

**PHOENIX ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY and SUSTAINABILITY
COMMISSION MINUTES**

September 8, 2022

Phoenix City Hall
Online Using Webex

Commission Members Present	City Staff Present
Andrea Odegard-Begay, via phone	Julie Riemenschneider, OEP
Bill Sandweg, via phone	Rosanne Albright, OEP
Caroline Lobo, via phone	Mark Hartman, OSS
Colin Tetreault, via phone	David Hondula, OHRM
Darren Chapman, via phone	Lora Martens, OHRM
Ginger Torres, via phone	Mary Wright, OHRM
Kelly Barr, via phone	Nathan Svenson, CMO
Penny Allee Taylor, via phone	Katrina Gerster, OEP
Timothy Franquist, via phone	Anita Ponce, OEP
	Matthew Potzler, OEP
	Mikaela Castle, Public Works
	Cuong Dinh, Parks
	Jason Blakley, Planning & Development
	Ken Alexander, Planning & Development
	Brent Olson, Fire Department
Commission Members Not Present	Community Members Present
Columba Sainz	Carlos Aguiar
Kim Sax	Kendon Jung
Kathy Knoop	Kristen Brady
Nicole LaSlavic	
Kevin Groman	
Sarah Porter	

1. Call to Order/Roll Call and Announcements:

The meeting of the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission (EQSC) was called to order with a roll call at 3:05 p.m. There were 9 members present at roll call.

Chair Caroline Lobo thanked the Street Transportation Department and Director Kini Knudson for their work on the Vision Zero Road Safety Action Plan. Phoenix City Council unanimously approved the plan with an allocation of \$10 million in funding.

2. Review and approval of August 11, 2022, Minutes

Commissioner Colin Tetreault made a motion to approve the August 11, 2022, minutes. Commissioner Penny Allee Taylor seconded the motion and it carried 9:0.

3. Public Comments

No one spoke.

4. Urban Heat Island and Tree and Shade Subcommittee (UHITS) Update

Vice Chair Torres, Chair of the Subcommittee, reported that the UHITS Subcommittee meeting will be held on September 13.

5. Permitting Roof Top Solar

Jason Blakley, Assistant Director with the Planning and Development Department (PDD) presented. There has been an increase in rooftop solar, with a heavy volume of 5,832 permits being issued (486/month). There are currently over 600 applications in queue for review. Special administrative and plan review staff are assisting with the workload. The current process for plan review and permitting is 60 days, the goal was 14 days. A separate permit is required from the Phoenix Fire Department to ensure Phoenix Fire Code compliance. The SolarAPP pilot program is being offered to a limited number of certified contractors, who can input data. Once data and payment are entered by the contractor into the Planning and Development portal, a permit is issued the same day. The process to use the SolarAPP requires an AZ certified contractor, residential rooftop installations only, no ballasted or grounded systems. Historic preservation district or a flood hazard area are not allowed. Contractors must email a copy of the SolarApp approval and other data to PDD records as the system currently does not allow attachments. PDD is currently undergoing new software (Shape Phoenix).

Additionally, PDD has introduced the PV Permit by Inspection Pilot. This pilot allows a specialized group of inspectors to bypass traditional office plan review. Permits are issued within three days of applying and once plan review and inspection has taken place. Eligibility is determined by the system size that is limited to 10kW or less, no battery storage, cannot be in a historical district or flood hazard area. Applications and plans must be emailed, PV – RPBI must also be included in the subject line.

Commissioner Darren Chapman inquired whether there will be an energy savings level that could be introduced to everyone.

Jason Blakley responded that a pilot to expand will be in the future. They have been looking at what pilot programs has been the most efficient. As far as the SolarApp, there are issues when the contractor enters in wrong information in the app.

Commissioner Colin Tetreault inquired if the program is something that can be used pro-actively and along with code compliance, how could the Neighborhood Services Department (NSD) utilize.

Jason Blakley responded that PDD is willing to do whatever they can to help if NSD wants to include it in affordable housing and if developers are interested.

Chair Caroline Lobo asked if incentives would be available for individual owners.

Jason Blakley replied that the city is not offering any incentives.

Chair Caroline Lobo asked about commercial availability.

Jason Blakley replied if its retrofitted, available for solar parking lots. The review process would take 25 days and it would be considered a minor commercial category.

3:32 Commissioner Colin Tetreault left the meeting.

Commissioner Kelly Barr inquired about customer batteries and if heat protection was in place for homeowners.

Jason Blakley explained that they have not got to a point where battery storage is included. He stated he can inquire with their technical team, and Phoenix Fire.

Commissioner Tim Franquist inquired whether any discussions have taken place with regards to ground solar cells, cool roofing, and solar reconciliation.

Jason Blakley responded that he will need to follow up with PDD team member Josh Bednarek.

