



Climate Change Commission

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 South King Street, 11th Floor • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

COMMISSIONERS

Charles Fletcher, Ph.D., Chair
Rosanna Alegado, Ph.D., Vice Chair
Makena Coffman, Ph.D.
Melanie Islam, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C, LFA
Victoria Keener, Ph.D.

Climate Change Commission Friday, December 17, 2021, 9:00 AM Zoom Virtual Meeting Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chair Charles Fletcher, Vice Chair Rosie Alegado, Makena Coffman, Melanie Islam, Victoria Keener

Public: Nicola Hedge, Hayley Cook, Matt Milward (Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency); Courtney Sue-Ako (Corporation Counsel); Walter Billingsley, Terry Chan (Department of Design and Construction); Laura Mo (Department of Planning and Permitting); Brian Lee (Honolulu Planning Commission); Kiana Otsuka (Hawai'i State Energy Office); Paul Bernstein; Ryan Ringuette; Dylan Senkiw; Colin Lee; Jakob Timmins; Nancy McPherson; Katie Rooney.

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Fletcher called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM.
2. **Roll Call:** All five Commissioners were present (Commissioner Coffman entered at 9:12 AM). Quorum was established.
3. **Approval of the Meeting Minutes of October 28, 2021 and November 23, 2021:** Approval of the minutes for October 28, 2021 and November 23, 2021 were deferred until the next meeting.
4. **Communications and Correspondence from the Public:** None.
5. **Report on the Activities of the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (CCSR):**

Deputy Director Nicola Hedge presented the following report:

- CCSR hosted a community advisory hui for the Climate Ready O'ahu project. All materials from the meeting are available on the Climate Ready O'ahu website (<https://www.climatereadyoahu.org/>).
- CCSR welcomed four new AmeriCorps VISTA members.
- CCSR staff volunteered around the Civic Center campus putting up decals near storm drains that remind the public that stormwater drains are linked to the ocean. Some CCSR staff also volunteered with the post storm clean-up of Waikīkī Beach.
- The City and County of Honolulu ("City") was recognized as one of the top three most improved cities in the country in clean energy and transportation initiatives. The American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy's City Clean Energy Scorecard moved the City from 41st last year to 24th this year.
- CCSR gave a Building Energy Benchmarking update to the City Council. Open houses for the initiative are scheduled for January 20th and 26th.

Questions and comments that followed:

1. Chair Fletcher commented that the flood event last weekend was a classic compound event. Chair Fletcher described footage of people swimming on Kalākaua Avenue, the third most valuable retail block in the country. Chair Fletcher commented that the Apple store renovations—

apparently following National Flood Insurance Program flood guidelines and Department of Planning and Permitting building guidelines for flooding and sea level rise—appeared to be effective during that event.

Comments and public testimony that followed: None.

6. Discussion on Commission Priorities and Workplan for 2022

- Each Commissioner shared their longer-term priorities for the next year.
 - Commissioner Islam's priorities included new changes in building codes for climate change and decarbonization; zero energy, zero carbon buildings in both the public and private sectors; and how building alignment standards are implemented at the district and building level. Commissioner Islam was also interested in furthering conversations around green affordable housing, scope three emissions and carbon impacts in the building sector, and construction circular economies. She commented that the effects of the codes put in place now will not be realized until later, thus there is a need to instill the most advanced codes possible, while investigating how ready the market is. She also commented on the roles that buildings play in grid optimization and to offset greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs).
 - Commissioner Coffman reminded the Commission that the end of her term on the Commission will be in the upcoming summer, and as such, shared her priority on following up on discussions and understandings of how the City's budget processes could be amended to incorporate the internal cost of carbon so that the price of carbon is more incorporated into City decision-making.
 - Commissioner Keener shared interest in topics of ecosystem- and nature-based solutions and potential connections to water supply and invasive species conversations with the Board of Water Supply (BWS). Vice Chair Alegado shared that she is also interested in nature-based solutions as a potential guidance document, but would like to reframe the topic to reflect indigenous peoples' stewardship and management of those solutions.
 - Commissioner Keener asked whether the Commission should update its Climate Change Brief, as much of the research could overlap with the work being done for the Fifth National Climate Assessment (NCA5).
 - Vice Chair Alegado described one of her priorities as needing to put into practice the principles of equity: having meetings in communities, inviting people to come to the Commission to testify, and bringing in the Youth Commission. Other priorities included a nature-based solutions guidance document, and a guidance document on the climate impacts of tourism.
 - Vice Chair Alegado asked whether the Youth Commission could present their ideas to the Commission. She also asked whether Neighborhood Boards could present to the Commission, so that their testimony would enter the public record.
 - Chair Fletcher described his priority as looking at sources of renewable energy generation, as O'ahu is running out of open land space. He described community pushback to solar and wind projects and limitations to offshore wind due to national defense issues. He commented that geothermal need not be limited to the Big Island. He proposed a guidance paper on geothermal energy as a potential energy source on O'ahu.
 - Vice Chair Alegado commented that she would personally not want to be a part of a geothermal guidance paper due to geothermal's cultural inappropriateness in Hawai'i. Commissioner Coffman commented that from a scientific standpoint, there is geothermal opportunity, but that the cultural impacts would be enormous, and that the Commission would need to be clear on the aim of guidance document, and for that reason, would want Commissioner Alegado to contribute to the development of the document.
 - Chair Fletcher noted that his research was limited, but that in New Zealand, geothermal had been embraced by the Indigenous community. He commented that Kapa'a Quarry could be a potential site for geothermal, as it is located over an old volcano magma chamber and has already been highly disturbed. He suggested that the paper would be an opportunity to look at the relationship between communities and energy production that is community owned and operated, and produces community benefits.

