



Climate Change Commission

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

925 Dillingham Boulevard, Suite 257 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

COMMISSIONERS

Victoria Keener, Ph.D., Chair
Rosanna Alegado, Ph.D., Vice Chair
Bettina Mehnert, FAIA, LEED AP
Makena Coffman, Ph.D.
Charles Fletcher, Ph.D.

Climate Change Commission Tuesday, December 8, 2020 2:00 PM Zoom Virtual Meeting Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Victoria Keener, Rosie Alegado, Bettina Mehnert, Makena Coffman, and Charles Fletcher

Members Absent: None

Public: Uyen Vong, Josh Stanbro, Sophie Lee, Hayley Cook, and Matt Gonser (Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency); Layla Kilolu, Courtney Sue-Ako, Rachael Han, Sharon Williams, Piia Aarma, Henry Curtis (Life of the Land), Dave Martin, Ryan Kobayashi (Local 368), Nancy McPherson, Diana Lopera (State Department of Land and Natural Resources AmeriCorps VISTA), Julie Yunker (Hawai'i Gas), Christopher Delaunay, James McCallen, Brittaney Key, Nathaniel Kinney (Carpenter's Union), Ma'ila Gantous, Melanie Islam, Parker Kushima, Nonie Toledo, Brian (Hawaii LECET), Andy Bohlander, Shellie Habel, Stefanie Sakamoto, Revere Wood, Pane (HOEISF), Kiana Otsuka (O'ahu Metropolitan Planning Organization), HPHA, Leilikolehua Gill, Kanoe Puuhau (Kamehameha Schools), Steve Chang, Kathy Sokugawa, Rafael Lee, David Arakawa, and Michael Iosua.

Call to Order: Chair Keener called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM.

Roll Call: Five Commissioners were present. Quorum was established.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of November 16, 2020: The November 16, 2020 meeting minutes were adopted as is (**AYE:** Keener; Alegado; Mehnert; Fletcher; **NAY:** None; **ABSTAIN:** Coffman)

Report on the Activities of the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (CCSR): Executive Director Josh Stanbro presented the following:

- CCSR staff are proud to have worked under Mayor Kirk Caldwell's Administration which is concluding at the end of this year, and they hope they can continue their work with Mayor-elect Blangiardi's, who will begin his term on January 2, 2021.
- CCSR has currently been working collaboratively with other cities through various networks (e.g. Climate Mayors and Resilient Cities networks) to inform the transition team with the Biden administration about needs from the city and county-level. CCSR aims to maintain the local advocacy efforts that span over 400 cities to stay in the Paris Agreement that have been ongoing the past four years. The new administration seems to be receptive to the continuation of Paris Agreement efforts, so Director Stanbro is optimistic that there will be federal funding and resources to cities like Honolulu that lead on climate change and transitioning to clean energy.
- The City continues to update the live dashboard online at oneoahu.org on CARES spending in Honolulu. They are on track to spend all available funding by the end of the year. COVID-19 wastewater testing results with the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (UHM) is also available online at the oneoahu.org dashboard website.
- CCSR has been working with UHM and Hawai'i Energy to help businesses, at little or no cost,

complete an audit of air quality in terms of COVID-19 safety and evaluating energy reduction efficiency to save money.

- Approximately \$6.2 million in CARES funds has gone out from CCSR-embedded programs to help local farms and ranches, as well as to provide emergency food supplies to beef up the local economic component of food sustainability through combined efforts from CCSR and Office of Economic Revitalization.
- CCSR has been involved in the Ala Wai flood control project and the revised designs, especially around helping the US Army Corp of Engineers with water table issues. Director Stanbro thanked Commissioner Fletcher who helped to inform the infrastructure design to be durable and resilient against SLR and resulting groundwater table rise and Matt Gonser for leading the efforts.
- CCSR has updated 2017 and 2018 carbon emissions inventories. Unfortunately, Honolulu emissions have not been decreasing. These results will come out with the annual sustainability report at the end of the year. CCSR will also release the draft climate action plan that has the updated emissions inventory. For the first time, the City will put out its own emissions inventory for city operations, which will be on the dashboard as well.
- Three policies are to be heard at the final city council meeting of 2020. The first one is Bill 58, which CCSR worked on to streamline permitting for renewable energy systems, like EV charging and battery storage. The second is Bill 2, which updates the land use ordinance around parking for the first time in 30 years. Although several elements have been removed from the original, there is now a reduction in minimum parking. The last one is Bill 65, which codifies the role and operations of the OCCSR. Bill 65 also ensures that Honolulu leads by example around building benchmarking and energy use, both of which are tools to stay in the Paris Climate Agreement.
- Charging infrastructure for the electric bus fleet is now implemented. First electric bus in the fleet will arrive at the end of the year. The bus-only lane on King Street has been constructed, as a result of partnering with Bloomberg philanthropies.

