



SF Environment

Our home. Our city. Our planet.



EDWIN M. LEE
Mayor

DEBORAH O. RAPHAEL
Director

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT
POLICY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING**

**APPROVED MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2015, 5:00 P.M.**

**CITY HALL, ROOM 421
ONE DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT JR. PLACE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call.** The Policy Committee meeting convened at 5:15 p.m. Present: Commissioners Wald and Wan. Commissioner Wan was appointed as a Committee member for this meeting.
- 2. Approval of Minutes of the January 12, 2015 Commission on the Environment Policy Committee Regular Meeting.** (Explanatory Document: January 12, 2015 Approved Minutes) (Discussion and Action) Upon Motion by Commissioner Wan, second by Commissioner Wald, the January 12, 2015 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes were approved without objection (AYES: Commissioners Wald and Wan; Noes: None; Absent: None).
- 3. Public Comments:** Members of the public may address the Committee on matters that are within the Committee's jurisdiction and are not on today's agenda. There was no public comment at this time.
- 4. SFPUC Stormwater and Green Infrastructure Projects and their Relationship to the City's Nature and Biodiversity Goals.** (Explanatory Document: Biodiversity Policy History and Watershed Management Plan Presentation) Speakers: Peter Brastow, Senior Biodiversity Coordinator and Rachel Kraai, Stormwater Planner, Urban Watershed Specialist, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) (Informational Report and Discussion)

Senior Biodiversity Coordinator Peter Brastow reported on the existence of an Interagency Working Group to collaborate on San Francisco's nature and biodiversity issues and to implement the City's biodiversity goals. SFPUC Stormwater Planner, Urban Watershed Specialist, Rachel Kraai and her colleagues from the SFPUC participate in this group along with other City agencies since many City programs have an effect on biodiversity and our natural

environment. A handout that can be found at http://www.sfenvironment.org/sites/default/files/fliers/files/sfe_bd_biodiversity_policy_history.pdf on the City's chronology and history of biodiversity and natural resources policy making in San Francisco going back to the environmental protection element of the General Plan was distributed in Committee meeting.

Ms. Kraai, reported that the Urban Watershed Management Program division she works in is tasked with planning projects and developing policy around managing stormwater using green infrastructure in San Francisco. Part of the work is to re-envision how to design urban landscapes around water with the basic premise of alleviating some of the issues that the sewer system has around stormwater using green infrastructure. She presented an overview of how the Wastewater Enterprise has been working to support biodiversity in the City through the Sewer System Improvement Program (SSIP) capital projects as well as development of a Triple Bottom Line (TBL) tool to assess the habitat potential of projects; the ways that biodiversity is being incorporated or ways to make space for the creation of biodiversity and habitat through the enforcement of the Stormwater Management Ordinance and Design Guidelines; and work being done related to biodiversity through community based stormwater management grant and incentive programs. Ms. Kraai reported on how the TBL tool's habitat criteria addresses landscapes created, removed or enhanced through the SSIP program and how potential projects will affect habitat and native biodiversity in the city..

Ms. Kraai reported on the vegetation palette that is offered as a complement of the Stormwater Design Guidelines, a resource that includes plants that are well suited for specific Best Management Practices (BMP's), plants that are largely native and locally appropriate, attractive to local wildlife and beneficial to insects and includes species that are endangered, threatened and rare. She also reported that the SFPUC is in process of updating the vegetation palette to include more plants that are suitable to San Francisco's urban conditions. Director Raphael requested examples of TBL projects that are not being pursued and the scoring system indicating why as a way to see how the TBL tool works. Commissioner Wan suggested that the vegetation palette include culturally specific plants and species to the neighborhood where they are being planted.

Commissioner Wald discussed City requirements imposed on residents for sidewalk improvements and the benefits of influencing City agencies to provide information about landscaping opportunities to residents on ways to maximize green improvements while minimizing concrete. She suggested that these City agencies be informed of SFPUC's TBL program and the advantages that the tool may have in their own programs.

Public Comment:

Department of the Environment Toxics Reduction Program Manager Jen Jackson stated that Ms. Kraai indicated that it is not a requirement to use the vegetation palette, and asked whether there is a way to make it a requirement as a way to increase biodiversity. She inquired whether community grant programs have weighting criteria in the selection process for a more biodiverse vegetation palette. Ms. Kraai reported that she believed there are weighting criteria for planting climate appropriate plants and that she would report back on the criteria. She reported on SFPUC permitting requirements explaining that the SFPUC does not have jurisdiction to require that certain types of plants be used for projects, and that the vegetation palette is for recommendation only.

