



Agenda Item #: _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Montgomery and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

FROM: Sona Kalapura, Environmental Programs Manager

DATE: February 3, 2009

SUBJECT: Presentation of a Status Report from the Environmental Task Force

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council accept this report and the presentation made on the progress of the Environmental Task Force.

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

BACKGROUND:

In June, 2008 City Council decided to form a resident-based Environmental Task Force (Task Force) to study environmental issues of priority to the community. Staff solicited applications for the 18-member Task Force, and received over 30 qualified applicants. On September 2, 2008 Council reviewed these applications and selected 14 residents to serve on the Task Force. Council then appointed two representatives to the Task Force, Mayor Pro Tempore Portia Cohen, and Councilmember Mitch Ward. The remaining two positions were appointed by the MB Unified School District, including Amy Howorth, School Board President. MBUSD chose to appoint an additional student (so two students serve on the Task Force), bringing the total membership of the Environmental Task Force to 19 members.

The Task Force had its first meeting on October 15, 2008, and divided into four subcommittees to tackle priority environmental issues: the Development of a Climate Action Plan; Water Conservation and Storm Water Management Issues; Waste Reduction and Recycling; and Sustainable ("Green") Design. Since this first meeting, the Task Force has held 3 well-attended public meetings, several subcommittee meetings, and has hosted an Environmental Speaker Series with engaging environmental experts providing information to the group and the public.

DISCUSSION:

The Task Force subcommittees developed working mission statements that were shared at its first public meeting (see Attachment A), and each group has made initial progress on the goals identified so far. The following outlines the progress made by each subcommittee:

Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Subcommittee reviewed climate action plans enacted across the country to understand the types of climate change measures being implemented. The group decided on three areas to focus their efforts in order to best assist the City in developing measures to reduce its carbon footprint. These areas are: Energy Efficiency, Transportation, and Public Education. The group decided to postpone making recommendations on energy efficiency measures until it receives input from the energy audit consultant (expected summer 2009). In the meantime the group will focus on the other two areas of concentration, and also on developing public outreach for the Earth Day 2009 events. Finally, the group will assist the Department of Public Works in reviewing two items: the proposals from the energy consultants, and the data developed on replacing the City's fleet with low-emission vehicles.

Water Conservation and Storm Water Management Issues

The Water Conservation and Storm Water Subcommittee will concentrate its efforts on developing the essential elements of a water conservation ordinance before moving onto storm water management issues. The group's recommendations will impact amendments to the City's Water Conservation Ordinance. The subcommittee will not develop tiered water rates, as that will be handled by a consultant. The group, however, will provide feedback on the type of rate structure they think will best aid the City in reaching its water conservation goals. The group has reviewed other water conservation ordinances, and models from the Metropolitan Water District, and has begun to identify the various types of conservation measures that will best fit the needs of Manhattan Beach. These measures will be presented by the subcommittee liaison and City Staff for Council review in the next few months. Finally, the group will develop a public awareness and outreach program to assist residents in learning how to efficiently use our water resources.

Waste Reduction and Recycling

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Subcommittee is considering elements to include in a new solid waste contract, as the current contract is expiring. The group will provide its input as to whether the contract should be renegotiated with Waste Management, or put out to bid. That decision will be left to Council, but the group will make recommendations on what areas of service to include in a new contract. The group has discussed service areas it feels are important to Manhattan Beach, and has received several briefings from the City's solid waste consultant Laith Ezzet. The group is also exploring other concepts, such as Zero Waste and a tiered trash rate to encourage recycling. The group will not develop specific rates as that will be handled by a rate consultant, but they will provide their recommendations to Council as to how strong the rate should be in order to encourage residents to recycle, while still meeting operational costs. The group will also implement a public outreach component in order to educate the residents on how to recycle better and send less trash to the landfill.

Sustainable ("Green") Design

The Sustainable Design Subcommittee has reviewed green building ordinances across the State to better understand what measures are successful in other cities, and what may work best in Manhattan Beach. The group is examining ways to develop comprehensive recommendations for large public and private development in the City that will utilize a third party rating system and follow LEED certifications. The group is also considering specific green building recommendations that will impact all projects through their inclusion in the municipal building

code. The group is beginning to develop a recommendation for private residential construction that will not require third party certifications, but will focus on energy efficiency, water conservation, materials, etc. The group presented these three ideas to the public at the last Task Force meeting, and received a good amount of feedback and ideas to consider in order to better formulate their recommendations. The group is working on creating a cost-model to better understand the impact the recommendations will have upon the construction community. The group understands that it is important to make sure the public understands why it is important to undertake these recommendations, and will focus on a public outreach component, with the first focus group to be held in February 2009.

CONCLUSION:

The Task Force subcommittees will continue meeting monthly to work on recommendations to present at the monthly public Task Force meetings. As these recommendations are vetted and approved by the entire Task Force, they will be presented to City Council for comment by the subcommittee liaisons and City Staff. City Staff will continue to present quarterly status reports to City Council to keep Council updated on the progress of the Task Force.

Attachments: A. Environmental Task Force Goals and Members by Subcommittee

Attachment A. Environmental Task Force Goals and Members by Subcommittee

Environmental Task Force Goals by Subcommittee:

Climate Action Plan

The Subcommittee will develop recommendations that will enable the City to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at least 7% below 1990 levels and incorporate a community-wide emissions education campaign.

Sustainable Design (“Green Building”)

To identify environmentally responsible, sustainable and energy efficient policies for constructing, renovating and occupying the built environment;

To develop and make recommendations to City Council that will lead towards a healthy and sustainable city; and

To educate and promote programs that increase awareness and incentivize sustainable building practices.

Solid Waste and Recycling

The Solid Waste and Recycling Subcommittee will act as liaisons for the community to come up with the most effective, comprehensive, and innovative waste reduction and recycling program possible and make recommendations to City Council.

Water Conservation and Storm Water Management

To support the City's effort to work toward a greater, greener Manhattan Beach by providing policy recommendations to the Environmental Task Force and City Council on stewardship of our limited water resources and effective storm water management to protect our beaches and coastal waters.

Task Force Members by Subcommittee

| Climate Action Plan | Green Building | Solid Waste/Recycling | Water/Storm Water |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Todd Dipaola | Casey Beyer | Suzanne Kretschmer | Heather George |
| Lillian Light | Ben Burkhalter | Wendy Phillips | Jeffrey Neu |
| Robert Scott | Christopher Conaway | Andrea Zislis | David Pedersen |
| Lani Lapidus Zaun | | | Bob Siemak |
| Adam Gerard | | | Jack Kirkpatrick |