

## **MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE**

### **Climate Action Working Group: March 15, 2019**

#### **Muir Woods Conference Room, 175 N. Redwood Blvd., San Rafael**

Present: Chairman Doug Wilson; David Kuhnhardt, Terri Thomas, Bill Carney, Ken Strong, Tamra Peters, Helene Marsh, Carleen Cullen, Belle Cole, Ed Mainland, Pat Nelson, Robert Gould, Bob Miller, Judy Teichman, Dale Miller, Kiki La Porta, Dan Segedin, Jody Timms, James Bill, Bettina Hughes, Mitch Rossi, Judy Teichman, Greg Thomson.

Guest Speakers: Cory Bytoff, City of San Rafael Sustainability Coordinator; Christine O'Rourke, Sustainability Coordinator, Marin Climate and Energy Partnership.

Chairman Doug Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:11.

#### **Brief Introductions**

**Agenda and minutes:** The agenda was adopted by consensus. The minutes were approved by consensus.

#### **9:17 Discussion 1: San Rafael's New Climate Change Action Plan (Cory and Christine)**

Chairman Doug Wilson introduced the topic and speakers: Cory Bytoff and Christine O'Rourke. Cory has worked on the Climate Change Action Plan for San Rafael in his role of Sustainability Coordinator. Christine has served as a consultant who conducts GHG inventories and writes Climate Change Action Plans (CCAPs) for several jurisdictions.

Cory: Cory gave a Powerpoint presentation and described the background of the San Rafael CCAP, noting that he worked for two years on the CCAP. The last plan was written ten years ago. Forty of the forty-eight measures in the 2009 have been completed or are ongoing. Climate change action has been integrated in the City's General Plan. The State adopted a target of reducing GHG emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The City convened a community working group to update the current CCAP toward these targets. The CCAP is built around a structure of local action and reflects a commitment to economic and social equity, and protection of the environment. Cory noted that 80% of the land in the City is ripe for carbon sequestration.

Transportation now accounts for a larger share of GHG emissions, given progress made in reducing emissions in the power sector. Government emissions account for only one percent of GHG emissions. The City's goals include working toward low-carbon transportation. The City projects that 84% of transportation-related GHG reductions by 2030 would come from the use of EVs. The City plans to develop an Electric Vehicle Plan that will result in 25% of registered passenger vehicles in San Rafael being EVs by 2030. The City is working with community groups to promote the construction of more EV charging infrastructure.

The City is developing stretch goals for energy-efficiency upgrades to existing building stock. Energy efficiency in buildings is a cost-effective method of achieving GHG reductions. Many energy-efficiency improvements can be achieved inexpensively, without remodeling, such as using energy-efficient lightbulbs and appliances. Incentives for including energy-efficiency upgrades in smaller remodels will include permit streamlining.

Contemplated improvements in the area of renewable energy emphasize increased use of rooftop solar and encouraging opt-ups to 100% renewable options for their electricity purchasing. Rooftop solar using the Deep Green option would reduce energy consumption by 62%. Waste reduction is another promising area for GHG reduction. The City is also tracking GHG emissions in the water and wastewater sector.

The City's performance so far has exceeded the State target for San Rafael, which is to reduce emissions to 15% below the baseline (2005) emissions by 2020. Figures indicate that emissions are on track to meet the City's more ambitious local reduction target of 25% below the baseline by 2020. The eventual goal is to reduce emissions to 100,000 metric tons by 2050, down from more than 475,000 tons in the baseline year. The majority of actions taken toward this goal will be local, going forward. Community engagement is key—engagement to change behavior. There are online engagement tools on the City's website, such as a carbon calculator and links to resources.

We need to use social science to understand behavior change. This entails marketing: understanding and segmenting the audience, and getting products into stores, as well as community-based social marketing, targeting specific behaviors. The hardest thing is to get people out of their vehicles. We should identify obstacles to behavior-change asks, and reference the practices of Resilient Neighborhoods. Formulate the right marketing message. For example, asking parents who are dropping their kids off at school to turn off their engines for the sake of the kids' health.

The timeline going forward is to adopt the new CCAP by April 15, and integrate it in the General Plan. A two-year early priority is to expand the EV charging network. The City will also adopt policies and programs to encourage zero-emission vehicles and incentivize building energy-efficiency. Challenges include the fact that expenses are going up while revenues are going down, and time pressure is mounting.