Ms. Jennifer Clary inquired about the status of the SFPUC's work on voluntary guidelines for DPW to use in their street maintenance programs and suggested that activists could advocate for guidelines to be permanent. She stated her opposition to DPW planting of planter boxes in median strips that don't allow for stormwater management. Ms. Clary discussed the importance of having an evaluation tool and showing the benefits achieved from private and pilot projects. She inquired if projects are being weighed according to the need of the Green Infrastructure Plan. Ms. Clary asked to focus attention on stormwater overflow levels in the Marina Green and Fisherman's Wharf that are susceptible to sea level rise, flooding in the Mission neighborhood, and reducing flooding on Cayuga Street. Ms. Kraai reported that Best Management Practices specifications have been created and are available on the website for City agencies to use, and that the next phase of these guidelines are in progress.

Dr. Sally Stephens was concerned with the discussion's emphasis on native plants, when scientists define biodiversity as both native and non-native plants, and that the Recreation and Open Space Element states that native and non-native species both contribute to local biodiversity. She pointed out that non-native plants can accomplish the same goals and in some cases may be more culturally appropriate. Dr. Stephens stated that there are also ADA sidewalk width requirements that should be considered.

Department of the Environment Integrated Pest Management Program Manager Dr. Chris Geiger discussed the challenges that City properties have designing for low maintenance and designing out pest infestations. He suggested that maintenance measures should be included in the scoring process for projects and in Best Management Practices and offered his assistance in this area. Ms. Kraai reported on SFPUC maintenance plan requirements. Director Raphael suggested that pest prevention in guidelines be considered for projects.

Mr. Peter Brastow explained that while we emphasize the use of local native plants to promote local wildlife, landscape continuity, overall sustainability and pride of place, there are several factors that we promote for people to take into account when selecting plants for landscaping. Habitat for wildlife is a high priority. That a plant is not invasive is equally important. Also, we suggest for people to use their creativity when choosing a plant palette, and not to plant a typical boxwood edge. Obviously, water conservation and filtration is also very important. A critical point is not whether a plant is non-native, but whether that non-native is also highly invasive, which we want to prevent. There are many non-native plants that can provide good habitat for native birds, bees and butterflies. In terms of wildlife habitat, largely we are planting for insects and birds, not so much land mammals, reptiles or amphibians.

Ms. Ruth Gravanis spoke in support of the consideration of biodiversity when creating green infrastructure for stormwater management. She suggested that consideration should also be given to protecting biodiversity in our bay and our ocean, such as stopping the untreated or minimally treated stormwater or combined system discharges into the bay and the ocean. She would like to see more discussion about capturing street and sidewalk runoff in smaller grant-funded projects as opposed to just rainfall. Ms. Gravanis stated that we are behind in taking advantage of opportunities presented in terms of runoff management. She suggested that plantings should be on the side and drainage should be going into carefully designed stormwater features that capture road runoff, not just rainfall. It was suggested that the Commission on the Environment help coordinate these efforts with the Department of Public Works. Ms. Gravanis asked whether it is useful to encourage urban butterflies to visit plantings

that are next to people's exhaust pipes and also in the way of traffic. She suggested that more thought be given to biodiversity in the bay and the health of the people that use the bay for recreation.

Ms. Nancy Wuerfel requested a list of habitats that would be created and what animals and plants will be targeted as the beneficiaries of habitats that would be created. She discussed the importance of considering microclimates in the plant selection guide. Ms. Wuerfel discussed the role that even weeds have in stormwater management because of their ability to retain water.

5. Review and Approval for recommendation to the Commission on the Environment Adoption of the 2015 Reduced Risk Pesticide List and Exemptions for City Properties. (Explanatory Documents: Amended Draft Resolution, 2015 Reduced Risk Pesticide List, Pesticides Exemptions Requests, Pesticide Use Update) Sponsor: Deborah Raphael, Director; Speaker: Dr. Chris Geiger, Ph.D., Integrated Pest Management Program Manager (Discussion and Action)

Director Raphael reported that in the 1990's, the Board of Supervisors banned the use of all pesticides on City properties with the exception of those that are considered to be Reduced Risk Pesticides and consistent with an Integrated Pest Management Program. The Environment Code section also requires that the Department present to the Commission on an annual basis the list of pesticides that are considered to be reduced risk and consistent with an Integrated Pest Management program.

