the 1987 Brundtland Report interconnections of planet/environment, people/equity, and prosperity/economy; climate action, resilience, and adaptation's role in sustainability; the value of considering urban sustainability and ecology since the global population has predominantly lived in urban compared to rural settings since 2005; and strategies and guidance to implement and evaluate sustainability goals like the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Cities. Wells then invited Sami Taylor of Raimi + Associates to discuss regulations affecting Culver City.

Taylor explained key legislation that affects the way local governments in California approach sustainability planning; environmental policies like CalGreen and energy and water efficiency building code requirements (Title 24); examples of local sustainability plans implementing state regulations; and differing authorities in local sustainability planning. Taylor invited Jeff Caton of Environmental Science Associates to discuss Culver City's 2019 Community and Municipal GHG Inventories.

Caton explained the results from the City's baseline GHG emissions inventories for the 2019 calendar year; emissions sources for community and municipal operations; how the information in the inventories show Culver City's progress toward the State's 2030 and 2050 GHG emission reduction goals; the sources of municipal and community GHG emissions; and the takeaways from the emissions inventories including that the City has lower electricity emissions compared to typical jurisdictions as it is enrolled in the Clean Power Alliance, transportation emissions make up a majority of municipal and community emissions, and the City can reduce high levels of emissions in the transportation and natural gas sectors through alternative forms of transportation and electrification. Caton then invited Taylor to discuss existing policies and programs in Culver City.

Taylor explained some of the City's existing sustainability plans and programs that can support the General Plan and its climate action goals and related community plans and programs. Taylor then invited Wells to discuss how the General Plan can incorporate these plans and programs.

Wells described how other cities have integrated the LEED for Cities and Communities rating system into the required General Plan elements; how city departments typically divide oversight over sustainability programs across the organization; examples of government agencies adopting energy and GHG emission codes, water efficiency programs, materials and resources programs, natural systems and ecology programs, mobility and parking programs; and quality of life solutions around environmental justice, civil and human rights, public health, social services, access to jobs, wealth building, affordable housing, safe communities, and educational opportunities. Wells concluded the presentation with discussion questions.

Secretary Marsiglia invited comment and discussion from the GPAC Members.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about whether Culver City needs a climate action plan; if Culver City has quantitative targets for long-term sustainability goals like carbon neutrality and parking management; and environmental and economic implications of housing development, including development that replaces older housing with large single- and multi-family homes.

Wells stated that Culver City does not have a climate action plan and that the GHG emissions inventories are an important first step to establish policies and long-term goals that align with statewide carbon neutrality goals. Yurkovich added that the General Plan can set long-term goals and implementation strategies around sustainability and that, if deemed necessary, one of the implementation strategies could be creating a climate action plan.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about how Culver City could reduce emissions related to transportation; transitioning to all electric cars by 2035 may not be as effective as alternative public transportation measures; building infrastructure to support alternative modes could reduce transportation emissions; achieving local sustainability goals with existing Zoning Code provisions for setbacks and landscape/hardscape coverage standards is difficult; and, reducing on-site parking requirements, especially for large scale developments, can be effective.

Wells responded that addressing mobility issues while considering sustainability and climate action planning is important to reducing vehicle miles traveled, encouraging alternative modes of transportation like walking and biking and accommodating those modes in the public rights-of-way (ROWS) is important, and convincing people to shift travel modes is more difficult than helping them buy an electric car.

A Member stated how impactful the presentation's points related to quality of life and socioeconomic considerations were; reducing vehicular emissions may be difficult as Culver City is a passthrough city and freeway networks surround it; Culver City could pursue conservation solutions like tree planting or water conservation programs

that distinguish it from the surrounding municipalities; that mandating more landscaping within setback areas could help; and it is important to create more housing near transit and employment centers and preserve single-family neighborhoods.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about how important it is to have measurable indicators with goals, a timeline, and an evaluation system; addressing the most polluting elements first, starting with Culver City's disproportionately high jobs to housing ratio, building more housing near employment centers, allocating road space to dedicated bus lanes on arterials, adding bike lanes on all streets throughout the city, and implementing TDM solutions like congestion pricing over tree planting and other less impactful strategies; and that as a passthrough city, Culver City can help reduce emissions for the region.

