



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 7/3/2013
Agenda Placement: 10A
Continued From: June 5, 2013

Napa County Planning Commission Board Agenda Letter

TO: Napa County Planning Commission
FROM: Charlene Gallina for Hillary Gitelman - Director
Planning, Building and Environmental Services
REPORT BY: Kirsty Shelton, Planner - 299-1377
SUBJECT: Best Management Practices

RECOMMENDATION

DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING A LIST OF VOLUNTARY BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO REDUCE GREEN HOUSE GAS EMISSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT

CEQA Status: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

Request: Discussion and direction to staff about a checklist of voluntary Best Management Practices (BMPs) for green house gas reductions. If the Commission concurs, applicants requesting approval of discretionary development applications will be asked to complete the checklist of voluntary BMPs.

Staff Recommendation: Commissioner input and direction regarding the proposed BMPs and their inclusion in discretionary development applications.

Staff Contact: Kirsty Shelton, Planner, 299-1377, Kirsty.shelton@countyofnapa.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Planning Commission considered the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) at their meeting of January 18, 2012 and recommended adoption by the Board of Supervisors. After almost a year long trial period, the Board of Supervisors considered adoption of the plan at their meeting of December 11, 2012. At that time, the Board declined to adopt the CAP, instead directing staff to seek additional emission reductions from transportation sources and investigate other issues raised during the hearing. The Board also requested that the Planning Commission develop and apply a list of best management practices (BMPs) to reduce green house gas emissions from development projects while the CAP is being revised and reconsidered for possible adoption.

The proposed BMPs were developed in consultation with applicant "stakeholders," including local land use planners, attorneys, civil engineers, architects, and industry representatives. The BMPs were discussed by the Commission at the June 5, 2013 meeting, resulting in suggestions for improvements, including 1) removal of the stars (*); and 2) instead of separating the BMPs into categories, separate into ones that have been quantified and ones that haven't.

These changes were incorporated and a letter of support was received on June 18, 2013 (attached) from the Napa Valley Vintners. The letter made five points. Each point has been addressed in the attached version of the BMP checklist as follows:

1. All efforts should be recognized. Staff has included an additional box that says "already doing."
2. Appropriate recognition of Napa Green. The Napa Green Winery program application is attached and participating wineries make a clear commitment to sustainability that is recognized by the County. We've moved this BMP into the first position in the "unmeasured" category on the BMP list and will continue to look for ways to quantify the emission reduction value of program components. The metrics behind the evaluation to be a Sustainable Winery is currently being updated and as these values are updated the BMP checklist will reflect the changes.
3. Measurable versus immeasurable. Staff agrees with this point and has renamed the second category 'unmeasured' rather than unmeasurable.
4. Solar Use. Staff agrees that generating on-site electricity is one of the best ways to reduce the GHG associated with building energy. This BMP will still remain the first BMP (meaning the BMP that gains the most potential reduction).
5. Ability to Receive Credit Within a Parent Company. BMP # 33 has been added to address this.

If the Commission concurs, the checklist of voluntary BMPs would be included in the application materials required when project proponents request discretionary development approvals from the County. Applicants would use the checklist to indicate those measures they propose to include in their project. When the CAP is ultimately revised, it could incorporate, update, or supersede the checklist of BMPs.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

As indicated in the Executive Summary, the Board of Supervisors requested that the Planning Commission work with project applicants to incorporate "best practices" that will reduce green house gas emissions associated with development projects until the County can revise and adopt a Climate Action Plan. This request was based in part on a realization that voluntary measures to reduce green house gas emissions can be effective with or without a Napa-specific standard like the one that was proposed in the Climate Action Plan.

If the Commission concurs, the proposed checklist of voluntary Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be used by project applicants to identify those measures proposed as part of their project. The measures selected would be included in staff's analysis of the proposed project, and in most cases would achieve a policy goal (reduced green house gas emissions) over and above what is needed to mitigate significant impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

As the Commission is aware, staff analyzes development projects by comparing them to a list of screening criteria promulgated by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). If a project exceeds the screening criteria, staff quantifies the green house gas emissions associated with the project, and compares them to CEQA significance thresholds also developed by the BAAQMD. (The BAAQMD's significant thresholds were challenged in court and set aside, but are still based on substantial evidence and available for local lead agencies to use.)

Once the checklist of voluntary BMPs has been finalized and is in use, staff will begin the process of revising the Climate Action Plan for consideration by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Staff's intent is to form a small task force or working group of interested stakeholders to assist with the process, and to complete a revised draft this fall. In addition, staff will continue work on a number of complementary efforts:

- The Board of Supervisors remains interested in a local offset program since it would offer the advantage of keeping the co-benefits of emission offset projects local (e.g. habitat restoration would happen here instead of elsewhere), and would allow for local monitoring. Staff will continue to research ways to keep the offsets local so that the community can enjoy the co-benefits.
- As part of the 2013 California Building Code, staff is going to research high performance building standards similar to Marin County such that the larger the home, the larger the percentage of high efficiency building materials required. Public meetings will be held when a draft of local building code amendments is prepared for adoption by the Board of Supervisors later this year. This new code will become effective on January 1, 2014.
- Staff is working with NCTPA on a Travel Behavior Survey to assess the potential for achieving additional green house gas reductions via expanded transit or paratransit programs.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- A . Draft BMPs
- B . Napa Valley Vintners Comment letter
- C . Napa Green Winery Certification checklist

Napa County Planning Commission: Approve

Reviewed By: John McDowell