



## PUBLIC WORKS

### Staff Liaison

Will Provost | (510) 559-7684  
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## AGENDA

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE Environmental Quality Committee

Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

### JOIN VIA ZOOM:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89556067875?pwd=MTVEYS9oaHpUNXBOV0d4Qkk2RWYvUT09>

**Meeting ID:** 895 5606 7875 **Password:** 2154350  
**or Dial in:** 1-408-638-0968

This advisory body is currently meeting by teleconference, consistent with the Brown Act as amended by AB 361 (2021). Under the amended rules, teleconference restrictions of the Brown Act are suspended and the City will not provide a physical location for members of the public to participate in the teleconference meeting. Any person wishing to speak to the Environmental Quality Committee on any of these matters is invited to participate via web-conference as described above. The City encourages submission of written comments in advance to the Environmental Quality Committee by emailing [wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us) prior to the meeting.

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### 7:00 p.m. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING

1. **ROLL CALL** – Chair Neil Tsutsui; Vice-Chair Beth Molnar; Members Buddy Akacić, Howdy Goudey, Rebecca Milliken, Mark Miner, Sean O'Connor, Paloma Pavel, Ellen Spitalnik, Sheila Tarbet, Rose Vekony, and Dave Weinstein
2. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC** *(Estimated time: 5 minutes)*  
*Remarks are typically limited to three minutes per person, and may be on anything within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. Remarks on non-agenda items will be heard first, as well as introduction by individuals interested in serving on the advisory body. Remarks on agenda items will be heard at the time the item is discussed.*
3. **COUNCIL/STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS** *(5 min.)*  
Staff and/or Mayor Pro Tem Lisa Motoyama may report on policies, priorities, and significant actions taken by the City Council, and/or on matters of general interest to the EQC.
4. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** *(5 min.)*  
Consider a motion adopting the minutes of the EQC meeting on December 14, 2021.
5. **COLLABORATION WITH THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE** *(10 min.)*  
Hear updates, participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding collaborating with the City's Urban Forest Committee.
6. **ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND RACIAL FRAMEWORK** *(30 min.)*  
Discuss potential next steps for the EQC to promote diversity and inclusion, and the idea of developing an environmental, social, and racial framework to guide future EQC efforts.
  - Ad-Hoc Subcommittee report
7. **EQC BUDGET AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS** *(15 min.)*  
Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible action items regarding planning, logistics, and expenditures for the EQC calendar of events, including:
  - Educational Events, Films, and Workshops
  - Presentation from El Cerrito Youth activists

- Green Team 2021 Cleanups / Broom Pulls:
  - Jan 15, 2022 Broom Pull
  - 2022 Events
- Recycling Center 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in 2022
- Earth Day 2022 – April 23, 2022
- Hillside Festival – May 14-15, 2022
- East Bay Green Home Tour – May 14-15, 2022

**8. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION (30 min.)**

Hear updates, participate in discussion and consider possible action items regarding implementation of the Climate Action Plan.

- BART Corridor Access Plan
- MCE Clean Energy & California Public Utilities Commission Updates
  - CPUC Net Energy Metering Proposal(s) and City Council Resolution
- San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update/EIR – EQC Comments
- EQC Recommendations to City Council Ad Hoc Subcommittee

**9. EQC THEME FOR 2022 – “GO ELECTRIC!” (15 min.)**

Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible action items regarding implementation of the EQC’s workplan theme for 2022 to “Go Electric!”.

- Electrification Education
- Community Organized Induction Burner Loaner Program
- Researching Prohibiting Natural Gas in New Construction
- MCE Deep Green Enrollment

**10. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (5 min.)**

Hear committee member announcements and suggestions for future EQC agenda items. Potentially engage in discussion and make decisions regarding logistics of EQC consideration of items including:

- EQC Return to In-person Meetings
- Climate Adaptation, Severe Weather Events, and Emergency Preparedness
- Integrated Pest Management Report from City Staff
- EQC Collaboration with Young People in El Cerrito
- Tool/Toy Lending Library
- Urban Greening Plan Implementation
- Community Member Suggestions (e.g. Meatless Green Mondays, Leaf Blowers)
- Real Property Transfer Tax Rebates for Energy Efficiency – Education

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Staff Liaison, Will Provost, at (510) 559-7684. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the members regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center (7501 Schmidt Lane) during normal business hours.



