

City of Capitola

Commission on the Environment Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 19, 2023– 6:00 PM

Capitola City Hall, Community Room
420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010



Chair: Michelle Beritzhoff-Law
Vice-Chair: Jason Shepardson
Council Member: Mayor Margaux Keiser
Commissioners: Anthony Lacenere, Peter Wilk

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Michelle Beritzhoff-Law, Anthony Lacenere, Jason Shepardson, Peter Wilk
Council member Keiser was absent from the meeting.
City Staff Present: Erika Senyk, Jessica Kahn

Chair Beritzhoff-Law called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

2. Oral and Written Communications - None

3. Consider the minutes from the March 15, 2023, Commission on the Environment Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes: Commissioner Wilk
Seconded: Chair Beritzhoff-Law.
Motion passed 4-0-1 (Mayor Keiser Absent)

4. General Business

- A. The Commission discussed outreach opportunities to eligible parcels for participation in the Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) Riparian Vegetation Planting Reimbursement Program. Vice-Chair Shepardson is to prepare a leaflet with ESHA program information to be approved and printed by City Staff. Commissioners will distribute the leaflets to property owners of eligible parcels using a list of addresses prepared by City Staff.
- B. The Commission requested to move the additional uses of Green Building Funds discussion to the May Commission meeting.
- C. City Staff gave an update to the Commission on current contracts supporting regularly scheduled Capitola beach cleanups, including a contract beginning June 15, 2023 with Hope Services for debris abatement along Capitola Beach and Esplanade. City Staff also informed the Commission of an upcoming meeting with Save Our Shores to discuss a potential contract for regular beach cleanups that would be available for public participation. The Commission requested that these beach cleanup efforts be advertised through the City's social media outlets to promote public awareness and education.

- D.** The Commission discussed opportunities for incentivizing residents to nominate and maintain heritage trees. The Commission gave the following considerations to the City's and Commission's involvement in heritage tree designation, maintenance, and protection:
1. The definition of heritage tree is not clearly defined in the City's municipal code (Section 12.12.100) and could potentially be updated or re-written by the City's Planning Department. Commissioner Wilk will contact the City's Planning Department.
 2. It is unclear if projects that include labor services could be funded using the Green Building Funds, as currently written in the City's municipal code (Section 15.18.080).
 3. A portion of the Green Building Funds could potentially be used to support a heritage tree program, if labor is included as one of the approved uses for projects financially supported by Green Building Funds.

The Commission requested that City Staff determine how many heritage trees are currently designated within the City of Capitola, the current amount of funds available in the community tree and forest management account, if there are additional state funding opportunities to support heritage trees, and to clarify the legal implications and limitations of including "labor" as an approved use for projects supported by Green Building Funds.

5. Items for Future Agenda

The Commission requested that the following items be agendaized for a future meeting:

- Use of Green Building Funds
- Scheduling regular beach cleanups prior to summer months
- Review of proposal for removing and controlling invasive plant species in Rispin Riparian Areas prepared by George McMEnamin (City Staff to email out copies of proposal prior to May Commission meeting for Commissioners to review)

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm to the next Regular Meeting of the Commission on the Environment on May 17, 2023.