

# South Bay Cities Council of Governments

## ***Livable Communities Working Group***

**Wednesday, July 20, 2011  
2:30 to 4:30 p.m.**

### **Agenda**

#### **I. Welcome & Introductions**

Attendees:, Otis Ginoza (Lawndale), Maria Majcherek (Hawthorne), Eric Haaland and Sona Kalapura (MB), Liz Sinclair (LA County), Leza Mikhail (RPV), Rebecca Cutting (Torrance), Pam Townsend (Hermosa Beach), Kim Christensen (El Segundo); Kelley Thom (Rolling Hills Estates), John Signo (Carson), David Magarian, Jeremy Hyde, Wally Siembab, Rosemary Lackow, Jacki Bacharach (SBCCOG)

#### **II. Minutes for June 15, 2011 – Received and Filed, no changes.**

#### **III. Local Ordinances for Sustainable Buildings: Green Building Codes, Sustainable Landscapes and More**

Sona Kalapura  
Environmental Program Manager  
City of Manhattan Beach

Pam Townsend  
Senior Planner  
City of Hermosa Beach

See Sona's PPT presentation on Livable Communities webpage  
<http://www.southbaycities.org> (July 20 meeting)

David noted there is funding from SCE to help cities with green ordinance. He introduced Sona Kalapura who presented regarding the process in Manhattan Beach of adopting Green Building Codes. She took a quick survey of the cities present as to their green buildings ordinances status, most were in progress and currently meeting minimal California green codes. Some cities have adopted the County ordinance. She noted Manhattan Beach has had strong environmental stewardship as a policy goal and credited the COG in helping to grow green programs, as well as the Environmental Task Force. Very recently MB won a lawsuit at the State Supreme Court, their plastic bag ban surviving legal challenge. They believe this will have a positive effect to encourage green ordinances. The ban involves a culture change and will be

implemented next January. Regarding their ordinances, they had a unique process, with a lot of citizen input, creating a task force from individuals with diverse interests. Various actions are being undertaken, including dealing with climate change, with a tie-in to greenhouse gases reduction. It was an 18 month process. For details re their sustainable building ordinance - see [www.citymb.info](http://www.citymb.info). Didn't want to make ordinance too burdensome – the goal was to apply to new development coming in. Examples: Wells Fargo at northwest corner of MBBld / Sepulveda – Wells Fargo used this as a new prototype for LEED gold. She noted top ten measures undertaken. This was a CEC (Calif. Energy Commission) approval process – if you don't adopt the model ordinance – go through a process that involves responding to the specific needs of the city.

In May their codes were approved. Their architect advisor who helped with tailoring the green code was Ben Burkhalter; he was phenomenal - see [blbarchitect@gmail.com](mailto:blbarchitect@gmail.com). David Magarian noted that SCE has staff to help you by coming to council meetings and addressing cost effectiveness of codes in buildings. Sona didn't recall specifically using SCE in Manhattan Beach. Liz, for LA County asked: if your codes call for 15% above Ca. Title 24 standards, have you looked ahead to whether your code will always be 15% above those standards? Sona responded that the way it reads is it just requires 15% above what was required in 2008. David M noted: it is intended to be a cyclical process – idea from CEC is to have local government become leaders in defining next steps. Sona noted that the MB committee initially wanted 20%, wound up with 15. In MB water conservation efforts have been great, but saving has declined recently - not sure why.

Eric Haaland, MB Planner, spoke regarding MB Planning Codes: green decks, roofs; landscape and irrigation are addressed. MB was very conservative in not giving too much away in zoning standards (e.g. you couldn't get more building height as a tradeoff for "green" design. Sona: a goal was to get rid of turf as it is too water-needy, encourage drought tolerant materials. Maria from Hawthorne: experience in MB, she converted her yard to zero water, got recognition. Wally noted an irony on a field trip to exurbia (specifically, Adelanto a natural desert, where every 4<sup>th</sup> house is vacant). As a purchase incentive they give away lawn installations. Sona said that the last prong of the MB code relates to renewable energy, (solar on roofs (max 12-inches over height limit), small wind energy turbines, EV charging stations which are allowed to overhang in side yards and garage parking space). David Magarian said he doesn't recommend wind as an effective sustainable measure – not enough wind in our area to make economically viable. Sona ended with Next Steps, including goals to: update website regarding sustainability and storm water (NPDES); and to develop public outreach.

Brief Q & A: Were there any cutting edge ideas applied to Wells Fargo building to get LEED certification? Eric explained mostly subtle design/construction methods, such as using recycled denim in insulation, gravel used to keep dust down.

Next presentation: Pam Townsend, Hermosa Beach.