## PUBLIC WORKS

### Staff Liaison

Will Provost | (510) 559-7684

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## DRAFT MINUTES

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE Environmental Quality Committee

Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

### JOIN VIA ZOOM:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89262087577?pwd=c09pS1BteXJlY28vOUlvY3I2SlduZz09>

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**7:00 p.m. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING** Chair Tsutsui called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL** – Chair Neil Tsutsui; Vice-Chair Beth Molnar; Members Buddy Akacić, Howdy Goudey, Rebecca Milliken, Mark Miner, Sean O'Connor, Ellen Spitalnik, Rose Vekony, and Dave Weinstein  
**Absent:** Members Paloma Pavel and Sheila Tarbet  
**Also Present:** Paul Fadelli, Council Liaison; Will Provost, Staff Liaison
2. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**  
No oral communications from the public were received at the meeting.
3. **COUNCIL/STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS**  
Council Liaison Mayor Paul Fadelli made comments reflecting on the accomplishments the City has made in the last year, that the City's finances are looking better, that the City has made strides relating to fire prevention, equity, and adopting the Expanded Foodware Ordinance. He also noted future goals for the City Council, including updating the Climate Action Plan. Staff Liaison Provost highlighted the City Council's recent adoption of the Ordinance implementing the mandatory organics recycling programs under Senate Bill 1383 and that the Public Works department is hiring a Management Analyst III.
4. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**  
Consider a motion adopting the minutes of the EQC meeting on November 9, 2021.  
**Move/Second:** Members O'Connor/Weinstein **Action:** Passed a motion to adopt the Minutes of the November 9, 2021 EQC meeting. **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None  
**Abstain:** Molnar
5. **APPROVAL OF THE 2022 MEETING CALENDAR FOR THE EQC**  
Consider a motion to approve the regular meeting schedule for 2022.  
**Moved/Second:** Members Milliken/O'Connor **Action:** Passed a motion to approve the regular meeting schedule for 2022. **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None
6. **COLLABORATION WITH THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE**  
Urban Forest Committee member Robin Mitchell highlighted updates from the recent UFC meeting, including that a contractor is completing work in the hillside natural area and that routine tree pruning will be starting soon. She noted the UFC is actively looking for grants for the City and may have found one from the Coastal Conservancy. She also mentioned that the UFC would like to be involved in the development of the updated Climate Action Plan when that process begins.

## 7. EQC WORKPLAN 2022

EQC Members participated in discussion and considered possible action items regarding updating the Work Plan for 2022.

**Moved/Second:** Members O'Connor/Goudey **Action:** Passed a motion to approve the Environmental Quality Committee's workplan for 2022. **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None

## 8. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND RACIAL FRAMEWORK

Committee members discussed the best next steps for the Ad Hoc Subcommittee and/or the Committee as a whole to develop an action plan for the Committee related to equity. Goudey proposed reviewing the EQC workplan with an equity lens. Akacić proposed that the EQC hear a presentation from El Cerrito youth.

**Moved/Second:** Members Spitalnik/Molnar **Action:** Passed a motion to appoint Akacić to the Ad Hoc Subcommittee working on equity issues and including Members Pavel, Spitalnik, and Tarbet. **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None

## 9. EQC BUDGET AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Staff and Committee members provided updates on recent events the EQC has supported and discussed plans for future events in 2022, including:

- Educational Events, Films, and Workshops
  - Virtual (Zoom) Fixit clinic (hosted by Berkeley Lab), on Sat. Nov. 20 - Debrief
  - Green Team 2021 Cleanups / Broom Pulls:
    - Dec. 5, Sunday, Baxter Creek – Debrief
    - Broom Pull – January 15, 2022
    - 2022 Events
  - SunShares 2021 – Debrief
  - Recycling Center 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in 2022
    - Weinstein stated that the El Cerrito Historical Society is beginning to plan and think through what this event should look like
  - Hillside Festival – May 14-15, 2022
  - East Bay Green Home Tour – May 14-15, 2022
  - Earth Day 2022 – April 23, 2022

