

MINUTES
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION.
200 N. Spring Street, Room 1050, City Hall
November 09, 2006

Present: Misty Sanford, President
Alina Bokde, Vice President
Maria Armoudian, Commissioner
Joyce M. Perkins – Commissioner
M. Teresa Villegas, Commissioner

Bianca Vite, Commission Secretary - (213) 978-2366

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** President Sanford called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.
2. **CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:** Commissioner Villegas moved to approve the minutes of October 21, 2006 as amended, and Commissioner Armoudian seconded.
3. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** None.
4. **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:** General Manager Allen provided the Commission with an update of departmental activities.
5. ITEMS OF DISCUSSION:
 - Follow up of public comment period items: Elephant Hill – Representatives of the Planning Department were invited, and will be contacted regarding the commissions desire to have a presentation to the commission at the December 2006 meeting. Hope Beautification Center complaint - EAD staff drafted letters and will follow up with the appropriate agencies regarding the vermin complaint, and will also contact Amira Mohammad, representative of the Hope Beautification Center. Melinda Bartlett informed the commission that the street trees in the area of 5th and Hope streets are in the process of being trimmed, and that the Bureau of Sanitation is hopeful that this will alleviate the problem since the rats commonly use the trees as nests.
 - Commissioner Armoudian's motions to place American Waste and Bradley Landfill on a future commission agenda were discussed. Commissioner Armoudian expressed a desire to hold a closed session to discuss both items. General Manager Allen expressed the need to seek the advice of the

City attorney because of the sensitivity of both items. Once she obtains legal counsel, she will inform President Sanford of the outcome at the agenda setting meeting scheduled for next week. Dependent upon this discussion, both items may or may not be placed on the commission's agenda for its' December's meeting.

- Subcommittee Reports and Updates –Commissioner Villegas and Vice President Bokde met with Recreation and Parks (R & P) Commissioner Mary Luévano. They discussed a few items about R & P and most of their meeting was information sharing, and discussing the Environmental Affairs Commissions' priorities. Mary's concerns are focused on green buildings, so the discussion did not center on park specific details. Mary recommended that they meet with the R & P full commission. As a follow up, President Sanford and Vice President Bokde met with the Recreation & Parks Commission. There was introduction and dialogue about what role the Environmental Affairs Commission and what role the Recreation and Parks Commission can play in moving the Mayor's environmental agenda forward. They expressed a desire to keep in contact and work closely with the EAC on the open space and "upaving paradise" and also that that will be a centerpiece in putting together those targets and also our implementation strategy for the ultimate goals that come out of the green agenda. Mary Luévano will be the EAC's point of contact. President Sanford has a future appointment with the R&P commission president Dan Gruenfeld. They were very gracious and she is hopeful that there will be a lot of opportunity to working closely with them. Maybe ultimately a special joint hearing on some of these issues can take place, so that the non-typical parks movement folks can have a voice in the process.
- Vice President Bokde and Commissioner Perkins met with Planning Commissioner Regina Freer, and City Planning department staff member Claire Bowen to discuss what the activities of the Commission and the Department are. The Planning Commission is in the process of having their own retreat to building their infrastructure. Their message is that they most definitely want to work with EAC. Their commission is divided into five different sub-committees: sustainability housing, mobility, equity and urban design. Within these subcommittees they are looking at people and resources to ensure that they are distributed equitably, and that the policies are responsive to the needs of the communities. Conversation focused on urban sustainability and transportation. They discussed the possibility of working together, looking at the Code and how EAC can bring in their expertise and assist them in helping to bring things forward to the Council and Mayor. All in all it was a good collaborative discussion. One of the pieces that the planning department has been charged with is building a green building program. They are working to establish this program that will focus on expediting permits for green buildings. They have in their budget a request to hire Global Green to help develop the green building program

and implement it. Their retreat piece will work to a matter of follow up, because there is a lot of overlap that needs. Establish a formal and how are we going to ... Commissioner Perkins stated that there was a lot of agreement in priorities on transportation, urban greening and brownfields. One of their challenges is trying to develop a City-wide policy because, historically these projects that come before them individually, are in different areas, council districts and it is very difficult to put together an umbrella policy in various areas than can be applied to all development. Global Green they cited different cities around the state that have worked with them to establish a green city policy. Pasadena is working with them now. They put an item in their budget and are taking a piece-meal approach and it would apply to public buildings. Their focus on they will minimize the approach initially, but definitely have the start of a green policy for the City of Los Angeles as well as look at other policies that would lead to that equity thing that they are concerned with. Commissioner Perkins inquired about the Budgeted item that Planning has to hire Global Green to work on greening. Would this Green Cabinet be dealing with Planning?

- General Manager Allen added that with all of the current projects and programs it may be related to development, but it may not be the case. The green agenda then we say, let's leverage resources with Global Green. To augment what we are doing with the green agenda. President Sanford invited Romel Pascual, Assistant Director of the Environment of the Mayor's Office to the podium. – Mr. Pascual stated that the budgeted item the desire he request to have Global Green develop a program, is targeted at private sector development. It's a program that they have done with Pasadena and other local municipalities. It looks at how do you develop a green building program? Discussion with Planning Department focused there is an opportunity to include a private sector within the sustainable green cabinet. on public and private sector and trying to do an overall program would be challenging and take approximately nine months. The low hang could be done with existing resources and in less time, in the context of the Sustainable Cabinet. The opportunity with what the Mayor has done and what can we do right now. Romel suggested that the Commission invite a member of the Mayor's staff to discuss what the Green Cabinet is about in December to link it with the Green Agenda, a broader policy. General Manager Allen is working to have the Green Agenda placed on the Budget & Finance Committee agenda in November or December at the latest to have the money taken out of the Un-appropriated Balance in the budget. The Sustainable Green Cabinet has not met as of yet, but it is an attempt to having the appropriate departments that have some level of engagement around green building get together. Commissioner Perkins commented about opportunities with vacant lots. They had a similar successful program in New York, they would take vacant lots and green them. They don't have to be active little parks, bring in some green even temporarily. They sit vacant, trashed for up to three years. There is a big issue of lack of green space, Let's go in there and find a way to green them, something that starts

