

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE  
CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 17, 2013

ATTENDEES: Joe Bunker, Nona Dennis, Tom Flynn, Michelle Passero, Roger Roberts, Tim Rosenfeld, Bob Spofford, , and Susan Stompe

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Susan informed the Committee that Mark Ginalski has resigned from the County's Planning Commission effective immediately. His is an open - at large seat. Anyone interested in filling his seat should apply.

ACTION ITEMS: None scheduled .

INFORMATION ITEMS:

- 1) Update of CARB's Cap & Trade System: Michelle Passero informed the CAC that while the recent auction resulted in a price of \$10/ ton of CO2 the market price appears to be rising moderately. The next auction will be in February. More companies are expected to participate. Participants who hold permits for CO2 emissions will have to true -up their emissions record in November and show that they are meeting targets. CARB does not expect the auctions to be a big revenue generator, but whatever revenue is generated must be used to satisfy AB 32 mandate on controlling Greenhouse Gas emissions; i.e. the revenue is to be invested in greenhouse gas reduction projects, assist disadvantaged communities, improve transportation efficiency , or provide for natural resource protection. There will be 3 workshops in February to " air" the 3 year Investment Program. On a parallel track is the California State Budget with needs for specific projects such as Energy Efficiency Investment Programs, and for Transportation uses including High Speed Rail. The May revised Californis Budget Plan will resolve the uses for the Cap and Trade auction revenues.

Michelle urges MCL to write a comment letter on the Investment Plan and will prepare a preliminary draft for review. She believes that it would be useful to focus on Natural Resource Protection needs in Marin related to Forest and Open Space protection, avoided land development conversion sites, the preservation of Aglands and Range lands that have a great potential for Carbon Sequestration ( including funding for the ongoing research project here in Marin for that purpose ). The letter should be addressed to Marin 's Legislators , The Governor's Office, CARB and Supervisor Steve Kinsey.

- 2) Update of SB 375: Michelle also informed the CAC that there is a \$10 million Pilot Conservation Grant Program now underway for the Bay Area through MTC of which 4 million is reserved for the 4 North Bay Counties. Solano and Napa counties wish to use the monies for transportation projects ( farm to

market roadway maintenance) . The grant monies can also be used for Land Restoration and Stewardship projects ( including Tree Planting programs and parking facilities for Open Space access) but not for Land acquisition. The Guidelines are not yet finalized at MTC , but MCL should be aware that this Grant Program will be coming up before TAM and the Coastal Conservancy for action.

- 3) MEA and MCE Update: Bob Spofford indicated that there was not much to relate. The rollout of MEA's program in Richmond is in progress with a very good response., especially for commercial building roof top solar systems. Now that Richmond is part of the system a new Logo is being designed to reflect the regional character of the Energy Authority. With respect to the Energy Efficiency Program, there is a new on-line analysis system for residential properties that has been designed by Planet Eco-Systems. Unfortunately, it is no user friendly and needs technical support to deliver it to residential customers. In addition, this tool does not have a good connection with energy efficiency measure installation contractors who tend to over size contracts as has been the case with the Energy Upgrade California program.

#### DISCUSSION ITEM:

- 1) An active discussion of drafting MCL policies for Land – Based Solar Systems ensued after review of the updated Community Marin listing of relevant policies and the comments of the Land Use Committee on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

Two policies were accepted as proposed by Bob Spofford.

- A. MCL will fully support any solar project of any size built on an existing rooftop or on a parking shade structure built over an existing parking lot.
- B. MCL will oppose any ground mounted solar projects being built in officially designated sensitive habitats.

Bob also presented a brief analysis of 1 Megawatt (MW) projects in Marin . MEA has determined that it can proceed with 10 such projects using feed-in tariffs at higher rates, (e.g. a long term fixed wholesale price of up to 14 cents per kilowatt hour (kwh) produced) without destroying its rate structure to consumers.. His analysis indicated that the economics of up to 1MW size projects cannot afford the cost of EIR analysis. Consequently, he proposed that any project not in an officially designated sensitive habitat area should receive expedited treatment except where "severe" visual impacts occur. The CAC was not prepared to accept this policy as proposed, which led to further discussion of policies that might be put into place that address thresholds of environmental significance . Policies that exist in New Jersey were mentioned by Tim Rosenfeld that may be applicable to

Marin. This information will be circulated amongst the CAC members for review.

The discussion led to a review of the pending application for the Green Point Nursery Solar Project at 755 Olive Road in Novato.

After considerable review of the revised application that has reduced the size of this project, and also considering that there will be a 100 foot buffer from wetlands on the southeast side of the site, and the fact that Olive Road provides an existing separation from wetlands on that side of the property, it was moved by Joe Bunker, and seconded by Tim Rosenfeld that MCL support this Greenhouse Gas reducing land based solar project which helps to addresses global climate change with the following condition: That it be allowed on a 30 year non-renewable Conditional Use Permit basis. This term allows for recovery of project costs while recognizing that in view of sea level rise the property could well become wetland at that time.

This motion was passed . 5 Yes votes and 2 abstentions. Michelle Passero did not vote inasmuch as she had to leave the CAC meeting early.

The CAC will continue its discussion on Land Based Solar Installation Policies at its next meeting. In this connection, the CAC intends to invite two experts to its next meeting with experience on determining thresholds of environmental significance for installation of solar systems:

- Maggie Winslow, known to Chris Yalonis, and former Dean of the Presidio Graduate School and an Ecological Economist., and
- Dick Cameron, known to Michelle Passero, from the Nature Conservancy who has dealt with this issue at various sites and lives in San Rafael.

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The CAC Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

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