**Moved/Second:** Members Tsutsui/O'Connor **Action:** Passed a motion to approve Green Team work parties in 2022, including a broom pull event on January 15, with additional dates to be determined by Weinstein **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None

**Moved/Second:** Members Tsutsui/Weinstein **Action:** Passed a motion to form an Ad Hoc Subcommittee to plan a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration for the Recycling Center, including members Weinstein, Milliken, and Molnar **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None

**Moved/Second:** Members Tsutsui/Spitalnik **Action:** Passed a motion to co-promote the 2022 East Bay Green Home Tour **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None

## 10. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

EQC Members heard updates on items relating to implementation of the Climate Action Plan, including the following:

- BART Corridor Access Plan
- Community Organized Induction Burner Loaner Program
- Fire Prevention and Climate Action
- MCE Clean Energy & California Public Utilities Commission Updates
- San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update/EIR – EQC Comments

Goudey provided an update on a recent California Public Utilities Commission proposal to change the net energy metering program that would be disadvantageous for solar customers.

**Move/Second:** Members Weinstein/O'Connor **Action:** Passed a motion to recommend the El Cerrito City Council oppose the proposed California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) decision to change the net energy metering program (NEM 3.0) which could add costs for solar customers. **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None **Abstain:** Milliken

**11. ENERGY RESILIENCY IN HOMES PG&E ON-DEMAND WEBINAR**

Miner introduced and the EQC watched the first segment of an on-demand webinar from PG&E on Energy Resiliency in Homes.

**12. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Staff and committee members made announcements and suggestions for future EQC agenda items.

- EQC Return to In-person Meetings
- Climate Adaptation, Severe Weather Events, and Emergency Preparedness
- Integrated Pest Management Report from City Staff
- EQC Collaboration with Young People in El Cerrito
- Tool/Toy Lending Library
- Urban Greening Plan Implementation
- Community Member Suggestions (e.g. Meatless Green Mondays, Leaf Blowers)
- Real Property Transfer Tax Rebates for Energy Efficiency – Education

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.

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Neil Tsutsui, Chair

This is to clarify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Environmental Quality Committee meeting of **December 14, 2021** as approved by the Environmental Quality Committee.

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Will Provost, Staff Liaison

# Draft Plan for Recycling Center's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

Jan. 10, 2022

Dave Weinstein, Beth Molnar, Rebecca Milliken

Goal: To focus attention on the recycling center and its history through media and live events, and to commemorate Joel Witherell, who oversaw the center for 20 years, from near its inception in 1973 to 1993 and who did more than any other individual to ensure that it is still around today.

Let's do this as a co-production, with the city's EQC and Environmental Services department, and the **El Cerrito Historical Society**.

## The date:

Aug. 5, 1972, is the day the center opened to the public. August 5, 2022 is a Friday.

## The plan:

One. **City Council resolution**. What should this do? Simply declare that Witherell did these things? Or: Include installation of plaque. Or? *See attached rough draft*.

Two. Hanging a **banner or banners** "El Cerrito Recycling Center, 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, 1972-2022) somewhere. (*Need a designer/producer; do something upcycled? Cost?*)

Three. **Permanent installation of a plaque for Joel Witherell** at recycling center. Historical Society has good portrait. Text could be adapted from resolution.

"Joel Clyde Witherell, March 31, 1938 - May 1, 2014

Joel Witherell oversaw the city's Recycling Center from January 1973, a few months after it was established as a monthly drop-off center by volunteers, to 1993, when he retired. Joel, whose role in the city was director of Parks and Recreation, helped direct the center's expansion, increasing hours of operation, accepting new materials, adding a curbside program, bringing in grant money, and helping develop a robust funding for recycling. Hundreds of people, volunteers and staff, have contributed to making the El Cerrito Recycling Center what it is today, one of the longest running and most comprehensive municipal recycling centers anywhere, but no one more so than Joel Witherell."

Four. **Website**. EC Historical could do this, listing events, linking to Dave's history of the center and to the movie that was based on that history. Also could put in historic photos. Sarah Steele is writing about her father's other accomplishments, saving the Black Forest near Clear Lake, helping young people, etc.