Christine: All of the cities have CCAPS. Some are older than others. The older ones, implemented around 2010, have a goal timeline that went to 2020. We need to incorporate 2030 goals. We have developed a template via the San Rafael plan, and have funding for some other cities. San Anselmo might adopt a new plan by April/May.

## **Questions and Comments**

Helene: Are your emission figures per-person or by household? A. (Christine): By household.

Ed: Do you have the numbers for EVs? A. (Christine): DMV is providing data, tracking the numbers countywide and citywide. This information is useful for the purpose of providing chargers.

Ed: What is the target number? A. (Christine): Approximately 30% of registered passenger vehicles by 2030. We looked at the statewide and arrived at a number that is aggressive but doable.

Carleen: Drive Clean Marin has a goal of 36%. Problem: We get DMV data a year after the fact. We need quarterly, timely reports.

Tamra: Resilient Neighborhoods is tackling the issue by adding a consumption piece to the program. We need to take responsibility for the earth and the materials that we return to the earth. Repair rather than replace. Change food choices.

Dale: The foundation is behavioral change. You can still buy gas vehicles. Look to the example of lead paint and low-flow toilets, where standards changed the market. A. (Christine): An ordinance would not pass now. We need community ambassadors; we don't have the votes.

Carleen: Legislation has to happen at the state level. We reached out to Newsom's office. Build a coalition demanding a ban on gas vehicles, even if it is just aspirational.

Doug: This is the core of what we are about. Coalitions push ideas.

Robert G.: A focus on specific things, such as sequestration, is good. A clarification re undeveloped land: This is not necessarily open space land. We should focus on smart design thinking. What is the emerging perspective regarding government as the primary doer? A. (Christine): The emphasis is on collaboration.

Tamra and Carleen: How do we support the effort and work together? A. (Christine): Listen. Ask questions. There are opportunities for groundswell models.

Robert: Are the bosses okay with collaboration and less control? A. (Christine): Yes, generally. Local government takes the lead with the support of the community. Examples include reach building codes, mandatory recycling. Adopt the standards when the community is ready.

Tamra: Resilient Neighborhoods mobilizes people.

Bill: We need a systemic solution by local government, not an all-voluntary model. Re EVs, it requires persuasion and requirements to install wiring for chargers. In the energy area, require heat pumps.

Judy: Many people commute to Marin. There is a benefit in creating more worker housing. A. (Christine): That is a big piece for a general plan update. Q. Is there any calculation of benefits? A. No, but there is a sustainable communities strategy with priority development areas. We don't

want to double count. This is part of the general plan housing element, which encourages transit oriented development and infill.

David: Community Energy Services Corporation offers a free assessment service for businesses. It's a one-stop shop, a nonprofit operating in the East Bay and Marin.

Bob M.: We need to consider what can and can't be done on a local level. Most developments are driven by the market and regulation. The role of local government is not to lead but support. A city is not in a position to set performance standards or pricing mechanisms. Cities don't have carbon taxes and have limited funds. Their biggest potential contribution is in the areas of innovation and waste. Re innovation, MCE is a big participant. Collaboration is essential. Policy is replicable, not necessarily funding. RE waste, cities can exert influence via their contracts, managing waste streams, and educating their citizens about GHG impacts.

Cory: We are mobilizing excitement: "What is the next thing?" Sequestration is one of those areas. Also, the use of low-carbon concrete in the county.

Tamra: Carbon gardening action.

Kiki: I want to underscore that we all strive to create behavior change—a chipping-away process. Sustainable San Rafael has been promoting inclusion of California Green Building Standards Code in local ordinances. Benchmarking is possible. It's a way to start. There is an institutional overlay. Performance standards are next. And appliance replacement—where the city and county work with retailers and employ a tax or penalty fee.

Belle: Demographics are a factor. A large portion of our population is 65+. This limits change. 1. New EVs get attention. How do we approach this? 2. Eighty-four percent of our land is subject to wildfires. Are you coordinating with emergency services, fire departments? A. (Christine): Yes. We're also addressing utility infrastructure. Pilot projects are expensive. We recognize the silver tsunami. By 2030, this will be a crucial market segment.

Tamra: Thirty percent will be in that bracket. They are motivated and have time.

