



Legislation Text

File #: 12-432, **Version:** 2

ACCEPT: Community Development Committee Meeting Highlights of July 17, 2012

CITY OF SAN LEANDRO

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

July 17, 2012
4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

San Leandro City Hall
835 East 14th Street
San Leandro, California
Sister Cities Gallery

HIGHLIGHTS

Committee members: Vice Mayor Gregory and Council Member Reed

City staff present: City Manager Zapata, Police Chief Spagnoli, Community Development Director Sims, City Attorney Pio Roda, Business Development Manager Battenberg, Housing and Planning Director Liao, Officer Sobek, Business Development Analyst Kay, Senior Planner Barros, Community Compliance Officer Herrera, Secretary Gonzalez

Public present: Carla Din (East Bay Green Corridor), Chris Crow, Mia Ousley, Anastasia Abate, Kristine Konrad

The meeting was called to order at 4:46 p.m.

1. Presentation by East Bay Green Corridor of Goals and Accomplishments

Carla Din, Executive Director of the Green Corridor, presented the partnership's mission and principles which include strengthening the regional green and clean economy with an emphasis on sustainability. The focus is on creating an environment which promotes the East Bay cities to innovative start-ups, specifically spin-offs from the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab and UC Berkeley. She highlighted the activities and accomplishments of the Green Corridor including partnerships, streamlined regional solar permitting, marketing and events, regional grant applications, and letters of support for member agencies. Business promotions include: an e-newsletter, website, referral network of "feeder groups", marketing of opportunity sites, private-public partnerships and events. Policy development includes standardizing Solar Energy Permitting Process and receiving State designation as an iHub.

Committee discussion included San Leandro's contribution to the establishment of the regional streamlined solar permitting process and clarification regarding how the Green Corridor is funded. Din confirmed that the Green Corridor Principals, of which Mayor Cassidy is one, will be addressing questions on the structure and funding of the organization in the next few months. Din confirmed current staffing is 1 full-time Executive Director plus 1 grant funded permitting consultant/project manager.

2. Discussion Regarding Chicken and Beekeeping within Residential Zones

City Manager Zapata provided a brief overview of the past discussions on chicken and beekeeping and shared that the Police and Community Development Departments are in the process of drafting a comprehensive policy which should be completed in the next few months.

Chief Spagnoli presented her concerns with the outdated ordinance which include the need to address issues beyond chickens and beekeeping, such as feral cats and urban farming. She stated that a comprehensive overhaul is necessary to avoid conflicts within the ordinance and because "one-size does not fit all." Chief Spagnoli further stated that a full update would take six months, including time for public input.

Senior Planner Barros presented research on policies in other cities in Alameda County. She stated that a common thread in cities with policies was that the regulations were within the municipal code, with enforcement by Animal Control, and included a minimum number of permitted chickens. Chief Spagnoli stated any policy must allow for a neutral process, such as performance checks, which will allow people who are following the ordinance, being responsible and safe neighbors to continue, while eliminating those who do not properly follow the code; an "animal fancier" should also be defined and included in the ordinance.

Committee discussion included consensus that the Police Department should lead the drafting of the ordinance as they are responsible for enforcement. The Committee agreed with a need to develop a comprehensive ordinance. Chief Spagnoli confirmed that Animal Control had two to three officers in 2008 and currently has only one officer. This one officer spends a significant portion of time reacting to calls and complaints, including a large number of feral cats calls, and currently has insufficient time on proactive enforcement.

Mia Ousley shared that she appreciates the need for a comprehensive ordinance that includes pigs, turkeys and goats and protects the safety of the community, with few restrictions. She offered herself as a resource to develop the ordinance and would like the process expedited because of the time it has taken to get to this point.

Kristine Konrad stated there needs to be education about chicken coop cleanliness, respect for neighbors and the sustainable movement for green living in general. Ms. Konrad offered herself as a resource in developing the ordinance.

Chris Crow complimented the work of City staff, but stated his concern regarding control being given to the Police Department and any resulting precedent.

3. Discussion Regarding Parameters for the Broadband Connection Business Incentive

Program

Analyst Kay presented an overview of the existing Business Incentives Programs including the successes of the Commercial Façade Rehabilitation Program and the Industrial Competitiveness Program. He shared that he receives multiple calls inquiring about Lit San Leandro and financial assistance in getting connected. He clarified additional funding for establishment of a new incentive for broadband connections is not being requested at this time. The Broadband Connection Program would be under the umbrella of the Business Incentives Program which has \$180,000 in available funding in FY 2012-13.

The cost to connect to an existing broadband network, which may be Lit San Leandro or another carrier, can range from \$2,000-\$40,000, depending on the availability and configuration of the existing conduit. Assistance would benefit existing businesses, but would also have a positive legacy, improving the buildings infrastructure if the business ultimately left the site. The proposed Broadband Connection Program is for a one year forgivable loan for reimbursement of 50% of the project cost up to \$10,000.

Committee discussion included concerns regarding splitting the \$180,000 between the three incentive programs, clarification of the current demand for the façade improvement and industrial competitiveness programs, the possible use of PEG funding, and marketing and promoting the program.

The Committee supported creating a Broadband Connection Program for up to \$10,000 as an eligible use under the incentive programs. At this time, the incentive funding allocation will not be explicitly divided amongst the three incentive programs, although that may be revisited in future budget years once more information about the demand for the programs is available.

4. Discussion Regarding Potential Amendments to Secondary Dwelling Unit Regulations

Planning and Housing Manager Liao updated the Committee on a proposed amendment to the definition of a secondary dwelling unit. In 2003 a secondary dwelling unit was defined as 450 square foot. Feedback from both the community and staff is that this is too limiting. Planner Barros confirmed that an update was envisioned in the 2010 Housing Element Update. The proposed amendment allows for:

- a) Lots up to 4,500 square feet may have a 450 square foot unit
- b) Lots between 4,500 and 6,000 square feet may have a unit up to 600 square feet
- c) Lots over 6,000 square feet may have a unit up to 750 square feet

Committee discussion included that no changes to parking conditions are recommended and clarification that the amendment would not affect Transited Oriented Development.

5. Community Development Project Updates

Update on Waste Management Project: the first phase is completed, LEED certified and is beautiful. This project was approved 1 ½ years ago.

6. Public Comments

Chris Crow spoke regarding the opportunity created by the City adding a Broadband Connection Program and a concern there is not enough money in the fund. He encouraged a mid-year budget review to increase funding to the program and the opportunity to create headlines and publicity.

7. Committee Member Comments

None

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.