



Green Team Committee Agenda

Wednesday, February 10th, 2010 7:00pm-8:00pm

Meetings end at 8:00pm unless the committee votes to end earlier or extend the time

Place: Hamilton Senior High School Cafeteria
2955 S. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90034

I. **Attendance:** Paula Waxman, Phyllis Rothman, Marco Meneghin, Hillary Gordon, Emma Harris, Nika Allahverdi, Erin Amini, Larry Hess, Saran Kirschbaum, Julie Weise, Sherri Lester, Mark Davis, Eric Weiser, Barry E. Levine, Charmaine Colina, Kathy Lewis, and Karen Antholis

II. **General Public Comments**

Marco Meneghin from State Assembly Speaker Karen Bass's office asked for volunteers to assist in a:

Clean-Up of Ballona Creek, Sunday, February 21st for 10am-12:30p.m. Meet at Overland Avenue Ballona Creek Bike Path Entrance directly across from the Culver City Julian Dixon Library, 4975 Overland Avenue, Culver City, 90230. Please RSVP by Thursday, February 18th at (323) 937-4747 or email Roxane Ojeda at roxane.ojeda@asm.ca.gov.

III. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **NEW BLACK BIN WASTE DISPOSAL TECHNOLOGY:** In lieu of a scheduled presentation by Mary Brooks of The Robert Group, the PR firm presenting the Los Angeles City Bureau of Sanitation's new garbage collection and disposal technology, Hillary Gordon, representing the Sierra Club spoke on the club's study of current technologies being considered. She focused on technologies involving intense heat to break down material. These technologies are sometimes referred to as pyrolysis, plasma arc gasification, and gasification.

POTENTIAL DANGERS

Super high heat creates a toxic gas and emits ultra fine particles of nickel, lead, arsenic, mercury, dioxins and furans and other toxic metals that can lodge deep in the lungs, and enter the bloodstream.

These ultra fine particles or "nano particles" of dioxin are 1 billionth of a meter in size. Paula mentioned that one report she read outlined the health impacts of dioxin, which included, "cancer, IQ deficits, disrupted sexual development, birth defects, immune system damage, behavioral disorders, and altered sex ratios."

Contaminants are not limited to toxic gases and ash, but can also leave the plant in the form of "scrub" or wastewater.

In addition to the health risks, these incineration technologies continue to produce greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.

DO INCINERATORS ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR LANDFILLS?

The current landfills serving the City of Los Angeles will be at capacity by 2011. The LA County Sanitation District is scheduled to open a new

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landfill in the Imperial County (Mesquite Regional Landfill). The use of incinerators will reduce the landfill waste stream significantly but the ash created can be more toxic than the original material.

SHOULD WASTE-TO-ENERGY TECHNOLOGY BE CONSIDERED A “RENEWABLE” SOURCE OF ENERGY

Trash vaporized by heat will produce a synthetic fuel that proponents say can be used to produce energy and serve as a substitute for fossil fuels. The Sierra Club’s position is that the government should focus on increasing ways to recycle black bin material. Recycling saves 5 to 6 times more energy than incineration.

If these technologies are termed “renewable” (a classification the Sierra Club disputes) they could be eligible for valuable tax credits which would divert finite funds from the development of authentic renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, and geothermal.

The plants might be eligible not only for tax and offset credits, but waste sent to these facilities could also be included in the diversion rates that the city is required to achieve. In essence, by sending waste to alternative technology facilities, the city could claim higher diversion rates even though less material is actually being recycled; i.e., diversion through non-renewable conversion rather than through recycling. The Sierra Club feels that this is not a good thing. In the opinion of the Sierra Club, when the emphasis should be on reducing, reusing, and recycling rather than just finding other ways to get rid of the trash we create wasteful production, packaging, consumption.

Another possible consequence of these types of power plants is that, because they depend on a constant waste stream to be energy productive, this could lessen the incentive to encourage citizens to reduce, recycle, reuse.

THE SIERRA CLUB’S POSITION- Zero Waste

The Sierra Club believes that the best long-term solution is for governments to encourage and legislate “extended producer responsibility” (aka EPR). Makers of products should be responsible for the things they produce from cradle to cradle. The Sierra Club feels that the costs of managing a product once it becomes discarded should be borne by the manufacturer/consumer, not the ratepayers. This would encourage manufacturers to design products that are nontoxic, durable, repairable, reusable, or recyclable. Conversely it would discourage the manufacture of disposable products and excessive packaging. By doing this we can reduce the black bin waste stream more significantly and in a more environmentally friendly way.