Robert G.: Science says our carbon budget/timeline for change is 11 years, but our targets are geared to 2050. This is very concerning. We need to be more aggressive. A. (Christine): The CCAP is developed via community activism. We need to mobilize champions. SB 32 is an appropriate marker. The struggle to meet actionable, achievable, evidence-based standards will be technology driven.

## **10:08 Discussion 2: Update ACE Initiative (Greg)**

Greg: Update on the Advanced Community Energy (ACE) initiative: Sausalito is developing a decarbonization plan. They are creating a task force to define the energy system needed to decarbonize. They need state legislation to enable cost-effective acceleration of the availability of clean energy at the local level. The ACE bill is needed to establish standards and methods defined by the California Energy Commission and to require the CPUC to regulate in accordance with CEC standards. There have been productive meetings regarding integration, and the bill will probably pass next year. The key outcome is to define what we want for an energy system. Spot

bills are being defined, including Wiener’s solar bill of rights. Communities need and want resilience and reliability. These should be the criteria.

Doug: We want to follow this. Your team does deep thinking regarding systemic change. We want to back you up. Other forces favor inertia.

Greg: We have to stand up for “Energy 2.0.” We met recently with Supervisor Sears. Our next meeting is with the head of MCE and its attorney. We need a sponsor for the bill. A groundswell would be useful.

### **10:17 Discussion 3: CCA and CPUC issues (Ken)**

Ken: The PG&E bankruptcy has been proceeding along four tracks: the legislature and governor’s office, bankruptcy court, the CPUC, and federal district court. A very experienced judge is presiding over the proceedings in bankruptcy court. This bankruptcy is very different from PG&E’s first bankruptcy, in which PG&E was squeezed by spiraling costs of purchasing energy in the spot market following energy deregulation. This time, a central issue from our point of view is long-term debtor financing—PG&E has not put aside collateral for programs that are important to us. For Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), creditors’ committees have been formed. The end result is a reorganization plan. PG&E must propose a viable slate of directors who are required to follow all laws. PG&E has an exclusive right to propose for 18 months. After that, the CPUC or creditors may propose a feasible plan. A legislative solution is needed for wildfire costs. No company can feasibly be on the hook for all wildfire costs.

PG&E wants the ability to accept/reject/renege its contracts. Renewable energy contracts would be on the same footing as other creditors. FERC has attempted to assert jurisdiction over PPAs, but the Federal District Court for the Northern District of California has ruled that the bankruptcy court will settle the issues concerning PPAs. The CPUC has veto power. This issue is key to energy reliability. It will be a 1-2 year process to determine what the reorganization plan will look like. Issues that the CPUC will consider include PG&E board changes, corporate governance, reorganization, and sale of gas-generating capacity. The Sierra Club has asserted that the bankruptcy creates bad incentives and impacts progress in reducing the use of natural gas. Others have suggested that PG&E should get out of the business of retail energy generation, which would be good for CCAs, or that PG&E should be broken up geographically. A CPUC ruling is expected in the next month or so.

### **Questions and Comments**

Kiki: The tendency is to privatize benefit and socialize cost and risk. Has there been discussion of state ownership? A. There has been talk about this—smaller IOUs, more municipal power companies, poles-and-wires companies. This is mentioned in the CPUC filing.

Ed: Cal CCA had endorsed wires-only; others propose state ownership of the wires. The Governor has “had it” with Picker. The Legislature is unhappy with the lack of urgency regarding the wildfires. A. The Legislature is unhappy with the CPUC’s self-policing policy. There are only 15 people statewide to oversee quality control.

Bob M.: There is concern regarding PG&E's use of bankruptcy proceedings to conduct financial maneuvering in a way that does not comport with 21<sup>st</sup> Century needs. Mark Ferron has an instructive opinion piece in the Chronicle: Don't Let PG&E's Perfectly Good Bankruptcy Go to Waste. See <https://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/openforum/article/Don-t-let-PG-E-s-perfectly-good-bankruptcy-go-13680588.php> What do we want? We need to decide, create alliances, and advocate.

Dan: Restructuring is the bigger issue. If it leads to restructuring of PPAs, would the PCIA be reduced? A. If high-cost PPAs are rejected, this should lead to a reduction in the PCIA. But it has an impact on the ability to propose new renewable-energy projects. This is bad for the CCAs.