Wells described how the U.S. typically divides ROWs compared to a street in Sweden that equitably divides ROWs by different modes. The Member commented that we do not have to accept current roadway structures as the status quo and that we can shift our thinking.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about how other agencies exceeded the State-mandated Reach Code requirements and whether Culver City can mandate white asphalt in large open spaces to reduce temperatures. Wells explained that while the Reach Codes apply to the energy code, some municipalities have exceeded the requirements and applied the Reach Code to the whole building code; the Reach Code is not mandatory; requiring standards that exceed the minimum is allowed in California; and schools are a different jurisdiction than City but the City could partner with the school district to add white asphalt or other water management features.

A Member discussed the importance of considering sustainability in transportation and mobility solutions, how these are urgent issues in society, how the General Plan should clearly outline measures and solutions that can address the issues, and the urgent need to review more specific measures and expediting the General Plan Update (GPU) and funding the solutions.

Yurkovich thanked the Member for discussing how the focus should be on identifying specific goals and critical issues

that the General Plan should address; explained that general plans typically have broad policy focuses with long timelines; and explained that the meetings are meant to gauge GPAC Members' input on policy direction while drafting the General Plan.

A Member discussed the importance of incorporating landscaping appropriate for the local climate; increasing walkability for environmental, public health, and community benefits; collaborating across jurisdictions to fix regional sustainability issues; adaptively reusing parking structures as dependence on passenger cars lessens and designing new parking structures so they can be adaptively reused; considering the Inglewood Oil Field proximity to the 405 Freeway; and reducing waste and proper recycling.

A Member discussed the idea of urban mining, how sustainability improves the economy and should inform the General Plan measures and goals, that creating a denser city improves sustainability, that the priority to build more housing in the short-term is more important than producing housing in structures that sequester carbon and are net zero carbon buildings, and that pursuing innovative projects when working on sustainability goals is important.

Discussion ensued between Members and staff about how the City should apply sustainability and equity to all parts of the GPU; Culver City needs more housing; being more walkable and cyclable can create a sense of community; local farming should be encouraged to help people grow their own food; the City should ensure businesses help achieve sustainability goals; the City should expand its Water Conservation Plan by encouraging green infrastructure like rain gardens; the City should apply the 17 United Nations goals like the LA County Plan; and the City should evaluate the Reach Code and ensure new buildings are 100% electric.

Wells explained that the LA County Plan was meant to serve as a template for other cities' sustainability and general plans and the building official should direct and prioritize the REACH Code. The Member mentioned how having a Member on the GPAC who worked on the LA County Plan is valuable. Caton offered to share a recent brief summarizing how cities in California have implemented different aspects of the Reach Codes like natural gas.

A Member discussed how their location in the city is not walkable and the transit is unreliable, making their family car-dependent; traffic issues and circulation; the value of making neighborhoods and destinations more walkable; Ballona Creek's potential as a bike and pedestrian path; their lack of awareness of Culver City's green waste effort; how Culver City should effectively educate residents and businesses on green waste policies like recycling and composting to meet goals; how sustainability should apply to all parts of GPU; and how Culver City should be a model and sustainability leader for the region.

Secretary Marsiglia opened up the meeting for public comment and read the following comments into the record:

Suzanne DeBenedittis commented that sustainability issues may get sidelined unless sustainability is its own element and addressed in the other elements, like LA County's Plan, and discussed the Leonardo di Caprio Foundation sponsorship, the economics of congestion related to McMansion developments, a sustainability tax, porous pavement, Culver City's potential to lead collaborative regional activities and in the Southern California Association of Governments, and that World of Walas is a good example of sustainable urban development.

George Montgomery commented on how surveying residents and workers on their trip origins and destinations can help set the GPU's transportation goals, different sustainability funding opportunities, how charging companies for their employees' car trips could fund sustainability and other GPU goals, and how incoming companies can help pay for housing.

Paula Amenzola commented on a need to discuss busses for schools.

Secretary Marsiglia noted that three attendees requested to speak and would have two minutes for comment.

