

**ST. PETERSBURG CITY COUNCIL
HEALTH, ENERGY, RESILIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE**

AGENDA

**Meeting of April 12, 2018
10:30 – 11:30 am – City Hall Room 100**

Members & Alternate: Darden Rice, Ed Montanari, Lisa Wheeler-Bowman, Gina Driscoll,
Steve Kornell (Alternate)

Support Staff: Sharon Wright & Lowell Atkinson

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approval of Minutes March 22, 2018 (attached)

C. New/Deferred Business

- 1. Restricting the distribution of plastic drinking straws (Health, Sustainability)**
 - a. Jessica Lewis – Chair, Suncoast Surfrider Foundation
 - b. Brian Bailey – Founder, I Love the Burg/Director, RKC.me

D. Relevant Updates

E. Upcoming Meeting Agenda

- 1. May 10, 2018 10:30 – 11:30 am**

F. Adjournment

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG

HEALTH, ENERGY, RESILIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 22, 2018

PRESENT: Darden Rice, Gina Driscoll, Ed Montanari, Lisa Wheeler-Bowman

ALSO PRESENT: Assistant City Attorney Joseph Patner, Assistant City Attorney Devon Haggitt, Sustainability & Resiliency Director Sharon Wright, Legislative Aide Lowell Atkinson and Office Systems Specialist Paul Traci

ABSENT: Steve Kornell (Alternate)

CM Rice called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and then undertook a roll call to establish the presence of a quorum. The meeting commenced with the following members present: Ed Montanari and Darden Rice. CM Driscoll entered the meeting at 1:04 p.m. CM Wheeler-Bowman entered the meeting at 1:06 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda and Minutes

CM Rice called for approval of the agenda. CM Montanari moved for approval of the agenda. All were in favor of the motion.

CM Rice called for approval of the February 8, 2018 Committee minutes. CM Montanari moved for approval of the February 8, 2018 Committee minutes. All were in favor of the motion.

New/Deferred Business

Climate Change and Sea Level Rise (Resiliency)

CM Rice introduced Dr. Gary Mitchum - University of South Florida Professor and Associate Dean of the College of Marine Science - as the Committee's main speaker and emphasized the importance of his work on sea level rise projection and how it relates to the City's work on resiliency and infrastructure planning.

Dr. Gary Mitchum, gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee entitled "Talking about Sea Level Rise and Climate Change." Dr. Mitchum discussed how the Greenhouse Theory is scientific fact deconstructing several common misconceptions. One way Dr. Mitchum relates some of these misconceptions is through the concept of the Climate Sensitivity parameter whereby slightly different results in climate change models lead some to question the validity of climate science as a whole. Dr. Mitchum explained that the Greenhouse Theory, contrary to some popular beliefs, existed prior to the 1970s. It was the subject of a paper written by French mathematician and physicist Joseph Fourier in 1827. In 1896, this theory was used in a formula to calculate the Earth's average surface temperature. A graph was shown that depicted the CO₂ concentration in Earth's atmosphere over the past 420,000

years. Dr. Mitchum explained that in the last 50 to 100 years the CO2 levels have increased resulting in the largest climate fluctuation ever recorded.

Dr. Mitchum continued his presentation by discussing sea level rise, which is largely a result of glacial melting and thermal expansion. Using satellite data, Dr. Mitchum's recent publication confirmed previous projections of global mean sea level rise of two feet by 2100 with 99% confidence. He emphasized that this new data confirmed the sea level rise models from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and that which was highly questioned by skeptics. Dr. Mitchum discussed how nuisance flooding and extreme rain events are two of the biggest impacts from rising sea level with the frequency of nuisance floods having increased by 300% since the 1960s. Climate change and sea level rise is also resulting in more invasive species in our local water ecosystem; Dr. Mitchum used a growing invasive Iguana colony south of the Skyway as a local example of biological evolution from climate change.

CM Wheeler-Bowman asked "Earlier you mentioned ice melt. Why would we see the melting of ice?" Dr. Mitchum explained that the ice sheets are receiving less snow and more melting due to the increasing air temperature. Warmer ocean temperatures is also contributing to the decline of ice sheets and global melting..

CM Rice asked "Would heat wave events be something of concern here as well – as part of your NOAA study?" Dr. Mitchum explained that the stress induced on people and infrastructure (i.e. air conditioners) in the event of a 2°F increase in air temperature would be significant to quality of life and commerce, but there are serious public health concerns with potential climate zone expansion and the emergence of tropical diseases like malaria. CM Rice also inquired if the local area wetlands will be lost due to the land moving– such as is the case in coastal Louisiana; she asked the question "Here in Tampa Bay are we dealing with that same function of how the land is moving?" Dr. Mitchum explained that the subsidence in New Orleans and coastal Louisiana is more rapid because new sediment placement from the Mississippi River has largely been cut off – not an issue we experience here in St. Petersburg, but the subsidence that happened in Galveston during the inundation and flooding from Hurricane Harvey could indeed happen here in Florida. He emphasized that subsidence and land loss is regionally specific and depends on a variety of factors.