Pam talked about their green ordinances being developed in Hermosa Beach. Referring to a hand-out, she recognized their Green Task Force, and accomplishments such as proposed banning of Styrofoam and plastic bags. The emphasis is on voluntary programs currently. They already waive solar permit fees, and have no height limit, though they require applicants to demonstrate the minimum height at which the facility will be functional, and they do not allow someone to alter a building under the guise that they are installing solar. Their water conservation ordinance addresses small planting areas and invasive species. Enforcement is triggered in conjunction with another related permit.

She noted in their Special Events permitting, part of the application addresses green issues. They need to work more on this, e.g. with the Fiesta Hermosa, they volunteer that they will have no Styrofoam, no plastic bags, but how is this enforced? The applicant fills out the form, it's reviewed by Pam, but so far no one really checks it "in the field". The organization may be checking on them – the City wants more help from them. It's a building block approach. They have adopted the California Green Ordinance – their approach was to see what made sense in HB – wound up 15% over California Title 24, with recycling of 65% construction waste. For residential sites, the ordinance encourages permeable surfaces – must use permeable surfaces on areas you are changing. Their storm water codes have been judged effective by the City's storm water consultant. Their Task Force also is working hard on a climate action plan - she credited Jeremy Hyde's help in coming up with a sustainability tool. Last week the council voted to waive 50% of city fees related to Energy Upgrade program improvements for citizens (many things don't require building permit, but basic package is covered). Are other cities seeing success with citizens taking advantage of Energy Upgrade program? David said it's been a slow as utility companies are slow in this area, and there have been 100 in LA County so far who have gotten rebates. Very recently much more advertisement will be done. Otis noted in Lawndale, their electronic billboard, CATV and entry sign will be advertising the Energy Upgrade program. Jacki: can the Lawndale sign / ad program be replicated with other cities? David: 5-6 commercial spots being used on CATV and the COG will be writing articles cities can use for newsletters. Many other additional incentives, lot of activity in this area: SBESC working with Hermosa leadership to do a city sweep – will be using incentive coupons – testing marketing approaches. Also working on green building labeling incentives – not know yet, working out flukes. Pam noted Hermosa is also working on a green point rating system. Wally: what has been the construction industry's reaction to all this?

Sona: at first not happy – as their first approach was ambitious: to treat mansions the same as a 1500 sf home, regarding efficiency (discouraging very large homes). Homeowners? Sona: haven't heard anything negative but also hasn't seen a lot of activity in the Energy Upgrade program. Jacki noted the COG has been asking for community "gabbers", to serve as Energy Champions for the upgrade program and she would love to get names/contact info for such. It was concluded that although the contractor program seems complicated, no one really knows about it.

Wally to Pam: we know Styrofoam is bad for fish, etc but is the alternative as benign? Pam: If you use plant based materials – that’s better. Do inland cities do less in terms of green measures? What’s the trend? Jacki noted we have one gold city (cities making their own building efficient): Hawthorne, and Lomita is a silver city. We need to explain to city facility managers this is good practice, and how to be more energy efficient (engineer to engineer). Kim, from El Segundo: we are at an interesting point in time, moving forward on different fronts, but also battling fiscal issues so, progress is going to be unique for every city – sometimes retrofitting will make more sense than scrape and build. There are many policy issues.

The discussion ended as Jacki announced that David M wants to set up a workshop for cities regarding financing green programs, and recognizing risks. David M called attention to surveys for the ordinances and discussions, requested they be filled out and left for him. Landscape compliance: how is enforcement done? Pam: it’s more an honor system, but they have to show details on plans. Thanks to both Sona and Pam for their presentations.

#### **IV. Climate Action Plans – Targets and Strategies (moved from VI)**

Jeremy Hyde

Jeremy said tomorrow (Green Task Force meeting) he will distribute a flyer and customized form that will help each city re-evaluate their carbon inventory and how to realize targets. Next, he will work on toolboxes tailored for South Bay and a survey for each city to help quantify mission statements. Advice: first count the great things your city is doing now. Ultimate goals; revisit these and quantify CO2 energy and possibly cost savings. This is coming in August (or sooner) and is similar to what SCAG tried but is more tailored to South Bay. Goal is to come up with specific measures for South Bay, again tailored to each city. COG is trying to figure out as much as possible on our own. For example, SCAG didn’t ask for fleet makeup details, and we will. From Liz (LACO): are you looking at LA County as well? Wally and Jacki: yes, the county pays an assessment to the COG, so, yes. Liz can put Jeremy in touch with right people at the County.