David Haake supported the idea of Culver City becoming a sustainability leader and commented that the City of Los Angeles took inspiration from Culver City's Inglewood Oil Field Amortization Plan and amortized their wells; the tremendous opportunity for Culver City to set a regional standard for sustainability planning measures; the importance of collocating housing and employment centers

and creating housing that is energy-efficient, affordable, and potentially net zero; that climate action planning should also consider climate resilience, climate adaptation, and address vulnerable populations and carbon neutrality; and the potential for using the oil field to distribute and store energy resources like solar to support energy resilience in the face of energy shortages and power outages.

Leah Garland commented on how Culver City can invest in an energy efficient pilot program during this economically challenging time; the cheapest megawatt is the one you do not produce; Culver City should implement a Home Energy Improvement Program like the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's that fixes gas and water leaks and installs LED lights; weatherizing homes and commercial buildings can cut waste and save on energy bills; Food & Water Watch's Building Climate Justice report on energy efficiency and jobs can help; and advocates implementing a greywater system for homes, apartments, and commercial buildings to preserve water supplies.

Ethan Senser, an organizer with Food & Water Watch, supports the report Leah mentioned and commented on infusing sustainability strategies and goals throughout the General Plan; applying sustainability to other topics like the economy and racial and environmental justice; sharing a framework the Climate Justice Alliance created to help draft the GPU; affordability and cost burden issues on communities adopting sustainable solutions; sustainability's connection to reimagining public safety and mobility; and supporting moving the plan forward and considering community goals.

Secretary Marsiglia noted there were no other speaker requests remaining, and thanked Wells, Taylor, and Caton for their presentation.

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Public Comment for Items NOT On the Agenda

Secretary Marsiglia invited public comment. No attendees requested to speak.

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Receipt of Correspondence

Secretary Marsiglia stated that none was received.

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Items from Members/Staff/Consultants

Member Mand discussed his work with Member Bingener on an initiative helping the school district find and prioritize ways for students to interact with each other outdoors safely while wearing masks and maintaining physical distance and encouraged others to attend the school board meeting on Tuesday, December 15, 2020, to support the initiative.

Member Metzler congratulated Member Puza and Vice-Chair McMorris on their respective City Council campaigns and expressed enthusiasm on seeing Vice-Chair McMorris serve on the City Council.

Secretary Marsiglia congratulated Vice-Chair McMorris on being elected to the City Council and thanked her for her work on the GPAC.

Secretary Marsiglia thanked the Members for their patience and cooperation as GPU project staff adapted the GPAC meetings from an in-person to an online format and invited Members to provide feedback on how to improve the meetings.

Member Mand requested progress reports and consultant billing hours before meetings to encourage more focused meeting discussions.

Member Metzler suggested using software available to the GPAC, like Microsoft Teams, to facilitate more dynamic feedback between meetings and requested training on how to use that resource.

Member Vizcarra noted appreciation for the existing meeting lengths and the thorough presentations but requested more engagement between meetings and a more participatory and engaging meeting structure.

Yurkovich explained that staff are trying to balance presentations and discussion times and encouraged GPAC

Members to share suggestions from videoconference meetings outside the GPAC.

Member Monkkonnen recommended using surveys to gather everyone's thoughts on specific recommendations to ensure each Member's opinions are heard.

Secretary Marsiglia encouraged Members to continue sharing feedback with staff to improve the meetings and process.

Secretary Marsiglia stated that there were two Technical Advisory Committee meetings in the past week and four scheduled for the following week and materials from the meetings would be posted online, encouraged the GPAC Members and meeting attendees to participate in the Storybank, noted that the public can still provide feedback on the Draft Vision Statement and Guiding Principles, and wished everyone a safe and wonderful holiday season.

Chair Rosenau acknowledged that these may be difficult times in the holiday season.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 9:14 P.M., the General Plan Advisory Committee adjourned to a regular meeting on January 4, 2021, at 7:00 P.M.

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Lauren Marsiglia for Ashley Hefner Hoang
SECRETARY of the Culver City General Plan Advisory Committee
Culver City, California

APPROVED _____

Frances Rosenau
CHAIR of the Culver City General Plan Advisory Committee
Culver City, California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

Jeremy Green
CITY CLERK

Date