CM Rice thanked Dr. Mitchum for his presentation and work on climate change and sea level rise and emphasized that the presentation fits in with the context of discussions about how to plan and build our city's infrastructure while mitigating and adapting to these threats.

Sustainable Design, Construction & Operations (Sustainability)

Ms. Sharon Wright – Director of Sustainability & Resiliency - gave a presentation to the Committee on the Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) building rating system – one of the most widely-recognized sustainable design certifications in the nation.

The Mayor issued an executive order in which the LEED green building program will be applied to all new and existing city-owned and occupied buildings over 10,000 square feet that meet minimum project requirements for certification. Building less than 10,000 square feet will apply green building standards but may not need to become certified. The LEED rating system is a part of the US Green Building Council (USGBC), which oversees educating people on being lead administrators, and is linked to the third party verification systems that examines building documentation.

Ms. Wright gave a broad overview of the LEED program highlighting cost considerations and incentives for private developers. Recent LEED projects at the city include the Water Resources Building, Jordan School, Fire Station #8, and the Police Training Facility (under construction).

Referencing the perceived similarities between the LEED Certification and Envision Certification, CM Montanari asked “Why are we looking to do both? Why don’t we just pick one certification?” Ms. Wright responded that Envision is more for infrastructure and LEED is for occupied space, such as buildings. CM Montanari also asked Ms. Wright “Do you know if [private developers] are widely using the LEED certification?” “Are they embracing this without us getting involved?” Ms. Wright responded that some private developers are embracing LEED without the City getting involved, and the city is currently considering ways to look for ways to incentivize builders. She emphasized that the Commercial LEED market has not grown as rapidly as in some other cities such as Seattle, WA. CM Montanari asked a final question: “Where are we going with all of this? Are we going down a path where this is just for new public construction, or are you suggesting that we start trying to incentivize private development to embrace LEED?” Ms. Wright stated that the city does require the LEED standard for all city facilities with existing incentives for private development, but the Administration is not pursuing a mandate currently.

CM Rice asked “What do you see as next steps?” Ms. Wright responded that she is currently working with departments to see how the current policy can be elevated above an Executive Order after examining policy language and meeting with contractors for relevant recommendations. CM Rice stated that the Committee will keep LEED Certification on the Referral List until it comes back for further consideration.

New Business Item Referrals

CM Driscoll gave a presentation to the Committee regarding her new business item referral – *“Discussion on restricting the distribution of plastic drinking straws”*. CM Driscoll commented that plastic straws are one of the biggest polluters of our waterways, and as a coastal community it is our responsibility to be good stewards of our environment. Ocean plastic is predicted to triple over the next decade with plastic potential outnumbered fish in the open ocean. CM Driscoll emphasized that multiple options should be considered including an awareness campaign that could be followed by some form of restriction.

Relevant Updates

Regarding the Relevant Updates portion of the agenda, Ms. Wright reported that a survey will be distributed to business regarding the plastic bag ban.

CM Driscoll commented that we want to be sensitive to business owners regarding the banning of plastic straws. CM Montanari wants to make sure businesses are involved when discussing the ban on plastic straws.

Upcoming Meeting Agenda

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for April 12, 2018 from 10:30 to 11:30am.

Adjournment

There being no further business, CM Rice adjourned the meeting at 2:02 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA NEW BUSINESS ITEM

TO: Members of City Council
DATE: February 26, 2018
COUNCIL DATE: March 15, 2018
RE: *Discussion on restricting the distribution of plastic drinking straws*

ACTION DESIRED:

Respectfully request to refer to the Health, Energy, Resiliency, and Sustainability (HERS) committee a discussion to consider a citywide restriction on the distribution of plastic drinking straws from point-of-sale.

BACKGROUND:

Plastic straws represent a significant environmental hazard to coastal habitats and communities alike: posing a threat to sea turtles, wading birds, and other wildlife frequently mistaking them for food while polluting our waterways and neighborhoods.

Plastic straws can take hundreds if not thousands of years to break down and are being found in the digestive systems of marine animals. They are also becoming one of the biggest sources of litter for coastal communities.

How does this work with our current efforts?

