

**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES – April 25, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. Present at the time of roll call were: Chair Ella Hushagen, Vice Chair Michael Siegel, Commissioner Rona Bortz, Commissioner Michelle Hammond, Commissioner Amy Davis Jones, and Commissioner Richard Tom. City Council Liaison Councilmember Michael Cacciotti was absent from the meeting. Commissioner Casey Law had an excused absence. Staff present: Ted Gerber: Public Works Director, Arpy Kasparian: Environmental Services & Sustainability Manager, Melanis Stepanian: Water Conservation & Sustainability Intern, and Mark Jimenez: Management Analyst.

1) General Public Comment

There were no general public comments.

PUBLIC HEARING:

2) Continued Tree Hearing – 1865 Hanscom Drive

Commissioner Tom asked if the chain link fence is meant to be permanent. Commissioner Jones questioned how the chain link fence would mitigate erosion and gave alternative suggestions for erosion mitigation. Commissioner Bortz brought attention to the non-native tree species selected by the applicant. Commissioner Hammond asked the applicant why they chose avocado trees. Commissioner Jones shared her concerns regarding the placement of the trees. Chair Hushagen asked if the applicant looked into planting the replacement trees at an alternative location.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Janet Sedgwick discussed the steep ground and her concerns about the dirt on the property being dug up and eroding.

Angelo Gladding shared his concerns regarding the proposed choice of avocado trees on the property. He suggested taking advantage of native trees on the property to help retain water.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TOM, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HAMMOND, MOTION CARRIED 6-0, TO DENY THE TREE REMOVAL PLACEMENT PLAN AT 1865 HANSCOM DRIVE WITH UPDATES TO THE PLAN INCLUDING TREES THAT WILL ESTABLISH QUICKLY, ARE DROUGHT TOLERANT, AND WILL REDUCE EROSION. COMMISSIONERS REQUESTED FOR THIS ITEM TO BE BROUGHT BACK TO A FUTURE MEETING.

3) Tree Hearing – 2054 Fremont Avenue

The property owner requested ease of penalty for the removal of trees without a permit.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TOM MOTION CARRIED 6-0, TO DENY THE APPEAL FOR THE PROPERTY OWNER AND REQUIRE REPLACEMENT TREES OR RESPECTIVE FINES TO BE PAID.

PRESENTATION:

- 4) Review of FY22-23 Water Conservation Program – Arpy Kasparian, Environmental Services & Sustainability Manager

Kasparian shared a review of the water conservation program within the City and reviewed the various rebates available. Rebate information regarding both City and Metropolitan Water District Rebates can be found at SouthPasadenaCA.gov/WaterConservation or SouthPasadenaCA.gov/Rebates.

Commissioner Tom asked for specific statistics that display how much water is saved by utilizing water conservation tools, such as high-efficiency dishwashers or toilets. Commissioner Tom also suggested promoting specific rebates to commercial businesses to increase participation.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 5) Approval of Minutes of March 28, 2023 NREC Meeting

MOTION BY CHAIR HUSHAGEN, SECOND BY VICE CHAIR SEIGEL, MOTION CARRIED 5-0, 1 ABSTAINING, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 28, 2023 NREC MEETING.

- 6) Selection of Officers

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TOM, MOTION CARRIED 6-0, TO APPOINT CHAIR ELLA HUSHAGEN AS THE VICE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR MICHAEL SIEGEL AS THE CHAIR OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION.

COMMUNICATIONS:

- 7) City Council Liaison Communications

Councilmember Cacciotti was not present at this meeting.

- 8) Commissioner Communications

Chair Hushagen had no communications. Commissioner Jones encourages residents and businesses to take advantage of the rebates available. Vice Chair Siegel discussed working on the “low-hanging fruit” and more feasible steps within Climate Action Plan, especially with an update coming soon. Vice Chair Siegel also promoted the free bike valet at the City’s Eclectic Festival and the May bike bus which will be the last of the school year. Commissioner Tom had no communications.

- 9) Staff Liaison Communications

Ted Gerber, Public Works Director, shared about the April 26 Special Joint Meeting of the City Council and Mobility, Transportation & Infrastructure Commission discussing the State of the Streets.

On April 27 at 6:00 pm, there is a community meeting providing an update on stormwater projects in the City, residents and community members are encouraged to participate.

Arpy Kasparian, Environmental Services & Sustainability Manager, updated the commission on Earth Day events and reminded Commission members to bring their ideas to the table as a new work plan discussion will be brought to a future meeting.

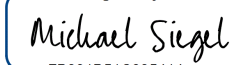
10) Upcoming Events

- Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project – Community Open House: Thursday, April 27, 6pm-8pm, South Pasadena Library Community Room
(<https://www.southpasadenaca.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/10219/716?curm=4&cury=2023>)
- LA County Smart Gardening Webinars- Various dates
(<https://www.ladpw.org/epd/sg/webinars.cfm>)
- MWD Turf Removal + CA Native Landscape Webinars- Various dates
(<https://greengardensgroup.com/turf-transformation/>)

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Ella Hushagen adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were adopted by the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission of the City of South Pasadena at a meeting held on April 25, 2023.



Michael Siegel, Chair