

MINUTES
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
April 26, 2016

Roll Call – The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. Present were Commissioners Nancy Wilms, Stephen Leider, Chair William Kelly, Noah Puni, and Vice-Chair Scott Kuhn. Al Benzoni arrived at 7:20. Absent were Kay Findley and Student Commissioner Emily Ng. Present were Council Liaison Robert Joe and Staff Liaison Amber Duran.

Minutes – The minutes from the March 22, 2016, meeting were approved after Commissioner Wilms proposed amendments and provided her edits to Staff Liaison, Amber Duran (Wilms, Kuhn 5-0).

Public Comments and Suggestions – N/A

BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1. Tree Replacement Requirement Appeal** – Resident, Mary Anne Lower, at 2012 Fremont applied for removal of a 43” silver leaf maple tree. The City arborist, Gonzo Maravilla, has made a recommendation for the dead tree to be removed. Approval for removing the tree comes with the requirement of replacing it with 5 new 24” box trees by 7/19/16 according to the tree ordinance. The City’s Tree Ordinance states that the replacement trees required can be planted on the owner’s property, a neighbor’s property, or on City property for \$325 a tree. Ms. Lower stated her fixed income does not allow her to replace the trees since the removal will cost her so much. City staff offered to reduce the number of replacement trees required to one but Ms. Lower rejected the offer. Ms. Lower is appealing to the NREC to approve the removal without having to meet the tree replacement requirement. There are currently no criteria for hardship exemptions in the City’s Tree Ordinance. Chair Kelly expressed concern that there is no provision for exemptions for the tree replacement requirement. Commissioner Wilms stated that the City’s Public Works Director, Paul Toor, must think that the NREC has the authority to grant the exemption since he requested its review. Motion to approve the application with the requirement to replace the dying tree with one tree rather than five and to explore a revision to the tree ordinance to include a hardship exemption for the tree replacement requirement in future cases failed (Kuhn, Benzoni 3-3). Chair Kelly asked that the approval application be put on hold until the next meeting while the City Attorney is consulted.
- 2. Styrofoam Ban Presentation** – Josephine Miller, Sustainability Analyst for the City of Santa Monica presented to the NREC on how to implement a Polystyrene ban based on Santa Monica’s experiences. Polystyrene (one type of which is Styrofoam) is labeled as Number 6 on plastic products and is not recyclable or biodegradable. Santa Monica put an exemption in their polystyrene ban for hardship but received no applications. Santa Monica has had success with compliance and the transition has been smooth thanks to City outreach and

community involvement. Miller discussed several alternative products that have been well received. Miller advised that South Pasadena include a hardship exemption in their ban, provide adequate City staff for 2 years to create support for the businesses, and adopt a full polystyrene ban (number 6) as opposed to only Styrofoam. Duran will send Miller's presentation to the NREC.

3. **Evaluation of NREC's Mission Statement and 2016 Goals** – Kelly asked for Commissioners to volunteer as leads on some of the goals of the NREC. Commissioner Puni's first priority is the Polystyrene ban. Puni would also like the NREC to become more involved in the community through education, outreach, and social media presence. Commissioner Benzoni's priorities are installation of permeable surfaces in the City where appropriate, passage of the graywater ordinance that's been presented to the Planning Commission, revision of the City's Tree Code for clarity, and provision of applications for tree removal on the City's website. Commissioner Benzoni would also like to adopt an ordinance to mandate that "cool" roofs with some reflectivity be installed during reroofing and remodels to reduce energy consumption. Commissioner Wilms stated her priorities are increasing the use of green infrastructure, including permeable pavement, bio swales, and rain gardens, and oversight of water quality in response to the recent lead contamination in Flint, Michigan. Kelly would also like to facilitate another community garden and put it on a future agenda. Additional goals of Chair Kelly are the adoption of a Solar Ordinance for new construction in the City, the institution of green procurement policies for City building, and the development of a more cohesive sustainability program in the City. Commissioner Leider concurred that his goal is for the City to develop a sustainability program in partnership with neighboring Cities. Kuhn's term is ending in December and does not plan to head a goal that is long term. Kelly would like to revise and present the goals next month, and develop deadlines and priorities. Benzoni would like the mission statement revised and be first on the next agenda.
4. **Golf Course Subcommittee Update** – Commissioner Kuhn reported that the focus of the last meeting was on the type of management agreement. A conceptual drawing has been circulated with different concepts. Water conservation opportunities weren't discussed at the last meeting.

INFORMATION ONLY

5. **Water Conservation Programs and Drought Actions** – City had a total water reduction of 27% for March 2016 compared to March 2013. The State Water Resources Board has extended restrictions and set the City of South Pasadena's conservation requirement to 26% beginning March 1. Duran reported that soon the City will be offering water audits to residents free of charge which will include outside irrigation.

6. **Graywater Ordinance Update** – The Building Code Amendment of the greywater ordinance can be incorporated during the triennial building code update at the end of this calendar year. Duran will send the Commission the correspondence of Building and Planning.
7. **Arbor Access** – Duran reported that West Coast Arborists said that they cannot code a read-only view for the NREC of arbor access. A solution may be for the NREC to provide Duran with a list of information they would like to see in a written report that could be executed and delivered by staff to the NREC. NREC would like more information on why the access cannot be granted.
8. **Upcoming Events** – The compost and Mulch Giveaway will be on June 4, 2016.

Chair Communications- N/A

Commissioner Communications- Commissioner Benzoni would like Duran to circulate a Power Point presentation on graywater. Commissioner Wilms expressed concern for why there has been so much resistance from the City to the Graywater Ordinance. Chair Kelly would like the graywater ordinance be put on the next meeting's agenda. Commissioner Wilms requested that the Polystyrene ban be on the next month's agenda. Puni will provide a draft Polystyrene Ban ordinance to the Commission. Commissioner Kuhn inquired about a tree that fell on the corner of Monterey Rd. and Meridian Ave.

Council Liaison Communications- Last council meeting presented the code of conduct and ethics that the NREC has received. Garfield and Orange Grove Park will install wood chips instead of rubberized plastic at the playgrounds. Initiation has begun to annex vector control through the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District.

Staff Liaison Communications- Amgen tour of California will start in South Pasadena on May 16th, 2016. South Pasadena along with 6 other cities along the Metro gold line will be hosting "6.26 Golden Streets" a free event providing more than 17 miles of car free roads on June 26, 2016.

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m. (Benzoni, Puni 6-0).

NEXT MEETING – The next regular meeting of the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission will be held on Tuesday, May 24, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.


William Kelly, Chair