

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Climate Action Working Group: May 15, 2015
Muir Woods Conference Room, 175 N. Redwood Blvd., San Rafael

Present: Co-chairs Pam Reaves and Doug Wilson; also, Bill Carney, Nona Dennis, Tom Flynn, Rick Fraites, Jana Haehl, Kiki LaPorta, Pat Nelson, Tamra Peters, Kate Powers, Roger Roberts, Judy Teichman

Doug opened the meeting at 10:10.

1. Brief Reports:

a. Sustainable San Rafael - Bill

Bill announced SSR Green Business event on June 17 in conjunction with SR Chamber of Commerce.

Bill reported on climate discussion coordinated by Bruce Riordan for Marin Community Foundation. It followed survey Bruce conducted through interviews with participants including Dawn Weisz of MCE, Cynthia Murray, North Bay Leadership Council, MALT, TAM represented by a planner, Parks Conservancy, Christine O'Rourke staff for Marin Clean Energy Partnership, Leslie Aldon for Kate Sears, Hannah Duress of ShoreUp Marin, Bob Brown from Novato, Cory Bytof of San Rafael, Cyane Dandridge of Terra Linda High School's SEL program. Patti Juachon of MCF was in charge. Eight topics discussed: coordination, funding, information, new regulations, engagement with vulnerable communities, public support, leadership, overall strategies.

Action: Nona will forward email outlining these.

A resource catalog of all programs currently driving policy was distributed. "Climate Policies and Programs at the Federal, State, and Regional Levels: Context and Opportunities for Local Action" <https://www.marincf.org/sites/default/files/downloadable/climate-policies-report.pdf>

Nona said Leslie Aldon announced OWL project installation of sea level rise simulations at Almonte crosswalk at Mill Valley/Sausalito bikepath. Opening May 21 at 10 a.m.

b. Katie Rice's Solar Policy group - Doug

Katie Rice has been coordinating a group of disparate viewpoints for the past year including Marge Macris, Barbara Salzman, Bill Carney, Bob Spofford, Dave Haskell, John Elam, Susan Stompe. Doug sat in at recent meeting for Ed Mainland. The effort is to streamline existing code on solar installations as opposed to creating a new ordinance. It is in response to solar project that was denied at Greenpoint nursery in Novato and the conflict over that project by environmental groups usually allied. There is a desire not to debate solar policy in the abstract at the Board of Supervisors. What will come out of it is streamlined over-the-counter permitting for smaller projects. Larger projects will be less ministerial and will be dependent on context and siting. Group decided Sonoma's model not transferrable to Marin. Sonoma drew from New Jersey state regulations that stratify types of agricultural land for ground based solar so good ag land is not converted to solar farms. Ground based solar is much cheaper to build than rooftop solar.

c. MCEP Marin Climate and Energy Partnership - Cory via Doug

Doug reported on MCEP's new webpage marintracker.org. It tracks sustainability progress and has good overview parameters. It includes maps. Marinclimate.org is MCEP's home site.

d. Novato's White Paper on Sea Level Rise- Rick

Novato is revising General Plan and updating elements. A white paper was written on sea level rise. Identified areas that will be inundated in the future: Bel Marin Keys, Bahia Vista, PG&E substation off 101. Susan Stompe and Rick met with Eric Lucan of MCCMC. Novato is getting prepared.

Kiki suggested that MCL track the Redwood Landfill as a toxic site in relation to sea level rise. Redwood Landfill is in County jurisdiction. Sea level rise and climate change were not evaluated in old permit. Court case appealed to CA State Supreme Court to relook at site and was remanded to the Board of Supervisors. One of the tenets of the suit is that the operator maintain the safety of the site even after it's closed. Capacity is where the money is. If expansion is allowed, the County is off the hook as mandated by law to find an alternative site to put waste. Alternative site would require a plan 15 years in advance. The County is motivated to grant expansion. Roger added that the plan of the northwest railroad is to truck waste to loading site and take it to Nevada and Roger said that is irresponsible.

Bill asked if Novato's sea level rise planning includes coordination with County planning effort, particularly paying attention to levee system north of Rush Creek marsh. Nona said it's complicated between the landfill and Gness airport, the marsh, and the levee system.

e. Dairies and Energy Efficiency – Tom

Judy announced MCL event at Giacomini Dairy on June 20, reservations are due by June 15. Max of 40 people.

Tom said effort to organize dairies into alliance to conserve energy and to get on path to renewables is moving along. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is providing support to do energy audits on dairies. Organic Valley has several dairies in area and they are providing funds to do analysis of energy savings and solar potential. Clover Stornetta and Straus also working with Tom. Tom has discussed with Marin County's Dana Armanino and the UC Extension about methane digesters of animal waste as a climate solution. There's interest in aggregation for a community digester. Tom has discussed with Justin Kudo of MCE who he has also worked with on Lawson's Landing project with minimizing water and energy use and producing all its energy on site. The grid in West Marin is congested. Tom has talked with Kate Sears and Steve Kinsey. MCE may take part in dairy program and Sonoma Clean Power has expressed interest in project. Exploration of Elon Musk's commercial batteries will be part of dairy and Lawson's Landing efforts.

f. Letter to Senator McGuire recommending use of Cap-and-Trade funds - Roger

Roger stated that at the MCL breakfast, Mike McGuire invited suggestions for uses of cap-and-trade monies. There are \$2.5 billion of unallocated funds. He suggested that MCL send a letter that says please make sure a significant portion of those funds be made available “for local energy efficiency program development, for installation of renewables on a community or individual basis, and for development of community action plans for climate action and reduction of greenhouse gas”.