to green our city. There has to be some kind of way that will help present an opportunity to look at some of this area. This is a real tangible idea that has to have some money behind it; perhaps with the new bonds passed this can happen. Some of the lots that have tax liens, maybe there is away legally that they can be temporarily greened to have an impact and make a difference. The Urban Land Trust Task Force under the previous administration focused on exactly this issue, but it never went anywhere, perhaps our commission can take up this issue. All of these ideas are good ideas, but there seems to be a piece missing. The American Dream Project is trying to come up something similar to this, but is involved in litigation. This is an area where we all have expertise and we can help flush out. Romel Pascual commented about having this issue addressed at the appropriate place and stated that perhaps this is not the best place for this discussion to take place. President Sanford commented that right now, there is no appropriate place. With the Green Agenda, where does that leave the Commission? Are we waiting for the budgeted money to be released to move forward? Will the Green Agenda capture existing and future priorities around the Mayor's initiatives and those things that we feel should be in their? Romel Pascual responded by saying that you will have to have some staff to get things done. General Manager Allen has shared a copy of the report with Councilmember Parks' staff and she will meet with him. Realistically we are hoping to have this taken care of by December. Romel stated that this does not preclude this commission to begin to have conversations on potential topics that you would like to explore with the green agenda. You won't have someone writing to capture what you are discussing. There is an interim that needs to capture ideas that you wish to discuss. General Manager Allen stated that we still have thoughts to be able to capture that I would not say to you stop with your great ideas. There are some things that we can continue to do until we have staff on board. I would say identify the priorities and crystallize the ideas. Try to get something on board. So let's not stop with the direction of where you want to go. You can use me to get your ideas in to the Sustainable Green Cabinet. Commissioner Villegas stated that when she met with Public Works, they mentioned that they would support a staff person. Is this included in the green agenda? No, the green agenda was in the original budget, and it was taken out for more specific information. Joyce's comments are very pertinent. Brownfields topic where the keep in mind that the propositions that were passed. Keeping mind that the information that Joyce was saying is pertinent to these programs. Keeping brownfields in pace with that. President Sanford added that they have gathered a lot of information and we still need to meet with MTA and CRA. We are farther along than she anticipated, and that they are all passionate about these topics being discussed. Let's talk about what is our next procedure? What can we as a commission do on the green agenda?

Commissioner Villegas suggested that all the ideas that come out of their individual meetings should be put down on paper. Commissioner Perkins added that a lot of good ideas have been said, and this would be very helpful. It would be helpful to have it written down. It can be looked at and similarities flushed out. General Manager Allen suggested looking at process and ideas. You discussed specific projects that we need to do. Romel Pascual volunteered his intern to assist the commission in capturing the information that they have gathered on paper. He suggested that he meet with each one of the commissioners one on one. President Sanford stated that there are still meetings to be completed with MTA, and CRA. Vice President Bokde is interested in finding out from the rest of the commissioners what their priorities are. The fact finding is important and for her the possibility of having a program that is focused would be key. President Sanford discussed the nuisance property issue that Commissioner Perkins brought up. This brings together all of the areas which we interested in. We can do a series of meetings that covers all of our focus areas. Commissioner Perkins stated that this could possibly engage some of the neighborhood councils. If there is some kind of drive or policy that these ideas could be introduced or their cabinet areas, they could have some guidelines so that they could possible use some of their annual allocation. It's something that can be done immediately. Her agency has worked with some of them and they have contributed up to \$20,000.00 dollars. This is something that all of them could consider. It is something that is doable it can improve their community. Greening is something that is needed in most of the neighborhood council areas. It is another way of latching onto an existing group that can be a partner in something like this. We could start with something small and doable and you can collaborate widely on. It gives us a visibility and it supports something that is already in place, the Mayor's green initiative. General Manager Allen also mentioned that Green LA could be brought in as a partner. Commissioner Villegas mentioned that her neighborhood council is doing exactly this. They are working with a property owner of a vacant lot and creating a temporary community garden. Commissioner Perkins stated that she would like to establish a policy about this. General Manager Allen added that it would be good to think about who you want at the table of people that you know as you move forward with this project. Melinda Bartlett can be a resource to you, since she has extensive knowledge in working on the Mayor's Million Tree Initiative and working with the tree planting people in the communities. She shares with Theresa that there are many funding opportunities available that we could look into. President Sanford stated that next steps can be to use their next meeting date to flush out these ideas.

- Recognition of Commissioner Secretary Bianca Vite – Assistant Deputy Mayor Romel Pascual presented Ms. Vite with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of Mayor Villaraigosa. General Manager Allen together with

Commission President Sanford presented Ms. Vite with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Environmental Affairs Department and the Environmental Affairs Commission.

6. **COMMISSION OLD BUSINESS:** None

7. **NEW COMMISSION BUSINESS:**

8. **FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS:** Bay Area Green Business Program, EAD to compile a list of ideas for future program projects

9. **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR THIRTY (30) DAYS BY CONTACTING THE COMMISSION SECRETARY AT (213) 978-2366.

This material is printed on recycled paper .

| c:EAC\MINUTES11/09/06

Deleted: ¶