The Sierra Club lauds “The Ambassador Program” run through the City of L.A. Department of Sanitation employed to educate residents about the correct use of the blue bin. Eight experienced inspectors of the department, spend 6 weeks in various neighborhoods accompanying the trash trucks on their routes. If contamination is found in the blue bins, they mark the incorrect items on a checklist which is placed under the lid and leave all the material in the blue bin so that the resident will see the checklist and learn how to recycle correctly. With only a crew of 8, the Sierra Club is proposing to send volunteers to help the city with this effort.



B. GREEN TEAM CALENDAR 2010: The Calendar will be posted on the Soronc website. The dates in the first small, green column represent the monthly Green Team meeting dates (the second Wednesday/month). The first and second large columns are Green Team activities. In the third large column are general Hami Garden benchmarks and specific work dates.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. HAMILTON HIGH SCHOOL S.A.F.E. CLUB : Nika Allahverdi

1. **Jan. 23's E-waste/Battery Drive:** held at Hamilton was a huge success. Hamilton students collected an entire van-load of electronic waste. They will be scheduling another drive using a different company who will pay for some materials.
2. **Haitian Jean Drive:** Jeans were collected and sent to Haiti relief through Aeropostel.
3. **Clean-Up Ballona Wetlands.** Students from S.A.F.E. will be participating in this event (see above).

B. FRIENDS OF THE HAMI GARDEN: Erin Amini

1. **Green Team was awarded a \$5,000 City Beautification Grant** matched with \$3000 from the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council: We were quite lucky to have awarded this grant because there were many grants submitted from the Westside and the money available was much reduced from last year.
2. **Work Schedules:** Next work scheduled for: Monday, Feb. 15, Presidents Day. 10-1. Please come! It's fun! Bring friends and family, shovels, gloves, water, and sunscreen or hat. So that you can plan your schedules in advance, we will be working the following Sundays:

Sunday, Feb. 21, 1:30-3:30pm, tilling

Sunday, Feb. 28, 10-1:00 pm, tilling

Sunday, Mar. 7, 10-1:00 pm, tilling and roto-tilling.

We would like each member of the Green Team to try to volunteer at least 5 hours over the next 3 months. Please also bring friends and family. We can provide extra tools if needed. Contact Erin Amini at erinamini@gmail.com to let her know when you would like to volunteer Completion is scheduled for June 1st.

3. **Canfield donated WORMS** to the new Hami Garden presented by Kathy Lewis, Canfield's master gardener and librarian.
4. **The Hami Composting Program** has begun. Students will be collecting lunch waste twice a week to be used to create the garden's own compost.



C. SOVA FRUIT COLLECTION: Paula Waxman

- Our first Sova Fruit Collection netted us about 300 pounds of fruit! In addition, Saran's husband who works at the Sova food bank estimated that those who brought fruit in as a result of our email blasts, and flyers, brought the collection to about 600 pounds of fruit.

Next collection date is this Sunday, February 14. Contact Larry Hess lawrencehess@ca.rr.com if you want to volunteer fruit from your tree or sign up to pick.

D. NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION UPDATE: Larry Hess

- Reported that he received the estimated expense report on the cost of adding and planting more trees along South Robertson Boulevard from the Los Angeles Conservancy. However, there were a number of possible errors, which he needs to discuss before he makes a report to the Green Team. He should have a finalized estimate by the March meeting.

E. SORO FESTIVAL UPDATE: Phyllis Rothman

- The Festival leadership has decided to make the theme of the festival this year an obvious green theme. The exact title has not been created. The aim is to attract green sponsors, exhibitors and food vendors who are willing to consider making the festival a zero waste one by using recyclable, compostable materials.
- Because of the city's dire finances, Soro Inc. has lost ½ of its city funding.

F. NEWSLETTER/ WEB SITE UPDATE: Larry Hess

- Larry has designed an elegant web newsletter, a link for which will eventually appear on the forthcoming and improved Soronc website. In the meantime, we will try to send the newsletter out, however we need to get issues resolved involving the Soronc logo.