



COMMITTEE REPORT

PRESENTED FOR COMMISSION MEETING DATE: 06/18/19

SUBMITTED BY: David Freedman

COMMITTEE NAME: Standing Committee on Solar and Green Building

SUBMITTED DATE: 06/10/19

COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: 06/04/19

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: 09/03/19, 10 am

Committee Meeting Goals:

- Planning for fall Energy Code training session
- DCE update
- Sustainability considerations for cannabis industry
- Home energy efficiency labels
- Wind and solar ordinance update
- EV charger update

Summary:

CVAG Director of Environmental Resources Katie Barrows and Desert Valleys Builders Association CEO Gretchen Gutierrez joined the meeting by phone for a discussion with Committee members and staff on a fall 2019 Energy Code training session. The tentative date is the week of October 21. Ms. Gutierrez will ask DVBA members if they have specific topics that they would like to see covered. Ms. Barrows will follow up with the Energy Code Ace team to see whether they are available for onsite training then and will check with UCR Palm Desert on classroom availability. Commissioner Freedman will contact the California Energy Commission to see if they could provide a speaker.

Ms. Barrows provided an update on Desert Community Energy (DCE) in advance of the discussion on the agenda for the Council meeting the next evening on whether the City will proceed with a 2020 program launch and choose the 100% carbon-free product as the default option for ratepayers. Ms. Barrows noted that discussions with Southern California Edison (SCE) were continuing, with the objective being a launch in early Fall 2020. She said that DCE Board will need to decide on participation by net energy metering (solar) customers but it was DCE's intention that they be allowed to participate in DCE on terms no less favorable than they now receive from SCE. Ms. Barrows stated that low-income customers would still be eligible for SCE's special rates and that DCE wants to expand participation in those programs. She also said that DCE is looking into applying for funds from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for energy efficiency programs. Commissioner Flanagan noted that as an alternative to DCE, Council could encourage participation in SCE's green rate program, as a proceeding to lower program rates is currently pending before the CPUC.

At the June 5 Council meeting, following an introduction by Sustainability Manager Tallarico, presentation by CVAG Executive Director Tom Kirk and discussion among Council members, they voted 5-0 in favor of launching DCE in Fall 2020 with the 100% carbon-free option as the preferred product. Council recommended a robust outreach campaign, which DCE will implement.

Jocelyn Kane, Vice President of the Coachella Valley Cannabis Alliance Network (CVCAN), joined the meeting for a discussion of sustainability considerations for the cannabis industry. Ms. Kane presented the slides from a workshop on this topic hosted by the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership in May. Committee members discussed the energy and water needs of cannabis indoor grow facilities. Ms. Kane advised that because of federal rules limiting access of the cannabis industry to banks, it was difficult for the industry to obtain financing for solar equipment. She said that the growers do use drip irrigation and recycle the used water as much as quality standards allow. Commissioner Freedman said he would check to see that solar equipment would be allowed as an accessory use to cannabis facilities under the Solar Zoning Ordinance the Commission approved at its March meeting, which is in fact the case. Commissioner Goins raised the question of indoor air quality for cannabis facilities, as they must be tightly sealed to prevent odors from escaping. Manager Tallarico said that SCE has energy efficiency programs for the cannabis industry. He said he would put Ms. Kane in touch with the right person at SCE and suggested that SCE participate in a CVCAN networking event. Manager Tallarico also suggested that the Commission develop a sustainability package for the cannabis industry supply chain, which would also look at waste reduction issues. As a first step, Manager Tallarico and Ms. Kane will coordinate to organize a tour of a cannabis cultivation facility for the Commissioners.

Jay Francisco of the City's Engineering Services Department then joined the meeting for a discussion of locations for electric vehicle chargers, which will be funded by a grant of \$60,000 from the South Coast Air Quality Management District and a \$20,000 matching grant from the City. SCE will cover the costs of drawing power to banks of at least 10 solar chargers, so the City will be able to install 10 new chargers next to the Tesla chargers being installed at the downtown parking lot across from the Art Museum. Other likely installation locations are parking lots on Belardo Road downtown, at Demuth Park next to the pickleball courts and at City Hall near the CoGen facility. Two of the City Hall chargers will be Level 3 fast chargers, all others will be Level 2. Manager Tallarico and Commissioner Flanagan are working on an RFP to be approved by Council after it returns from the summer break.

Commissioner Freedman briefed the committee on the status of the wind energy conversion systems (WECS) and solar zoning ordinances that the Commission approved at its February and March meetings. The WECS ordinance was on the agenda for the Council meeting the next evening, following resolution of environmental issues with industry and community stakeholders. At its meeting, Council unanimously approved the WECS ordinance on first reading. Council thanked both the Sustainability and Planning Commissions for their work in a collaborative fashion. The solar zoning ordinance is tentatively scheduled to come before the Planning Commission at its June 26 meeting.

Committee members then began a discussion of home energy efficiency labels. They agreed to begin looking into a pilot program to encourage homeowners to obtain an energy audit at the time of sale. The audit would identify existing conditions and opportunities for energy efficiency in a home, as well as its Home Energy Score using US Department of Energy standards. The program would work with the local real estate industry to have the score included in MLS listings. Similar programs exist in Berkeley (<https://www.cityofberkeley.info/EnergyOrdinance/>) and Portland (<https://www.pdxhes.com/>). Manager Tallarico said he would investigate funding for a rebate program for participating homeowners in the range of \$10,000 for the upcoming fiscal year to support a pilot program. Commissioner Freedman said he would contact local service providers to find out the cost of an audit. One provider contacted so far gave a cost of \$175 for the audit on a stand-alone basis or \$100 if included with a home inspection.

Recommendation/Request:

Continuing working with stakeholders on 2019 Energy Code issues as it moves towards effectiveness.

ACTION ITEMS REQUEST TO COMMISSION

Approve funds for an Energy Code training program to be held in the fall of 2019 to be requested as part of Committee's FY 2019-20

	<p>outreach budget, if training needs are identified. Approve funds for a home energy efficiency audit rebate pilot program, if program is developed by the Committee and approved by the Commission.</p>
<p>ACTION ITEMS REQUEST TO OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY</p>	<p>Work with Planning Services Department staff on draft solar zoning ordinance. Work with CVAG on possible launch of DCE in 2020. Implement home energy efficiency audit rebate pilot program if approved.</p>
<p>POTENTIAL FISCAL IMPACT/REQUEST IF ANY:</p>	<p>Funds for an Energy Code training program to be held in the fall of 2019 will be requested as part of Committee's FY 2019-20 outreach budget. An FY 2019-20 allocation of \$10,000 may be requested for the home energy efficiency audit rebate pilot program.</p>