



Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes Regular Meeting, January 23rd 2025

Committee Members in Attendance: Jay Kimball– Chair, Chris Greacen-Vice Chair, Kendra Smith, Michael Shanks, Adrian Kilpatrick, Grant Carlton, Janet Alderton, Vince Dauciunas, Barbara Marrett, Jerry Whitfield, Matilda Twigg

Committee Liaisons in Attendance: Tim Clark, Lovel Pratt, Faith Van De Putte, Sheila Gaquin, Lynn Bahrych

Ex-officio and County Staff: Angela Broderick, Jane Fuller

Convene meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jay Kimball at 5:31pm. Quorum was confirmed. Re-introduction of new committee member, Grant Carlton.

Public Comment No members of the public present.

Business Operations

- **Approve Agenda** – The Agenda for the meeting was approved with a friendly amendment to push the agenda item Transportation Element Recommendations discussion to next meeting. **MOTION: Chris moved, Janet Seconded and the motion passed.**
- **Approve December 5th, 2024 Meeting Minutes–** **MOTION: Janet moved, and Chris seconded, to approve the minutes of the December 5th, 2024 meeting** with one, small typo to be corrected and the motion passed.
- **Terms and Recruitment**-Angela stated there are 4 committee positions that will be expiring in April of this year. Angela will reach out to those individuals to see if they wish to renew. She encourages current members to tap into their networks for potential new members. Current members are allowed a second term but not three consecutive terms.

Engagement Update

Brief clarifying conversation regarding the timeline of the transportation element in reference to the Climate Committee’s recommendations to be submitted to DCD for consideration.

Angela shared a feedback document from the COMPASS group sessions being held by community-based organizations under the Commerce Public Participation Grant. She noted that they are partnering to run focus groups cooperatively to reduce redundancy and burnout of overburdened communities.

Sheila noted the idea of limiting house size had come up, wondered if that was legal, and noted that comments had come in to the Planning Commission in Land Use and Housing regarding limiting growth and house size. Janet expressed support for limiting the footprint size, and Michael brought up the example of Nantucket where demolition of structures is limited, legally property owners are required to offer for sale or move it rather than demo from a waste-reducing perspective. Vince stated that there could potentially be a maximum building size created as long as it does not conflict with State Building Codes and the County Attorney agrees. He noted that that the state has established there cannot be a limit put on water and power utility usage, the only “limitation” can be a financial one with a tiered cost-usage system. Lynn stated that there are size limits to impervious surfaces but no limit to house size; state law defines a single family as much larger than expected. Sheila added that septic design might be one of the most direct limiting factors currently in the County. Chris recalled an idea brought up in the Climate Committee retreat by him and Vince that new construction could be limited to less than 4,000 sq feet as observations have been noted that climate emissions are

disproportionally attributed to the largest houses and referenced a “de-mansionification” Los Angeles ordinance. Grant noted the COMPASS comments were based on 42 participants (mainly Lopez) and noted the importance of the number and variety of the different cross-sections of community we are getting comment from, as many commenters may be from a similar demographic. He highlighted transportation as the biggest GHG emission sector in SJC and how much work is lacking there, such as a multi-modal transportation plan. Lovel brought up requiring greater weatherization and energy savings requirements than currently in code to combat the increased demand for energy, as well as targeting big-energy use components such as large, heated pools. Janet encouraged urgency around encouraging solar plus storage.

Jane Fuller shared the new Council’s joint feeling of concern for the state of critical resources like energy and water in the county. Vince shared his recent session with ChatGPT discussing the Washington State GMA guidelines for comprehensive planning and how it has not changed much since its inception in 1990, which assumed infinite power and water with no analysis required. He stated there is work being done to discover if there will be an adequate water supply for the growing population and demand in the next 10-20 years, but the results from the USGS report will not be available until after the information for our comprehensive plan is due. Point being, outdated guidelines are not preparing our comprehensive plan for the inclusion of large infrastructure to remedy lack of adequate utilities. Vince urged the committee to consider if we should give top priority recommendations for critical issues, and asked how Comp Plan policies become fully realized in the UDC. Kendra clarified that there is a process for how the elements we contribute to the comp plan update factor into the development code update after the comprehensive plan. Learning from the implementation of the development code, we then alter our future comprehensive plans based on that experience. Lynn added that the Clean Water Committee plans to encourage and incentivize the storage of water for drought conditions in future policy and regulation writing.