Chair Caroline Lobo asked what the over all feed back from the program has been.

Jason Blakley responded that the customers are unhappy with the timeline process, however they are very happy with the SolarApp. Pima County is using the app now. Phoenix is the biggest jurisdiction within the past two months. Additionally, a couple of programs are on the horizon to assist with timelines.

6. Adhoc Committee Shade and Tree Masterplan

David Hondula reported his office is making good momentum on the masterplan and moving in parallel with the Office of Environmental Program Climate Action Plan and would appreciate advice from commissioners.

Commissioner Ginger Torres stated the importance of having a diverse group with a wide range of knowledge and expertise. Business owners are very critical in gaining support and a grass roots approach with the subcommittees.

Chair Caroline Lobo commented the challenges are getting people to commit time.

Commissioner Penny Alee Taylor asked if there is a landscape architect representation on the subcommittee.

Commissioner Ginger Torres replied at this time there aren't landscape architects representing.

Nancy Allen suggested that David Hondula speak with the mayor's office to discuss the types of skill sets that are needed, time commitment, and for additional guidance.

Chair Caroline Lobo added that she agreed with Nancy Allen on the need to gather information from the mayor's office and come back to the committee.

3:51 p.m. Commissioner Colin Tetreault returned to the meeting.

7. GO Bond Committee Update

Chair Caroline Lobo reported she attended the GO Bond meeting held on September 12. She added that meetings are also held virtually and encouraged the participation of the subcommittee.

Commissioner Ginger Torres reported that she attended the GO Bond Executive Committee in August, the next meeting is scheduled on September 14. The capital needs study was on the agenda which included the replacement and upgrade of HVAC and other equipment. She added that \$25 million was proposed. She also reported that electric vehicle charging stations total cost needs are \$16 million, Brownfields total cost is \$5 million, and heat resiliency is \$11 million. She further stated that she is unsure how city staff came to the sentiment of the projects and added that greenhouse gas is important to her and that the projects are not an exciting sell to the voters. She reported that additional funding will be discussed at the next GO Bond Committee meeting to be held on September 22. She stated that extra input is valuable on which projects to recommend.

Commissioner Colin Tetreault mentioned the energy savings contract, high environmental impacts and cost for fuel investment tanks is a massive risk and liability for the city, not good for the people and environment. He went on to explain HVAC and other efficiencies, cost savings, highest investment of use.

Commissioner Kelly Barr agreed with Commissioner Ginger Torres with regards to the type of projects that are unappealing to voters. She inquired about electric vehicles and if this topic is covered in other subcommittees.

Nancy Allen explain that electric vehicles are not on the bond as they would not be eligible for funding. She added that departments were asked to identify crucial projects for the GO Bond Committee to assess funding priorities and Budget and Research heads up the committee and has their contact information included in the meeting packets. Furthermore, the job of the subcommittees is prioritized projects, however there are more needs than funds. Since 2008 there has been population growth, drought, and climate change. The purpose of the subcommittee is to whittle that down.

Commissioner Darren Chapman added that he would like to see more transparency in terms of the projects and numbers.

8. City of Tempe Sustainability and Resiliency Summary

Chair of the Sustainability and Resiliency Commission Kendon Jung presented. The Tempe Climate Action Plan was updated in 2019. Important areas identified in the plan include youth, businesses, neighborhood, and marginalized and indigenous people. Kendon Jung also spoke about a call to action for extreme heat, transportation, climate justice, and solar.

Commissioner Colin Tetreault expressed interest in feedback on collaborations, working close together on shared outcomes.

Kendon Jung replied that staff coordination on presenting unified front for residents, along with zoning updates. A survey conducted by Local First revealed 80% ownership is comprised of owners who don't even live in the state.

Kendon Jung added that the drought and water conservation efforts are hitting cities differently, therefore messaging to the community is consistent and being driven home.

Commissioner Ginger Torres reported she has had conversations with the City of Tempe about sustainability and regional resilience difficulties in attaining funding.

Chair Caroline Lobo added that environmental justice needs a regional approach and would like collaboration.

Kendon Jung replied they are securing funding for a paid position to look at regional equity.

Commissioner Tim Franquist talked about setting up a committee to include a regional group of MAG members to work on resiliency, open space, and sustainability.

Kendon Jung is on board to set up a work group and would like Phoenix to provide a forum for best practices and discussion. He added it would take a large collaborative effort, he will spread the word with other municipalities.

9. Announcements and Review of Future Agenda Items

Chair Caroline Lobo asked about in person meetings.

Commissioner Tim Franquist suggested air quality and proposition 400 issues as potential future agenda items.

Nancy Allen replied there will be a virtual (hybrid) option available and in person meetings will take place in city hall on the 12th floor, central conference room.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anita Ponce, Administrative Assistant I