

Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

September 17, 2020

WEB CONFERENCE

Los Angeles County Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Betsey Landis, Chair, Environmental Organization Representative
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative
Shikari Nakagawa-Ota, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health
Carlos Ruiz, Los Angeles County Public Works
Sam Shammass, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Wayne Nastri, South Coast Air Quality Management District
Reyna Pereira, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Martins Aiyetiwa, Los Angeles County Public Works
Gabriel Esparza, Los Angeles County Public Works
Michael Harmon, Los Angeles County Public Works
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens
Omid Mazdidasni, Los Angeles County Public Works
Dennis Montano, Republic Services
Dave Nguyen, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works
Vu Truong, Los Angeles County Public Works
Kawsar, Vazifdar, Los Angeles County Public Works
Daniel Wibisono, Los Angeles County Public Works
Jeffrey Zhu, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mike Mohajer called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m., after giving Chair Betsey Landis time to resolve technical difficulties with logging into Zoom.

II. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 20, 2020 MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes, as corrected, from the August 20, 2020, Subcommittee Meeting was made by Mr. Carlos Ruiz, and seconded by Mr. Sam Shamas. Motion passed unanimously.

III. UPDATE ON SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Odor Complaints

Mr. Vu Truong, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL) odor complaints from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) for the month of August 2020 ([Link](#)).

- During the month of August 2020, 82 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline. Of those, 28 were classified as trash, 5 were classified as landfill gas, 17 were listed as No Field Response, and the rest were listed as odor from other source and none, which meant no odors were detected from site visit.
- Compared to July 2020, the number of complaints received in August 2020 increased from 23 to 82 complaints.
- Compared to August 2019, the number of complaints for August 2020 increased from 7 to 82 complaints.
- As of September 3, 2020, AQMD issued one Notice of Violation (NOV) related to odor for the month of August 2020.
- According to the AQMD report, the total number of complaints received during 2020 is 314.

Mr. Mohajer commented that during the Community Advisory Committee (SCL-CAC) meeting, which he participated in, it was noted that most of the odors reported in the morning hours were caused by trash. As a result, Republic Services (Republic) stopped receiving trash in the early morning, but the specific hours were not indicated. Mr. Wayde Hunter of the North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens, who was also in attendance at the SCL-CAC meeting, commented that Republic may have gone back to early morning hours from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. Mr. Mohajer mentioned it would be helpful if staff could gather the information that is available and update the Subcommittee.

2nd Quarter 2020 SCL Vegetation Report

Mr. Michael Harmon, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the 2nd Quarter 2020 SCL Vegetation Report. Republic submitted the 2nd Quarter 2020 Vegetation Project Status Report on August 3, 2020.

During the second quarter of 2020, a weeding strategy was implemented to address aggressive invasive weeds that had flourished since the Saddle Ridge Wildfire impacted the sage mitigation areas. Maintenance personnel have conducted removal of the invasive weeds on both City Side Sage Mitigation Decks B and C. The following species have been targeted as part of the removal strategy; Russian Thistle, Wild Oat, Shortpod Mustard, Red Brome Grass, False Barley, Tree Tobacco, Yellow Star Thistle, and others that took hold in the burned barren areas. The following is a general status update of each of the mitigation areas for the 2nd Quarter of 2020:

City Side Sage Mitigation Pilot Project Area - Deck C

- Due to the establishment of native vegetation, there has been a quick rebound of the several species including: Saltbrush, Coast Sunflower, and pockets of wild ryegrass.
- The native species following the rebound include Purple Sage, Coast Sunflower, White Sage, Creeping Wild Rye, Deerweed, Black Sage, and Mexican Elderberry. There are also new species from the original seed mix now sprouting up in decent numbers and are Scarlet Bugler, Telegraph Weed, Monkey Flower and Smooth-Leaf Yerba Santa.
- Intense weeding efforts implemented by the landfill has greatly reduced the cover of noxious non-native annual species, especially previously dominant brome grasses.

City Side Sage Mitigation Area - Deck B

- There is evidence of desiccation of the seedlings, especially the Common Yarrow and other native species that have recently sprouted and are beginning to harden off and defoliate during the dry season.
- Many of the species in the seed mix have germinated and are doing well and blooming, which include the White Sage and Mexican Elderberry.
- A substantial amount of sage scrub has resprouted and some of which flowered this past spring.
- It is also noted that the weed cover is generally low-to-moderate and most annual species are currently dormant or have desiccated.

City Side Sage Mitigation Area – Deck A

- As observed during previous springtime monitoring events, there is a stand of native California goldfields located in the southern center of the Upper Deck that is notable.
- Vegetation is dominant in this portion of the Upper Deck, which includes non-native species, demonstrating that the soils in this portion of the deck are suitable for supporting native vegetation.

County Side Sage Mitigation Pilot Project Area

- The southern half of the mitigation area has relatively good coverage of native species, mostly California buckwheat and California sunflower.

Ms. Landis indicated she will send staff her comments on the report. She commented on the need to keep up constant weeding of major grasses and had questions regarding a chart in the report that showed all the proposals on how to clean up the weeds and replant. Discussion ensued and she requested staff to invite the vegetation consultant to the next meeting to discuss progress.