Doug pointed out that McGuire sits on the Senate Energy Committee. Kiki said the Sustainables may want to sign on to such a letter if MCL were amenable.

Bill brought up the desire to set criteria for priorities for cap-and-trade funds in proportion to payoffs in GHG reductions. He said there is the perception that many in Sacramento are viewing the cap and trade funds as a sort of slush fund. He agreed with Roger that letter to Senator McGuire go out soon.

Nona suggested that Marc Levine receive the letter also.

The Carbon Project is trying to get in line for cap and trade funds also.

Action: Roger will draft a letter.

f. MCE and the quest for Deep Green

At Environmental Forum Lecture, Dawn Weisz said the cost of Deep Green has come down to a point where it's more than competitive with PG&E, and no problem with supply. (It still costs more than 50% Green.)

San Rafael and Mill Valley are installing solar arrays but not signed on to Deep Green. SR's cost would be additional \$60,000 to go from 50% Green to Deep Green. However, Bob said if you have solar, the calculus towards Deep Green increases for the better and SR should recalculate. It would depend on the leasing agreement SR has as a power purchase agreement with SolEd through a solar seed program. The time is right for MCL to advocate to electeds to explore Deep Green. Each city's solution would need to be worked out individually. MCE should present to MCCC at one of their dinner meetings. Bill said he believes SR Councilmembers are on track already and that as solar is installed and costs come down they will be putting savings into Deep Green incrementally and could lead by example. Sausalito, San Anselmo, Fairfax are already Deep Green. However, only 3% in MCE's entire service district is Deep Green.

Money saved with energy efficiency improvements could be used toward Deep Green. MMWD could be saving significantly with energy efficiency. Tom has spoken to Cynthia Kohler about that.

Mary Morgan and others from Main Street Moms met with MCE Board's executive committee and reported the questions they ran into in lobbying their community to opt in for Deep Green. Their conclusions were that MCE should emphasize climate change in marketing renewables, that MCE should build on its relationships with community and enviro groups to encourage its members to sign up for Deep Green, and that community volunteers need training to answer questions raised.

Kiki invited Mary Morgan, Kris Brown and Julia Bartlett from Main Street Mom's in Point Reyes, and Nancy Vernon whose Environmental Forum project is to increase Deep Green opt-ins in San Anselmo by 250, to meet with Fairfax's Climate Action Committee. The three groups have agreed to work together, use similar language, and same collateral in their communities.

Bill proposed why not make all that MCE offers 100% renewable energy. Impediment would be to not raise rates above PG&E's. That was held out as the promise when MCE was being planned. Getting to 80% is in long-range acquisition plan, which is online, but MCE has to have 20% system power, which is a problem in marketing and truth-in-advertising. How fast MCE can accelerate that plan is the question.

What is MCE's long-range strategy to keep their rates competitive with PG&E's? Bob said it's not through the local distributive generation, small project, feed-in tariff sources because that's expensive. The switch to renewables in the acquisition plan is based on large industrial scale projects that MCE is investing in that are under construction in places like Kern County. As more and more CCA's come on board, competition for those energy sources increases. Tom said ultimately the state goal is zero net energy for all new commercial buildings and residential buildings by 2030. Ultimately it's not about cheap energy, it's about getting people to use less energy and be provided clean energy so, in the end, total energy bills may be less but people may be paying a higher price per kilowatt-hour competing with fossil fuels. It takes time to build renewables sources and bring them online but there doesn't seem to be limit on potential long-term renewables in California. One of the initial challenges for MCE was that it had to become a credible financial entity that a bank would lend money to but now they have proved a CCA model can work.

Tamra and Bill ordered a Tesla power wall to try residential storage and distributive energy. Other storage capacity is your car when have two way power connection. Inverter's for solar systems today have ports for battery systems.

2. Discussion: Structuring our approach to the many issues of climate change. Find your favorite issue(s), follow and develop expertise, share with the Group and get support where needed.

Doug lead discussion on future reports on projects and tracking issues to help CAWG set its priorities in where it would like to exert its influence by setting policy, commenting on plans, or in contributing to the planning process in a proactive way. Judy commented that having a report or informative presentation and then having people share what's happening along those lines in their experiences around the County provides rich cross pollination. Tom said the function of MCL and CAWG is important in stimulating movement forward on different fronts. Rick emphasized need to get info from these meetings to public. One suggestion was to prioritize things that would engage younger people to work on projects possibly in partnering with School of Environmental Leadership at Terra Linda, or high schools that have community service requirements, or with Dominican and student's leadership projects. Nona said CAWG should consider a topic for a Business Breakfast forum. Resilient Neighborhoods discusses these issues with its participants. Information could be posted on MCL biweekly e-bulletins. Topics have to be controversial for

press to show up at events, like Business Breakfasts, so have to depend on press releases. Jana said it's important to create widening ripples for example by partnering with organizations like MCE to present at MCCMC dinner to spark electeds to pick up issue and lobby their City manager and staff, get it on their agendas, which is distributed by email and through City newsletters and then people show up for meetings and post on NextDoor. Then group could put out appealing blurb with links to how individuals can save money. It's a way to reach thousands of people through existing channels.

3. Additional Information

MCE is coming out with their energy efficiency plan in June, eventually it will go to the CPUC. Tom and his colleagues are sending letter to MCE referring to list of recommendations a CAWG subcommittee generated. It cannot go out referencing MCL recommendations unless those recommendations have been approved by the MCL Board.

Next Meeting: June 26, 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Meeting adjourned 12:08 a.m.

Notes: KP