Workshop Notes



El Cerrito Climate Action Plan Workshop #1

Tuesday, October 26, 2010, 5:00 p.m. El Cerrito City Hall (City Council Chambers)

10890 San Pablo Avenue

Workshop Presenters:

- Melanie Mintz, Environmental Services Division Manager, City of El Cerrito
- Maria Sanders, Environmental Analyst, City of El Cerrito
- Ariel Ambruster, Facilitator, Center for Collaborative Policy

Melanie Mintz called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.

1. Meeting Overview and Participant Introductions

<u>Ariel Ambruster</u> gave an overview of the meeting agenda and ground rules. Meeting participants introduced themselves and briefly discussed their interest in the Climate Action Plan.

2. Presentation on El Cerrito's Climate Action Planning Process

<u>Maria Sanders</u> presented an introduction to the context, purpose and organization of El Cerrito's Climate Action Plan (CAP). Please refer to *CAPWorkshop#1.ppt* for more on the contents of the presentation, including an overview of El Cerrito's 2005 greenhouse gas emissions inventory and examples of potential emission reduction strategies.

3. Possible Climate Action Strategies Worksheet

Meeting participants were given a worksheet to fill out individually, soliciting their comments on the following questions:

- i. Of the strategies mentioned in today's presentation, please answer the following:
 - O Which ones do you think would have the greatest potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
 - o Which ones would you support the City pursuing?
 - o Which ones would you not support?
- ii. A number of possible policies, ordinances, programs, or projects that could help El Cerrito reduce its carbon footprint were discussed today. What additional ideas do you have as options the City could pursue?
- iii. Many of the City's climate action strategies will rely on voluntary participation by members of the community in order to be successful. What types of things could the City do to encourage greater participation by the community in the following activities?
 - o Commuting to work car-free (i.e., walk, bike, or take public transit to work) more often
 - o Making energy efficiency or clean energy improvements to homes and businesses
 - Reducing garbage going to the landfill

4. Large Group Discussion

Participants made the following comments:

i. Transportation Strategies:

- Encourage more biking and walking, link bike stations and more car share services with BART stations
- A chair lift for overcoming El Cerrito's steep hills?

- Organize a casual carpool to BART for people living in the hills who would drive to and park at BART
- More secure bike parking (bike valet?) at BART and elsewhere. No one who wants to bike should have to worry about finding a safe place to park their bike.
- Bike Boulevards like in Berkeley

ii. Energy Strategies:

- Need to overcome barrier of high upfront costs in retrofitting homes. A Property Assessed Clean Energy Program could help by amortizing costs. But we need to focus on identifying and going after the low-payback measures.
- City should think about whether there really is a true reduction from the solar permit fee waiver.
 Permit fees should be reasonable, but waiving permit fee altogether may not have a very big impact.
- The real savings will come from conservation and efficiency measures. Bring all the program resources out there together to help people retrofit their homes.
- Energy efficiency is a good local business opportunity.
- When it comes to residential natural gas savings, an ordinance is the way to go.
- By tying residential energy savings to a Time-of Sale ordinance, there's a disincentive for home owners to act early on and get cost savings from improvements. Should link any ordinance to home owners cost savings.
- Streamline or otherwise create incentives for permits on energy efficiency improvements.
- In favor of some type of energy conservation ordinance in order to get at a baseline of energy savings.
- Take advantage of weatherization programs for low-income homes.
- Not in favor of a Time-Of-Sale energy conservation ordinance. But home owners should have access to a measurable, detailed road map for what energy efficiency improvements they can make. Give homeowners an incentive for getting a whole house, blower door energy audit.
- Reduce building permit fees for energy efficiency improvements.
- Recognition program for homes with significant energy reductions.
- Work with local realtors to have a new home owner welcome basket with information in it about El
 Cerrito conservation programs, coupons for a home energy audit, etc.
- Require energy efficiency improvements at the time that the home is being renovated for other work.
 EG, ceiling insulation at the time new roof is put in.
- Green home recognition program.

iii. Other Strategies:

- Encourage businesses to join the County Green Business Program, maybe through outreach via the City's Environmental Quality Committee and lower business license fees.
- Contest to make art out of waste diverted.
- Encourage people to shop green and local.
- Organize neighborhood Green Teams to help people embrace conservation. Use the power of peer pressure.
- Use social networking media to get comments about the Climate Action Plan on-line.
- Work on messaging in order to make a global problem more understandable

5. Wrap-UP & Next Steps

Next meetings will cover Land Use/Transportation and Energy Efficiency Strategies in more depth.
 They will take place on Saturday, Nov 13, 10 am -12 pm and Thursday, Dec 2, 7pm to 9 pm

6. **The Workshop Ended at** 7:00 PM