Wally to Jeremy regarding target setting: why would a City Council want to do this? Jeremy: any strategy has to start with goals, and then you need to determine what progress you’re making on your goals. Kim F: realistically will these be able to be reached or want to go higher? So, targets are helpful. Targets have to be linked to \$\$ (saved). Jeremy: is trying to verify as much as possible. There will be eventually more regulations that will be coming to cities - those who early adopt will be glad they already started on this. Some cities, though will find it hard to reach targets due to some factors (e.g. have a large industrial plant). Again, Jeremy will be disseminating a 2-page form at tomorrow’s Green Task Force meeting.

**V. Local Use Vehicle: Preliminary Report and Discussion of LUV II Options (switched with SCAG item on agenda)**

Jacki Bacharach, Wally Siembab, and David Magarian

Jacki passed out preliminary reports on the LUV program. Wally said it is hoped that this report will be widely read as an interim report – it is a draft (with a couple of typos) starts with our sustainability strategy, and can be used to inform public policy and hopefully will be able to attract more investment in the program. AB 118 was pretty powerful incentive (voucher program) – is on hold now. Regarding the report, there are **3 basic questions, challenging EVs**, and the report is organized around those: **1) will people really use them?** Report shows EVs have a 25% mode share for households where public transit is running 2%. Regarding VMTs: 22% less per household, less than 3 radial miles from home for 98% of users (stay in neighborhoods); average 5 miles RT and average of 1.1 “leg” miles; **2) what are the benefits?:** GHG reduction, gas consumption reduced, and 65 million \$ saved if based on \$45/hhd per yr (25% of their travel), and savings of 60-70 million not spent on fuel (includes charging cost). **3) is large scale deployment possible?** Yes conditionally. How about maintenance, overall quality? A lot of little things (e.g. doorknobs) break, How long is warranty? - it varies. Wally: need to develop streets with combo lanes – but there are various things **government agencies can do, and public education is very important.** This is a very special time when common citizens have a lot of things they need to know, unlike the fifties (massive undertaking for the public).

Next step: Jacki, Wally and David will meet with AQMD to discuss extending the project – then we will go look at neighborhoods with different characteristics, look at seniors, look at condos, check out charging problems; look at second tier (not early adopters) and tell AQMD what we want to do in the next phase of the demo project. Idea: let’s go back to same user group, give them a full vehicle with a speed regulator on it and see how they react, performance wise. Also LUVs don’t pose risks to injuring others.

Other opportunities for funding: The CEC released a grant program for PEV readiness (due in 2012), South Bay is competitive but so far, it doesn’t look good. There’s another Nissan Leaf study being done by ECOTALLY. Looking at complete streets planning, suggested a city could take the lead? Anyone? (Most cities don’t want to touch this.) This would be based on state law which has a triggering mechanism to require complete street improvements, and possibly storm water improvements. So, COG is going after other funding as well to continue studying this.

**VI. SCAG’s Public Workshop on the Regional Transportation Plan in Carson, August, 23; 1-4 PM: Review of Agenda and Handouts**

Wally Siembab

SCAG Workshop on RTP and Sustainable Strategies will be 1-4 pm, 8/23/11 in Carson, this is our chance to input to them about RTP and our sub-regional SCS. Will start with a 96-slide presentation. What is our reaction to this statement that the demand for large lot large house is overbuilt and the demand for attached multifamily is under built (SCAG prediction)? Group reactions: hard to tell in this economy, it's complex; younger generation can't get financing. It was noted that the LA Times recently ran editorials side by side regarding downtown housing, the good and bad. Wally pointed out the cities should speak up about what SCAG is saying. Group comments: issue is how will these polling station questions be used? Looking at rapid fire scenarios: specifically Community Neighborhood Design: if you are a South Bay-er this is not a real dichotomy. Seems this is a bunch of stereotypes. What to do about this? South Bay can have both statements be true. Otis felt all the questions are too general and this discouraged him from attending the workshop. Will this be used to support whatever they want to be conclusions? Turning to draft scenarios: Wally said he advised that we should be ready to discuss various specific types of transit, not just public transit in general because none of the public transit scenarios will get us to meeting air quality attainment. But our South Bay scenario will be used. The plan should be to keep harping on our SCS - - it will work. Maybe it would be better to attend a later workshop?

## **VII. Update: PEV Readiness Grant Application**

Wally Siembab,

See discussion at the end of Item V.

## **VIII. Other Business**

Jacki and Kim Fuentes reported on SCAG RHNA subcommittee. They will bring back what information SCAG has to offer. Kim reported SCAG is in discussion with the state on three things: how to deal with growth forecast; guidance on what to do when cities do not agree with their growth numbers after the forecast numbers are released and lastly, how to deal with replacement units.

## **IX. Adjournment.**

At 4:30, adjourned to August 17.