Mr. Mohajer brought up that Republic previously indicated they had delivered soil for beneficial use and cover at the landfill. The Task Force sent a letter requesting information about the soil and requested their response within 30 days, which they have not done. A follow up letter was sent to Republic and they have until September 30, 2020, to respond. The letter indicated if they do not respond, then the matter will be referred to the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning (Regional Planning) because they would be in violation of the Finding of Conformance (FOC) and potentially the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) issued by Los Angeles County (County), as well as the City of Los Angeles Ordinance for SCL. Mr. Mohajer would like this item on the next FPRS Meeting Agenda.

Discussion of the approved, as corrected, August 20, 2020, Minutes was revisited due to Ms. Landis not being available at the beginning of the meeting. Subcommittee members had no objection. Ms. Landis had a correction on the Minutes that staff had caught and corrected. The motion and approval remained. Mr. Mohajer asked that a copy of the approved, as corrected, Minutes be sent to the Subcommittee Members.

IV. LOS ANGELES COUNTY GREEN ZONE ORDINANCE

Ms. Kawsar Vazifdar, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the [Los Angeles County Green Zones Ordinance](#).

Mr. Landis asked when the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be released. Ms. Vazifdar responded that the Draft EIR is expected to be released in October 2020. Ms. Landis noted her concerns about the Green Zones Ordinance because she believed it would promote the development of composting facilities,

which she stated do not always produce clean compost and require significant acreage. She added that compost may contain bacteria, metals, and other harmful contaminants. She continued that the Department of Food and Agriculture says that contaminated compost should not leave the location in which it was created.

Ms. Landis and Mr. Mohajer expressed concern that the Task Force was not consulted in the development of the Green Zones Ordinance and requested a staff presentation at the next Task Force meeting. Mr. Mohajer stated that he wanted to review and comment on the Draft EIR and Health Impact Assessment.

V. Update on CCL

Mr. Omid Mazdiyarni, staff to the Task Force, gave an update on CCL.

Odor Complaints

AQMD agreed to provide odor complaint data on a quarterly basis. The next quarterly odor complaint update will be presented in October 2020. CCL received a total of eight NOVs from AQMD in July 2020, six NOVs from AQMD in August 2020, and three NOVs from AQMD in September, as of September 11, 2020. Since CCL received their fourth NOV of the Calendar Year on July 24, 2020, it triggered CUP Condition 69 which requires the operator to submit a report detailing the problem with corrective actions. The report was submitted on August 21, 2020. Public Works is currently reviewing the response.

Lawsuits Updates

CCL filed two separate lawsuits against the County.

- The first lawsuit was filed on October 20, 2017, challenging operational conditions, and fee conditions of the CUP. On June 22, 2020, the Court issued a ruling in favor of the County on most operating conditions. Regarding the 12 challenged fee conditions, the court upheld 2, remanded 4 back to the Board of Supervisors for further consideration, and overturned 6. In its ruling, the Court also upheld Condition 9, which authorizes the Board to void the permit if any material provisions are found to be invalid. The parties will be scheduling a meeting for the purpose of discussing a potential settlement. If no settlement is reached, the litigation will proceed to Phase 2 for the determination of additional claims pertaining to the challenged conditions.
- The second lawsuit challenged a decision by the hearing officer that upheld an NOV issued by Regional Planning on December 11, 2017. CCL's writ of administrative mandamus challenging the NOV was filed on April 13, 2018. The trial in the second lawsuit was previously set for June 25, 2020. Due to COVID-19, the parties agreed to continue the trial to October 22, 2020.

CCL and County notified the court that they will participate in settlement negotiations for both lawsuits and requested a continuance of the October 20, 2020 trial date in the second lawsuit. The court tentatively continued the trial date to January 14, 2021.

- A third lawsuit was filed by Environmental and Community Groups on August 24, 2017, alleging that the project EIR was inadequate and not in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. The court issued a decision on October 10, 2019, in favor of the County and CCL. The Community has filed an appeal and the case is pending.

NOVs for Non-Compliance with the CUP

- Regional Planning issued four NOVs for non-compliance with CUP Conditions 68, 77, 79, and 113 to Waste Connections on June 11, 2020, at the request of Public Works.
- CCL filed its appeal on August 6, 2020. Regional Planning has scheduled a virtual hearing for November 24, 2020.

There were no comments from Subcommittee.

VI. DISCUSSION ON FOC REPORTS

Mr. Daniel Wibisono, staff to the Task Force, was having technical difficulties with Zoom. Mr. Dave Nguyen mentioned there were no matters that needed to be discussed and that the update could be rescheduled for next month. Mr. Ruiz added that staff would forward the requested information regarding FOC reports to each Subcommittee Member.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Hunter commented that the SCL-CAC uses Zoom regularly and does not encounter the issues from today. He added this was the first Zoom meeting that the FPRS has had and staff simply must get used to the system. Today's problems were not major and recommended a practice run before the next meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled remotely for Thursday, October 15, 2020, at 11 a.m.