



# COMMITTEE REPORT

PRESENTED FOR COMMISSION MEETING DATE: 04/16/19	SUBMITTED BY: David Freedman
COMMITTEE NAME: Standing Committee on Solar and Green Building	SUBMITTED DATE: 04/08/19
COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: 03/05/19	NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: 05/07/19, 11 am

### Committee Meeting Goals:

- Reach Code opportunities
- EV charger policy
- Desert Community Energy update
- Energy Code training programs
- Solar policy for accessory dwelling units

### Summary:

The meeting began with public comment from Kim Floyd, a Palm Desert resident and Sierra Club representative. Mr. Floyd stated that the Sierra Club believes that there is a climate change emergency and is looking to local decision makers to take the maximum response to deal with the emergency. Mr. Floyd said the Sierra Club wishes to assist and encourage the Sustainability Commission and City Council members throughout the Coachella valley to address issues related to climate change.

Commissioner Freedman summarized the webinar he had just attended on opportunities for Reach Code measures that exceed the requirements of the 2019 Energy Code that will enter effect on January 1, 2020. Following discussion among the Committee members, they agreed that measures worth further consideration are electric readiness, energy audits at time of sale and energy and water efficiency for cannabis industry facilities.

Sustainability Manager Tallarico updated the Committee on the City's electric vehicle charger program. The City has received grants for installing one Level 3 station and at least 18 Level 2 stations. The City will issue an RFP for third parties to install and manage the stations. Commissioner Flanagan will assist in establishing the RFP criteria and locations around the city where the chargers could be installed.

CVAG Director of Environmental Resources Katie Barrows then joined the meeting by phone. Palm Springs will consider launching Desert Community Energy in the spring of 2020 and having the default option be the 100% carbon-free product. Ms. Barrows explained the process for customers to opt out of DCE or opt down from the 100% carbon-free option. At its April 15 meeting, the DCE Board will establish a Community Advisory Committee. The committee will assist the Board in implementing energy programs and provide ongoing support and community engagement, including suggestions and support for DCE programs to reach out to low-income and under-served members of the community. One area of focus will be community benefit funds, which are available through the California Public Utilities Commission. The funds would allow DCE to offer energy efficiency programs that are designed to suit the needs of community members, given our extreme climate and air conditioning load. DCE

customers would also be eligible to participate in SCE programs, such as energy audits.

Ms. Barrows and Commissioner Freedman indicated they would follow up Energy Code training needs and available programs. The objective is to have a training session in the fall for valley-wide building professionals and city staffs.

Finally, Commissioner Freedman presented his draft memo on solar requirements for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), which he prepared in response to an inquiry from Council during discussion at its February 20 meeting of an ordinance to amend the Zoning Code provisions on ADUs to conform to recent state law. The question of whether a PV system is required for an ADU is covered by mandatory provisions of the 2019 Energy Code. ADUs that meet the definitions of alterations or additions (i.e., attached or converted from existing unconditioned structures) do not require PV systems. Newly constructed detached ADUs do require PV systems if they do not satisfy the size or shading exceptions of the 2019 Energy Code.

Committee members discussed concerns that adding upfront costs to ADUs for PV systems may discourage the benefits of ADUs as affordable housing units and could discourage some from adding units, which would counter the desire for more dense housing stock. The costs and benefits of a policy that prefers PV systems on ADUs where they are not required by the 2019 Energy Code would need to undergo further analysis from a financial and GHG emissions perspective. The City may also wish to consider an incentive program when the applicant for a conforming ADU voluntarily installs a PV system. The fiscal impact of that waiver would also require further study.

Commissioner Freedman's memo, as revised to reflect input from Commissioner Goins, will be presented along with a staff report from Sustainability Manager Tallarico as a "Receive and File" item on the consent calendar for the May 1 Council meeting. Council will also consider at the meeting the draft Wind Energy Conversion System ordinance that has been approved by the Sustainability and Planning Commissions.

**Recommendation/Request:**

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

<b>ACTION ITEMS REQUEST TO COMMISSION</b>	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 outreach budget.
<b>ACTION ITEMS REQUEST TO OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY</b>	Work with Planning Services Department staff on draft solar zoning ordinance.
<b>POTENTIAL FISCAL IMPACT/REQUEST IF ANY:</b>	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.