Five. An **exhibit board, historic photos and quick historical facts** so you can grasp the overall history fast. (*Beth to put together with photos and facts from Dave*)

Six. **Main event** will be a **program** Friday Aug. 5, 50 years after founding on that date, maybe 6 pm, Dave gives brief intro history of center, then early founders and others who helped the center grow and Joel Witherell's daughter speak. Also tour of center and **performance on homemade upcycled musical instruments** by recycling artist in residence [Steve Zwetsch](#). There may be **hands-on events too for young people** (*Beth*).

*(Dave to organize program with EC Historical; Beth to handle artist performance and exhibit. Food: Mary Barkey's cookies, other light snacks.)*

**Throughout the year, starting in February, we will publicize the recycling center's anniversary by:**

**Running Fun Facts** about the history of the recycling center monthly in Green news (*Dave*); ditto monthly, **projects your family can do** at home related to recycling, Art activities - at home upcycled projects using items found in your home or at the Recycling Center: Terrariums, musical instruments, collages etc. (*Beth*).

In addition, publicizing **the anniversary in city managers report, Chamber News**, etc.

Agenda Item No. **EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL PROCLAMATION**

**Recognizing Joel Witherell for his decades-long successful effort to create and sustain a vibrant recycling center in the City of El Cerrito**

WHEREAS, The El Cerrito Recycling Center, called E.C.ology at the time, opened as a volunteer-run “pilot project” to see if recycling would work in El Cerrito, on August 5, 1972 – 50 years ago; and

WHEREAS, by January 1973, the mayor reported that the center had “proven quite successful and is now about the biggest in the area;” and

WHEREAS, the volunteers who had created the center, which was open only two day a month, understood from the start that for it to function effectively and for the long-term it should be staffed and run by the city of El Cerrito; and

WHEREAS, Joel Witherell joined the city of El Cerrito in January as its park and recreation director, serving as staff liaison to E.C.ology and embracing the recycling cause; and

WHEREAS, Joel Witherell was an early member and president of the newly formed Northern California recycling Center from 1973, promoting recycling regionally; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, Joel Witherell got the first sizable funding for the Recycling Center, a \$45,000 grant the California Solid Waste Management Board for a “curbside source separation demonstration project” that would lead to the center’s first household recycling pickups.

WHEREAS, in 1976 Joel Witherell worked with the City Council appointed Citizens Solid Waste Committee to develop a recycling commitment and plan more robust than a new countywide plan; and

WHEREAS, Joel Witherell helped plan and oversaw a series of expansions and improvements at the Recycling enter: moving from being open every other Saturday to two Saturdays a mont in January 1977, and increasing the range of materials collected; and

WHEREAS, The city took over operation of E.C.ology on July 1, 1977 with the goal of eventually recycling 25 percent of the city’s solid waste, with Joel Witherell in charge; and

WHEREAS, with Joel Witherell in the lead, 1977 and 1978 saw major expansions at the center, thanks to more grants, more employees paid by a federal jobs program, and construction of the first building on site, the 6,000 square-foot “pole barn,” which would remain in place until 2011; and

WHEREAS, throughout the rest of Joel Witherell’s tenure at the Recycling Center, he promoted expansion and improvements in recycling, both at the center and curbside – making curbside collection free, rather than via subscription; providing recycling buckets to homeowners;



overseeing the popular Book Exchange; working with volunteers to create the citywide garage sale; and much more; and

WHEREAS, Joel Witherell, throughout all of this, oversaw city parks, the swim and community center, and a robust recreational program; and

WHEREAS, in 1989/1990 Joel Witherell proposed and the City Council adopted policies to ensure the Recycling Center's fiscal health through a recycling fee on garbage bills, increased garbage rates, and small garbage "mini-cans" to increase recycling and decrease material sent to landfills; and

WHEREAS, Joe Witherell, who retired in 1993 after overseeing the Recycling Program for 20 years, its longest tenured supervisor, did more to ensure the Recycling Center's success and continuance than any other individual, and

WHEREAS, in discussing Joel Witherell's career at the city of El Cerrito, the West County Times in 1994 referred to him as "the best of all combinations to look for in a public servant," and, "a visionary with his feet on the ground;" and

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of El Cerrito does hereby salute Joel Witherell for his contributions to the city AND WHAT. Name something for him? Install a permanent plaque?

Dated:

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Gabe Quinto, Mayor