Questions and Comments that followed:

1. Chair Keener inquired about the main changes to the Ala Wai flood control project as well as the availability of sectoral emissions for the 2017-2018 carbon inventories. Director Stanbro responded that the Army Corp of Engineers has come out with a new design for the Ala Wai that eliminates many catchment basins in the mauka regions, which initially faced community pushback. The new design now puts a large pumping station in the canal itself to remove water from the canal during a flood event. CCSR is working to ensure that the design selected incorporates current knowledge about the increasing impacts of climate change, like SLR, water table rise, and increased heavy precipitation events, and that the design accounts for these changes. As for the inventories, they are currently not in a digestible format so Director Stanbro does not have sectoral information on hand, but they are coming soon. Overall, however, emissions in Honolulu did not experience drops, but generally saw flat trends.

Communication and Correspondence from the Public: No communication and correspondence from the public was received since the last Climate Change Commission meeting.

Discussion and Action on Climate Change and Construction Industry Guidance Document

- Commissioner Mehnert presented a summary of the construction guidance document. She highlighted the design and construction industry's contribution to climate change and the potential for decrease in emissions. With new buildings being constructed quickly, this growth gives the industry tremendous opportunity to change the adverse impact on the climate. Growing energy use is increasing emissions and the need for new construction is exacerbating the impact of climate change. Commissioner Mehnert explained the difference between embodied carbon and operational carbon. Next, she discussed the stakeholders engaged in the creation of this document and the forging of new collaborative relationships to create solutions. Such solutions include prioritizing sustainable design strategies, sustainable material selection and project delivery, renewable energy, and resilient designs. Commissioner Mehnert then described the various standards present that are pushing the envelope on sustainable design and construction and reviewed the purpose of the climate commission before moving on to the recommendations. Commissioner Mehnert recommends incorporating two objectives of the 2030

Challenge to support climate change adaptation and risk management, which aim to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from design and construction. This will be achieved by the architecture and building community adopting agreed-upon, sustainable targets for emissions and energy consumption for new and existing buildings. One way to achieve this is to set green, carbon-sequestering concrete as the default and hold architects to AIA's Framework for Design Excellence design standard. Commissioner Mehnert also recommends the creation of incentives for developers to ensure long-term financial feasibility of developments by, for example, eliminating building height limitations and defining site development, which will allow developers to create more innovative and sustainable solutions. Lastly, Commissioner Mehnert recommends that identifying a big picture containing future goals is needed to guide the development industry towards being sustainable while not compromising on the financial feasibility goals.

Questions and Comments that followed:

1. Commissioner Coffman thanked Commissioner Mehnert for presenting on the paper. Commissioner Coffman believes it would be helpful to talk through in more detail about the implementation of these recommendations and will send citations for various sections throughout the report. The current recommendations are trying to tackle emissions from the GHG and adaptation side, but Commissioner Coffman is unsure about the best way to approach solving the problem. Developer incentives are an important point in regard to the provision of development services and cost burdens, but what does it mean for climate change? Are there ways to open these incentive structures up for developers? Commissioner Mehnert thanked Commissioner Coffman for her input, and clarified that the paper is done, but the uploaded draft may be an old one. Commissioner Mehnert reiterated the conversations needed to facilitate sustainability in construction, like the conversations she had using green concrete, but she cannot do it alone and needs everyone to initiate these conversations.
2. Commissioner Fletcher thanked Commissioner Mehnert for the hard work put into the paper. Commissioner Fletcher recognizes that the paper should be moved along, but Commissioner Fletcher would like to see more references and more feedback from the development community. Commissioner Fletcher asked for other commission members to work with Rachael to build up the references and feedback portion. Commissioner Mehnert says there are some references in the paper, but if the Commission thinks the paper needs more work, more can be added. As for reaching out for feedback, Commissioner Mehnert believes that they have to include people that are in charge of big developments but she is unsure if that can be done piece by piece. The next big step is to open up the paper to all stakeholders and for each person to fulfill their role in giving input. Chair Keener commends the work and effort gone into the paper and the vision and courage in publishing the paper. Chair Keener supports the recommendations at a high level, and understands how Commissioner Fletcher and Commissioner Coffman see the opportunity for clarifying more details and adding references. Chair Keener suggested releasing a memo for the stretch goals rather than a guidance document, which can be released later with additional research.
3. Commissioner Alegado would like to hear the community's feedback. Commissioner Mehnert also wants to hear the community's feedback and wants to reiterate that this paper covers such a large topic that there is too much data to be incorporated.
4. Ryan Kobayashi from the Hawai'i laborers community thanked Commissioner Mehnert's work on the paper and for recognizing that a larger scope of people need to be included in this topic. He stated that there is more than one union present at the meeting, including laborers, which Kobayashi represents, as well as the carpenters and operator's union, Hawai'i Construction Alliance, and LECET. Commissioner Mehnert has listed the inclusion of developers and contractors for the stakeholder outreach meetings, but a lot of contractors in Hawai'i are unionized, so Kobayashi thinks unions should be included as well. Commissioner Mehnert thanked Kobayashi for his comment and will include unions in conversations as well.
5. Henry Curtis recognizes that sustainable construction and design is a complex subject and wants to discuss three issues. First, there are concerns about if there is enough green concrete, which depends on the growth of population and new buildings. Second, there is a lot of pressure put on the height limit of buildings, but there is not a lot of enforcement for maintaining urban boundaries, which cuts into food resilience and open space. Third, Life of the Land is part of the PUC docket for performance-based regulation, and they deal with electric utilities and incentive regulation. However, with the issue of free-loaders, why should we incentivize people if they would've done something without the incentive. Is that a good use of government resources? Commissioner Mehnert appreciates Curtis's thoughts and likes the comment on defining urban boundaries, which is not discussed enough.
6. Nathaniel Kinney spoke next as the executive director of Hawai'i Construction Alliance, which is made up

of carpenters, operators, laborers, bricklayers, and masons unions. All unions have a direct relationship with a general contractor. Piggybacking off Kobayashi's comment, Kinney noticed that after sitting in on meetings from Bill 2 and Bill 65, he realized that unions need to be included more in these conversations and be considered as stakeholders. Kinney discussed the difference between developers and unions, and how unions are the ones talking to policy makers and keeping up to date on new ordinances and policies. Once a bill or a proposal receives union buy-in, then others are more willing to buy-in, which makes unions a critical leverage point. Commissioner Mehnert thanked Kinney and is excited because with these conversations, they are already starting the conversations that are needed for sustainable development.