Angela updated the group on upcoming outreach efforts; hosting focus groups with COMPASS at the family resource centers on San Juan, Orcas and Lopez, and the second climate survey is coming soon, with a focus on strategies, actions and priorities.

Annual Report and Workplan

Jay shared that current national funding streams for climate action remain to be seen for this year and beyond. Washington State EV subsidy program is contemplating another for this year after overwhelming applications last year. Jay opened the discussion on communication, asking - How will we as a committee be effective this year? What steps do we need to take that may differ from last year?

Angela talked about the importance of help from the committee in tracking the changing landscape of funding, and the nuance of how we talk about our work (eg. sustainability, pollution, etc.) She spoke to the sensitivity needed in outreach for community members who are under new strains and stresses. Matilda is working with Angela on youth outreach through the schools, and she said youth outreach can be strengthened by discussion rather than instruction.

Janet had a personal home assessment from the Conservation District regarding wildfire risk prevention and expressed the desire for field trips or demonstrations if people are willing to open their properties to show what has/can be done. Vince expressed a need for consistency of messaging to the community regarding wildfire danger in the county. Lynn suggested that we could support an ember awareness campaign. Jay asked Kendra and Angela how the committee can best insert this wildfire prevention knowledge in the climate action plan. Angela is monitoring the Community Wildfire Protection Plan update process, and Kendra noted that the Terrestrial Managers Group is identifying places/projects in the CWPP for wildfire risk prevention. Many initiatives are in the hands of the Conservation District, the committee can absolutely have room in the Climate Action Plan to insert ideas for actions at the county level and for individuals. Conservation Corps were noted for managing forests, but the amount of overstocked forests are a challenge.

Positive feedback was given for the climate events at the San Juan Grange and the County Fair booth, and for keeping the committee well-informed.

Multiple members suggested a “do better” could be a more tech friendly way to give collaborative feedback and edit live documents instead of separate copies (committee members currently have options for both). Another suggestion was clearer timelines of committee feedback requested on documents and their respective due dates, and additional info on how member feedback is integrated. Jay suggested that a “shared roadmap” or dashboard resource could help.

Angela shared the CSAC 2025 Workplan with monthly outlines of all projects, comp plan elements and committee meetings. Jane Fuller reiterated that an action plan cannot come before Council approval of the Comp Plan update. Angela and Kendra clarified that the groundwork is just that, utilizing what has already been worked on for the Climate element and starting to put structure into the Climate Action Plan but not finalized until the Climate Element has been approved as proper sequence dictates. We also need to utilize the consultants help within the funding period of the Commerce grant.

Liaison Roles and Updates

Sheila expressed concern about DCD’s deadlines for the Comp Plan considering they have had to revisit some topics and haven’t begun working through Otak’s topics yet. The grant deadline ends in June, but the updates deadline isn’t until December.

Tim shared that Land Bank had their annual retreat and discussed topics such as housing market and the work done on new and existing preserves. Looking forward, their year may focus more on resource projects rather than purchasing new land. Landbank offers public tours concerning wildfire risk and is running a firewood lottery on San Juan Island in February and Lopez will have a forest inventory in the coming year too.

Faith shared that the ARC submitted a memo of comments on the Climate Element. The omission of agriculture in the water resource section of the draft was mentioned as crucial feedback. Other feedback was potentially leveraging the current use taxation programs to incentivize land use practices that achieve climate resilience goals. Also calling out a policy about supporting the development of local food production and just how that local food production ties in with climate resilience. Different nonprofits (Friends of the San Juans, COMPASS group working under Marona Institute) are coming together and helping to support an Ag Community Event March 9th at the SJ Grange and on February 21st at Lopez Community Center.

The meeting adjourned at 7:37pm.

The next meeting will be held on March 27, 2025 at 5:30pm.