- Vice Chair Alegado noted that is dangerous to conflate different Indigenous cultures together and commented that this topic could be an opportunity to put into practice the Commission's equity principles. She noted existing studies on cultural use impacts of geothermal and such documents should be examined first.
- Commissioner Islam commented that mapping was a useful process and that there may be an opportunity to overlay map layers to identify connections and opportunities. She commented that this could be used to prioritize where future conversations should be, and could be used to make that type of information more accessible.
- Ryan Ringuette gave a presentation on Building Performance Standards (BPS).
 - According to the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP), the existing building sector on O'ahu accounts for 35% of O'ahu's GHGs. BPS is a decarbonization strategy that establishes performance levels that buildings must achieve. New York City's Local Law 97 sets GHG emission caps for the city's buildings. Other examples of cities with BPS include Washington D.C., Washington State, and St. Louis, but all BPS policies are fairly new. CAP Action 5.2 calls for city buildings to have building performance standards by 2021-2022. CAP Action 5.3 calls for commercial and multifamily buildings to have building performance standards by 2022-2023. He proposed the Commission develop a BPS guidance paper to review what other states and countries are doing, and recommend what the City could explore.
 - Commissioner Islam commented that how buildings are reported must change from an energy use index to a carbon emission index. She noted the need to identify existing barriers in the market for BPS and volunteered to facilitate further discussions on the topic.
 - Commissioner Coffman asked if a BPS guidance paper should be separate from the Commission's construction industry guidance paper. Commissioner Islam replied that a BPS paper would go into more depth and identify market barriers and recommended a separate paper.
- The Commission discussed updates on existing and future guidance documents.
 - Chair Fletcher noted that Ryan had worked on a draft urban heat paper, but Chair Fletcher has not yet been able to act on it. He commented that he intended to make edits to increase readability and then share it with Vivek Shandas of Portland State for his review before sharing with the other Commissioners.
 - Commissioner Keener asked whether input from affected communities could be incorporated into the urban heat guidance document.
 - Commissioner Keener worked with Commissioner Islam, Wendy Meguro and Hawaii Natural Energy Institute researchers to revise the construction industry guidance document based on stakeholder feedback from the focus group discussion held last summer. They added examples of policies and incentives that reduce emissions from building operations and construction and investigated embodied carbon incentives. They are identifying opportunities and examples for continuing professional education in building design and construction to meet those standards, and are hoping to submit a draft for the Commission to look over in one to two months. She commented on the need to identify and prepare for compounding climate events and follow up on equity principles.
 - Commissioner Keener discussed thinking about equity principles in guidance papers moving forward and committing to including stakeholder or focus groups with each document.
- The Commission discussed short-term priorities related to the Red Hill water crisis.
 - Commissioner Keener discussed the need to investigate drought impacts and water supply vulnerabilities as medium- and long-term climate change issues, and the need to apply the precautionary principle to identify areas where investment would make the most impact. She commented that the BWS 2016 Master Plan outlined mid- and longer-term impacts, and that the precautionary principle was not applied well in the case of Red Hill.
 - Vice Chair Alegado asked the Commission to draft testimony in support for City Council Bill 48 (2021) and discuss as part of the Commission's January 2022 agenda. She described the compromising of the Hālawā Shaft as a blow to the City's climate resiliency, and the need to protect aquifers as a critical climate defense.
- The Commission discussed hosting in-person meetings.

- Vice Chair Alegado asked when the Commission could hold in-person meetings, particularly outside of the urban core. Deputy Director Hedge shared that she would need to check on any City guidance for when in-person meetings could happen as the COVID-19 situation evolves.
- Vice Chair Alegado commented on the need for the Commission to be more proactive in intentionally including voices.

Questions and comments that followed: None.

Comments and public testimony that followed:

- Nancy McPherson commented that the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) is interested in bringing climate change issues to the forefront and that creative methods will be required to deliver more education. She noted that the Commission meetings have a lot of good information but there is a need to make it more digestible to the public and asked about coordinating DHHL outreach workshops with the Commission.

7. Discussion on Commission Meeting Schedule for 2022

- The Commission discussed the Honolulu City Council's timelines for hearing bills on the Red Hill issue as they are interested in adopting and submitting testimony.
- The Commission scheduled its first three meetings for 2022:
 - January 21, 2022, 9:00-11:00 AM
 - March 4, 2022, 9:00-11:00 AM
 - April 8, 2022, 9:00-11:00 AM

Questions and comments that followed: None.

Comments and public testimony that followed: None.

8. Public Input for Matters Not on the Agenda:

- Nancy McPherson thanked Chair Fletcher for agreeing to present to the Hawaiian Homes Commission in January.

9. Tentative Next Meeting Date: The next meeting date is scheduled for January 21, 2022 at 9:00 AM via Zoom.

10. Announcements:

1. Commissioner Coffman commented that the NCA5 will be holding public meetings in January and February to discuss a wide range of topics. Meetings and the meeting agenda are available online (<https://www.globalchange.gov/content/nca5-engagement-workshops>).

11. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 AM.