

City of Capitola

Commission on the Environment Meeting Minutes



Wednesday, October 18, 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
Youth Member: Tucker Graessle

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Michelle Beritzhoff-Law, Anthony Lacenere, Peter Wilk
Mayor Keiser, Jason Shepardson, and Tucker Graessle were absent from the meeting.
City Staff Present: Erika Senyk

Chair Beritzhoff-Law called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

No additions or deletions to the agenda.

3. Oral and Written Communications

- Goran Klepic, Santa Cruz County resident, spoke about graffiti in the men's bathroom and concerns about alcohol consumption at Jade Street Park.
- Commissioner Wilk received communications from Council Member Pederson about topics including improving beach cleanliness by potentially putting trash cans on Capitola Beach, plastic straws, white roof requirements or incentives, increasing the Commission's presence on social media, and new funding sources for the Commission to support future projects.

4. Consider the minutes from the August 16, 2023, Commission on the Environment Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes: Commissioner Wilk
Seconded: Chair Beritzhoff-Law
Motion passed 3-0-2 (Mayor Keiser and Vice Chair Shepardson absent)

5. General Business

A. Climate Action Plan goals for 1) Water and Wastewater, 2) Solid Waste, 3) Parks, Open Space, and Agriculture, and 4) Action and Implementation

Recommended Action: Discuss potential actions and develop recommendations that support Climate Action Plan goals for the 1) Water and Wastewater 2) Solid Waste, 3) Parks, Open Space, and Agriculture, and 4) Action and Implementation sectors and associated measures.

Environmental Projects Manager, Erika Senyk, presented the staff report.

The Commission discussed each sector and its associated measures:

Water and Wastewater: Commission recommends prioritizing this sector for the new Climate Action Plan and incorporating topics such as saltwater intrusion, wastewater infrastructure, and impacts on water resources. The Commission discussed additional action items such as requiring drought-tolerant plants to be included in landscaping plans of development projects and updating City building codes to include requirements beyond the State's Green Building Codes and in collaboration with the City's two water providers.

Solid Waste: The Commission discussed additional action items for this sector including having a designated food waste or mulching center in the City, conducting outreach to Multi Family Dwellings for organics recycling opportunities, and educational outreach to residents regarding State requirements for organics recycling and the resulting environmental benefits.

Parks, Open Space, and Agriculture: The Commission discussed potential new Climate Action Plan action items such as leveraging Save The Waves to maintain the surf break off of Capitola Beach and encouraging planting of native trees in parks instead of palm trees. The Commission recommends including an action item requiring that native plants be used for planting projects by the City's Public Works Department, at a minimum. Commission also recommends that action items in the new CAP encourage designated funding to improve and maintain parks and waterways, strictly discourage the loss of current open spaces and increase awareness of opportunities to create open space, and improve understanding of how public parks and open spaces directly relate to measurable carbon emission reductions. The Commission lastly recommends identifying funding sources to maintain community gardens.

Action and Implementation: The Commission discussed management improvements to ensure that CAP action items are carried out and expressed interest in tracking the new CAP goals through quarterly Commission review of action items and progress evaluations. The Commission suggested identifying a list of logical CAP targets and goals (e.g., Capitola as a net-zero city) accompanied by a list of action items that help those goals to be achieved.

6. Items for Future Agenda

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

- **November 15, 2023 Regular Meeting:** Review Climate Action Plan potential projects and recommendations to bring to City Council. Discuss promoting an individual environmental certification (e.g., Green Business Network) as part of the new Climate Action Plan.
- **December 20, 2023 Regular Meeting:** Approve projects and recommendations to bring to City Council at the Mid-Year Budget Report meeting in January 2024.
- **Green Building Funds:** Discuss Green Building funds and potential recommended uses of the funds in support of the City's Climate Action Plan goals.
- **White Roof Rebate Program**
- **Plastic Pollution and Plastic Straws**
- **Commission on the Environment's Social Media Presence**
- **Soquel Creek and Noble Gulch Maintenance Plan and Funding Opportunities**
- **Maintenance along Cliff Drive and Potential Planting Project**

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm to the next Regular Meeting of the Commission on the Environment on November 15, 2023.