7. Commissioner Mehnert noted that Christopher Delaunay from Pacific Resource Partnership would also like to be included in the stakeholder conversations.
8. Commissioner Fletcher echoed Chair Keener's and Commissioner Mehnert's thanks to Kinney and Kobayashi, and inquired about existing (if any) educational programs or training programs for the unions concerning sustainability, resiliency, and climate change. Commissioner Fletcher believes that obtaining a strong background about the urgency of climate change is important to set everyone on the same playing field and to help understand motivation behind actions taken. Kobayashi responded that laborer's unions do a lot of onsite civil work and deal with water utility issues. For example, many people at trade school are trained in stormwater capture, which is then one of the programs that members offer to contractors. Commissioner Fletcher then offered to present on climate change to the unions if Kinney or Kobayashi requested. Kinney responded saying that the trainings currently don't have climate change included specifically as the trainings are new. However, unions have been drawn into the climate change conversation due to mandates that drive up affordable housing and often result in disagreements with environmentalists over cost additions from environmental policies. Additionally, union members are working on moving coastal sewage treatment plants inland due to climate changes like sea level rise. Kinney finished by stating that he would appreciate education on climate change, adaptation, and resiliency.
9. David Arakawa thanked Commissioner Mehnert for being a visionary and for working with stakeholders. Arakawa believes this document is important because policymakers will use it to pass laws. Arakawa recommends the commission to include Blangiardi's administration, the new DPP director, and the CCSR director in conversations surrounding the construction guidance document. He liked many things in the slideshow, but stated that the uploaded document is not reflective of the slideshow, as the document had unfinished sections. Arakawa agrees with Commissioner Mehnert that more data is not needed, as people already know about the impacts of climate change from the construction industry. Arakawa recommends to look at following Scott Glenn's process used to create EIS rules, which outlines a strategy to get stakeholders to talk and work together. Arakawa noted the portion in the presentation about equitable housing systems and would like low-income housing systems involved as well as a cost-benefit analysis. Arakawa proposed leading field trips for the Commissioners to construction sites and low-income housing systems to see how climate change policy affects people on the ground. In turn, Arakawa is excited for Commissioner Mehnert to take developers and contractors to see how green concrete is made. Commissioner Fletcher is on board with the cross-training idea. Chair Keener said a cost-benefit analysis may not be appropriate for this type of guidance document, which is meant to provide a high-level framework to stimulate these conversations. A cost-benefit analysis would be its own document. Arakawa responded that his push to conduct a cost-benefit analysis comes from a desire to prevent the increase in cost of affordable housing from climate policy. For example, Bill 25 caused one housing unit to increase in price by \$24,000. Arakawa acknowledges the current document is too big to include a cost-benefit analysis and is okay with including one in a separate document.
10. Brittaney Key spoke about her concerns with air pollution and urban heat island effects being potentially exacerbated from higher buildings and climate change and inquired if those considerations are being factored in. Commissioner Mehnert responded that these are good comments but it is difficult to answer as it is a situation of choosing the lesser of two evils. Is it better to have urban sprawl than heat island effect? Commissioner Mehnert thinks nothing can justify sprawl, but designers can mitigate heat island effect by, for example, using roofs.
11. Chair Keener said the Commission received plenty of feedback from people to improve the document which is a fantastic outcome from the meeting. Chair Keener then opened the floor and inquired if anyone has a comment specifically about the recommendations that could help Chair Keener understand the types of specific feedback the Commission would be looking at in future iterations of the paper.
12. Henry Curtis sent in the chat that recommendation 4a needs change. He also presented a revision needed surrounding language on combating versus mitigating climate change.
13. Commissioner Mehnert is very encouraged by dialogue here. She would like to have a session where all stakeholders come together and discuss the recommendations and if they should be more specified.

14. Chair Keener stated that everyone agrees the paper needs to be revised, and the Commission will revisit the paper in another meeting in the future. Rest of the Commissioners will help Commissioner Mehnert with the revisions.

Public Input for Matters Not on the Agenda:

- David Arakawa said Bill 65 will be discussed tomorrow. The Land Use Research Foundation supports many provisions in Bill 65 but is asking to add a stakeholder advisory task force, proposed to be made up of community members facing SLR impacts, scientists, Commissioners, architects, engineers, planners, construction agencies, and local businesses. Arakawa also suggested to include into Bill 65 a requirement of CCSR to complete a cost-benefit analysis. In his discussions with OCCSR, they have not been supportive of a stakeholder advisory task force and C/B analysis. Lastly, Arakawa proposed mandating an audit of OCCSR every 4 years, similar to the Biki Bike audit.

Tentative Next Meeting Date: The next meeting date is January 25, 2020 at 1:00PM via Zoom.

Announcements: Commissioner Alegado wanted to let everyone know that Pacific Island Climate Adaptation Science Center has funded a community-driven assessment for fish ponds, which will be published soon. She was the principal investigator and consulted with fish pond practitioners across the island, resulting in the report being comprehensive and community-driven. The report will be available by January 2021.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:47 PM.