



MEMO

To: Matt Seubert
COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

From: Scott Davidson

Cc: Tammy Seale
Nora DeCuir

Date: December 7, 2011

Re: Summary of November 17, 2011 EECAP Community Workshop

The second community workshop for the Energy Efficiency Climate Action Plan (EECAP) Community Workshop was held on November 17, 2011 from 3:30 pm to 8:00 pm at the Senior Center Lodge in Half Moon Bay, CA. The purpose of the workshop was to educate and solicit feedback from the community about the climate adaptation component of the project. Specifically, objectives included generating input on the Draft Vulnerability Assessment (VA) and potential climate adaptation measures to include in the Climate Action Plan. The meeting was divided into two sessions: Session 1 was a workshop targeted at key stakeholders (but open to the general public also) in which Draft VA results were presented and discussed as a group, followed by a Board exercise to allow additional discussion and feedback; Session 2 was an open house format targeted at the general public that allowed for free-flowing discussion and comment on the meeting boards.

Session 1: Stakeholder Workshop

The workshop began with introductions from Matt Seubert, County Planning and Building Department project manager, who introduced County, PMC, and ICLEI staff and provided an overview of the agenda. Brian Holland, project manager with ICLEI, then presented an overview of the findings of the Draft VA and fielded questions regarding the document. Scott Davidson, PMC staff, then presented a proposed approach to developing adaptation measures for the Climate Action Plan.

Following these presentations, Mr. Davidson introduced the Board exercise. The exercise was designed to allow participants to circulate around the room to learn more about climate vulnerabilities and potential responses for the six focus areas of the VA. At each Board, key vulnerabilities were described and maps of potential impacts were presented. Participants were able to further discuss the conclusions with County, PMC, and ICLEI staff, and share their feedback by noting comments on the accompanying flipcharts.

The Board exercise generated some lively discussion, particularly around sea level rise impacts. Comments received are noted in the Board transcriptions following this summary section.

Session 2: Open House

In the Open House, members of the public were invited to circulate among the six stations, review the Draft VA findings, maps, and potential adaptation responses, and provide their feedback on these items on flipcharts. Because of the format, there was plenty of opportunity to have discussion among County and consultant staff and attendees from the public. The key themes coming out of these discussions include:

The importance of climate mitigation. While this workshop was focused on the adaptation component of the CAP, two attendees emphasize that mitigating climate change through GHG emissions reduction should be the County's highest priority.

Questions around the climate science. One attendee voiced concerns about the scientific assumptions included in the Draft VA. In particular, the commenter questioned the conclusions of the sea level rise figures cited in the document, which are drawn from guidance published by the State of California Climate Action Team and a team of scientists led by Stefan Rahmstorf. The commenter asserted that these sea level rise assumptions overestimate the problem and noted several ways the science was faulty. Based on the perspective that sea level rise will be less severe than assumed by the State, the commenter discouraged the County from taking action that is more aggressive than the science warrants.

Cost analysis. One attendee encouraged the County to consider cost and impact on the economy when evaluating potential adaptation and mitigation measures.

Attendees also provided comments on the flipcharts, a transcription of which is provided below.

Exercise Board Transcription

Coastal Ecosystems

- Going forward, need more info about how land will respond, i.e. erosion rates
- Need engagement with Coastal Commission and Army Corps
- Concern about property values if managed retreat is pursued
- Uncertainty about bluff erosion rates, so need flexible/adaptive responses
- Concern about low-lying Princeton area

Agriculture and Forestry

- Encourage County Park forests to become Demonstration Forests
 - Allow Enterprise Funds to be created to manage forests
 - Provide an opportunity for carbon sequestration by those who need to mitigate
- Create biomass energy generating facility in SMC, using waste from eucalyptus/acacia eradication
- Create more offstream water storage

- Facilitate greywater recycling and water recycling
- Consider timber harvest ordinances which would encourage the above changes
- Prioritize strategies that also reduce emissions

Coastal Infrastructure

- Increased areas of liquification due to water table changes, develop construction standards to address this
- Coordinate with Local Coastal Program update
- Address bluff erosion and retreat
- Lack of adequate evacuation routes
- Adopt recommendations of CA Sea Level Rise Interim Guidance Document developed by Sea Level Rise Task Force

Water and Wastewater

- If I were to rank the impacts of climate change on the top of my list, water and wastewater impacts would be on the top. The State's progress through the Water Board down the County needs to move faster. Why aren't the SMC building codes and public health codes moving faster for wastewater use systems?
 - Water conservation
 - Grey water
 - Recycled water
 - Rooftop/cistern water gathering
 - Why do these strategies work in other counties but not here?
- Alternatives to septic?
 - Self-composting toilets
- Look again at well permitting – it's important right now, example Denniston Creek CCWD
 - Monitor wells for overdraft

Wildfire

- Vegetation management in SFPUC/Crystal Springs Reservoir is currently inadequate to protect against major fire event.

Public Health

- More collaboration to provide transportation options, protecting air quality
- Air quality is good here – it's less of a concern