Coastal communities like St. Petersburg are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of plastic straw pollution. As a vibrant coastal city that depends heavily on its waterfront as a centerpiece for economic development and quality of life, it is our responsibility to be good stewards of the environment and constantly look for ways to improve our sustainability efforts.

Drinking straws composed of alternative materials are readily available, biodegrade more rapidly than plastic, and can be considered as a quality replacement for those wishing to use straws.

Gina Driscoll, Council Member
District 6



Suncoast Chapter

Jessica Lewis
Suncoast Chapter Chair
Surfrider Foundation

**Health, Energy, Resilience, and
Sustainability Committee**
St Petersburg City Council



Surfrider Foundation fosters conservation, activism, research, and education to **protect and enjoy our oceans, waves, and beaches** through a **powerful grassroots network.**



**BLUE WATER
TASK FORCE**



A woman with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and a white apron, is smiling and holding a large, messy bundle of discarded, colorful single-use straws. She is standing on a sandy beach. The background shows the ocean and some trees under a clear sky. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue rectangle containing text.

Single-use plastics:

- **Are frequently littered, damage recycling equipment, clog storm drains, and cost taxpayers money**
- **Photodegrade, forming smaller and smaller pieces that enter aquatic and marine food webs at the lowest levels**
- **Are difficult to recycle properly, if at all**
- **Are used for moments yet last several lifetimes**

Single-use straws:

- **Are a top 10 littered item**
- **Harm wildlife through ingestion and entanglement**
- **Are unnecessary**
- **500 million straws are used and discarded every day in the US, that's 175 billion annually**

Options

Ban on single-use plastic straws

- **Do not allow “bioplastics” or “biodegradable” plastic as an alternative**
- **Clear and straightforward**

Offer straws upon patron request only

- **Doesn't solve the problem**
- **Regulatory and follow through issues**



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Implementation

Ban on single-use plastic straws

- **Reduce consumer and beverage industry-worker confusion**
- **Public education and outreach leading into enforcement date**
- **Paper straws could be offered in lieu of plastic**

Offer straws upon patron request only

- **Difficult to track**
- **Confusion among consumers and workers**
- **Paper straws could be offered in lieu of plastic**



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Results

Ban on single-use plastic straws

- **Stops the problem at the source**
- **Reduction in single-use plastic litter**
- **Get ahead of preemption**
- **STAR Community: Waste Minimization**
- **Miami Beach, FL; Hollywood, FL; Ft Myers Beach, FL; Carmel, CA; Malibu, CA; Manhattan Beach, CA; Santa Cruz County, CA**

Offer straws upon patron request only

- **Problem persists**
- **Unwarranted feeling of accomplishment**

Questions?



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SURFRIDER
FOUNDATION

Suncoast Chapter

Health, Energy, Resiliency, & Sustainability Committee (HERS)

4.12.18

Pending/Continuing Referrals

Topic	Return Date	Prior Meeting	Referred By	Date Referred	Staff Responsible	Special Notes
Discussion on restricting the distribution of plastic drinking straws	4.12.18	3.22.18	Driscoll	3.15.18	Sharon Wright; Michael Dema	
Ordinance change to encourage the use of soil moisture sensors and other water conservation tactics in new construction and landscaping	TBD		Nurse	9.19.17	Sharon Wright; Liz Abernethy; Chris Claus; Rick Dunn	Tampa Bay Water staff has researched landscaping codes of the member gov'ts and is working with some of the largest homebuilders to encourage landscaping policies that reduce watering needs.
Ordinance on Plastic Bag Ban	TBD				Sharon Wright; Michael Dema	In progress
City-wide Green Fleets Initiative & Ordinance or Policy	TBD		Rice	4.17.16	Sharon Wright; Brandy Colandrea	Work started with city departments. Completion date TBD
A mechanism to capture energy savings to be re-invested in additional energy efficiency projects. Review Green Bond option.	TBD		Nurse	9.15.16	Sharon Wright; Anne Fritz; Elizabeth Makofske	Some funding has been approved. Procurement and feasibility of fund establishment is in progress.
Discussion to construct an ordinance requiring LEED certification standards for all new and existing city-owned and occupied projects over 10,000 sf	TBD	3.22.18	Rice	1.18.18	Sharon Wright; PWA & Dept. Staff	The committee requested additional input from PWA Staff and LEED-certified contractors at a subsequent HERS meeting. (3.22.18)
Discussion to construct an ordinance requiring Envision standards to be applied to infrastructure projects	TBD	2.8.18	Rice	1.18.18	Sharon Wright; PWA & Dept. Staff	The committee requested additional input from PWA Staff and Envision-certified contractors at a subsequent HERS meeting. (2.8.18)