Integrated Pest Management Program Manager Dr. Chris Geiger reported on the series of meetings and the extensive work group meeting that was held with all people doing pest management in the city to review the existing list to identify which pesticides are necessary, which are working, and whether there are safer alternatives available. New products are brought to the table for experimental purposes and the list is reviewed each year. He explained that the number of products on the list is not a performance metric, but rather that the list is a toolbox of products that have been identified to meet regular and recurring needs and that pass criteria. Each year there is an effort to take off products that there may be a safer alternative for. Dr. Geiger reported on changes to products on this year's list and presented highlights of this year's process.

Dr. Geiger presented a chart of Pesticide Use within City and County of San Francisco properties showing total pesticide active ingredient applied, top pesticides used in 2013, pesticide use by department, and total rodenticide use. A discussion was held on increased uses in Tier 1 and Tier 2 products and the reasons for increased use. Dr. Geiger explained that the biggest use was golf course use that increased the use of Tier 1 products.

Public Comment: Ms. Nancy Wuerfel reported that the Recreation and Park Department is listed as the number one user of pesticides and asked if the most usage is in golf courses. Dr. Geiger reported that Harding Park is the number one user of pesticides and Tier 1 products in the Recreation and Park Department's jurisdiction, and that the natural areas are the smallest. Pesticide use categories are divided by golf, natural areas, facilities and parks, and Golden Gate Park. Dr. Geiger reported that more detailed graphs are scheduled to be available on the website in March, and that an update will be provided on the status at the March

Commission meeting. Ms. Wuerfel reported that the PGA tour to be held at Harding Park assured their compliance with IPM guidelines.

Upon Motion by Commissioner Wald, seconded by Commissioner Wan the Resolution approving the adoption of the 2015 Reduced Risk Pesticide List and Exemptions for City Properties was approved for recommendation to the Commission on the Environment with an amendment (AYES: Commissioners Wald and Wan; Noes: None; Absent: None) (Explanatory Document: Amended Draft Resolution)

6. **Director's Update.** Deborah Raphael, Director (Discussion) Director Raphael reported that she and Commissioner Wald will be meeting with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to ask for their assistance on a federal level to implement the Safe Medicine Disposal program. She reported that there are changes being considered to the annual Earth Day Breakfast venue so that it would be a Climate Action tour with the Mayor instead of a breakfast. Additional reports were made on (1) upcoming plans for the U.S. Conference of Mayors event in June; (2) Director's participation in a two-day tour on community based social marketing. An update will be scheduled for a future Operations Committee meeting; and (3) Director's talk in Washington D.C. for National Cancer Prevention Day on San Francisco and California's efforts. An article is featured in the Huffington Post.
7. **Communications.** (Explanatory Document: Correspondence Log) (Information and Discussion) Commission Secretary Monica Fish reported on communications received and status to date.
8. **Announcements.** (Discussion) There were no announcements made at this time.
9. **New Business/Future Agenda Items.** (Discussion) Commissioner Wald suggested that the March Policy Committee meeting include a discussion on the Local Agency Formation Commission's (LAFCo) report on Community Choice Aggregation, status legislatively, SFPUC's plan, and staff discussions on implications for the Department.
10. **Public Comments:** Members of the public may address the Committee on matters that are within the Committee's jurisdiction and are not on today's agenda. Ms. Wuerfel pointed out a typographical error in the Communications List that should be changed to state SB47 instead of SF47.
11. **Adjournment.** The Policy Committee meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

The next meeting of the Commission on the Environment Policy Committee is scheduled for Monday, March 9, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. in City Hall, Room 421.

** Copies of explanatory documents are available at (1) the Commission's office, 1455 Market Street, Suite 1200, San Francisco, California, 94103 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Photo identification is required for access to the building; (2) on the Policy Committee's website <http://www.sfenvironment.org/commission/agendas>, or (3) upon request to the Commission Secretary at telephone number 415-355-3709, or via e-mail at Monica.Fish@sfgov.org. The meeting audio can be reviewed at website link http://media-06.granicus.com:443/ondemand/sanfrancisco/sanfrancisco_22d57964-6bb1-41d4-a054-4f20cbc0748d.mp3.