David: To what extent does public control exist in the utility industry? A. Co-ops prevail in rural areas. Municipal utilities are some of the best and some of the worst in the industry.

#### **10:38 Discussion 4: Drive Clean Marin (Carleen)**

Carleen: We are looking at consumer demand, which drives the economy. Consumer demand will also drive the switch away from oil, the biggest contributor to environmental harm. Reduce demand for oil, and Wall Street will respond accordingly. Oil companies are using our money to conduct their lobbying to retard constructive policy! Under the divestment movement, oil will become a stranded asset.

A collaboration is forming among organizations. Thirty-eight organizations met with the Buck Institute and will do a launch in May. MCE will vote regarding possible funding. The Air District also has possible funding. Drive Clean Marin has funding for various communities, primarily in Marin. This effort is too big for one nonprofit; Cool the Earth will be the backbone. Drawdown Marin is a question mark. We hope to become a Drawdown Marin project. Our goal is an annual reduction of 330,000 metric tons of GHG. When people add an EV to their household, they are also adding KHWs, especially if they also have Deep Green electricity. Our first audience will be drivers with plug-in access.

Things are changing rapidly, with new manufacturers. Big oil is fighting it with greenwashing. The problem is that consumers are not coming along. We have a Tesla market; we need a broad EV market. We are forming community listening groups, at which we "press the flesh," conduct pre- and post-meeting surveys, and offer technological background and support. Communication and sales tools are essential, as is policy collaboration.

#### **Questions and Comments**

David: Climate Reality has 500 members in the Bay Area Chapter. In Marin, there is a focus on EV policy.

Carleen: Get a pilot program and scale in counties.

Ed: In AB 40, Ting asks the California Air Resources Board for a strategy to ban gas cars by 2040. You might incorporate that in Drive Clean Marin. A. We are working with Indivisible Marin to get data—to see who comes from where, to aggregate and segment the database.

## Reports and Announcements

**Drawdown Marin (Robert):** There have been meetings of the Executive Steering and Renewable Energy committees. The renewable energy collaboration is the first in time and the most advanced. They are considering 1) front-of-the-meter local generation, storage; 2) behind-the-meter generation/storage, which accounts for another 25-30%--100% if they go solar or Deep Green. Solar and storage, a resilience theme; 3) load-shifting out of the peak period in the evening when energy is dirtier. Regarding local generation, the goal is to generate 30-40% within county boundaries.

The Transportation group will meet on March 21. The Buildings and Infrastructure group will meet on April 3. The Carbon Sequestration group will meet on April 25 or 26. The Executive Steering group will meet on April 10. They will go beyond the GHG metric to look at economic indicators, a holistic, comprehensive approach. The Community Partnership Council will meet on March 26. Check the calendar on the webpage.

Doug: The public can attend.

**Citizens Climate Lobby (David):** MCE will meet regarding EV outreach. Their efforts should double. TAM will put \$10,000 toward the effort. This should be ten times greater.

**Environmental Forum of Marin (Helene):** In the interest of time, I will just refer you to the flyer for the March 27 event, Climate Imperative: Reduce, Reuse, and Sequester Greenhouse Gases [<https://marinefm.org/> (event sold out)].

**Sustainable San Rafael (Bill):** There is a flyer for the carbon pricing roundtable on the table. The Wildlands and Fire Council will consider the Fire Plan and “37 things to do re wildfire” on Monday at 7:00. There are 500 units of housing and a quarter-million square feet of commercial space in the pipeline for San Rafael.

Cory: We are coming into General Plan proceedings.

**Golden Gate EV Assoc. (Dale):** Drive Electric is conducting an Earth Day event, partnering with Novato Green Living, at Novato City Hall.

**OFA Marin (Belle):** We have the “Ready Now” flyer. OFA will present: “Firestorm: Wildfire and Climate Change” on May 8 at the San Rafael Community Center. We will partner with the Marin Fire Department and climate groups. The focus is on bringing together people with varying expertise. We will inventory what is going on at the county, city, and district level.

David: There are 19 co-sponsors, including Adam Schiff.

Ed: A Sierra Club position paper points our problems.

**Resilient Neighborhoods (Tamra):** Iron Springs Public House will hold a Give Back Monday for Resilient Neighborhoods on Monday from 4:00 to 9:30.

Next meeting will take place on April 19.

Adjourned: 11:10.

Minutes: PN.