



Climate Change Commission

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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

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 Monday, May 17, 2021, 9:00 AM Zoom Virtual Meeting Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chair Victoria Keener, Vice Chair Rosie Alegado, Makena Coffman, Charles Fletcher, and Bettina Mehnert. (Commissioner Coffman left the meeting at 10:09 AM. Commissioner Mehnert left the meeting at 11:00 AM).

Members Absent: None.

Public: Matthew Gonser, Hayley Cook, Kevin Hachey, Michelle Ahn (Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency); Terry Chan, Walter Billingsley (Department of Design and Construction); Roger Babcock (Department of Facility Maintenance); Barry Usagawa (Board of Water Supply); Jainey Bavishi (New York City Mayor's Office of Climate and Resiliency); Anu Hittle (Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission); Leah Laramee, Diana Lopera (Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources); Megan Gonsalves (Hawai'i Division of Forestry and Wildlife); Nancy McPherson (Hawai'i Department of Hawaiian Homelands); Henry Curtis (Life of the Land); Dave Raney (Sierra Club); Pane Meatoga III (Hawai'i Operating Engineers Industry Stabilization Fund); Melanie Lander (Hawai'i Sea Grant); Asia Yeary; Clarice Schafer; Dave Martin; David Jones; Jeff Lau; Josh Stanbro; Joshua Fu; Julie Yunker; Kiana Otsuka; Leilikolehua Gill; Melissa May; Nami Ohtomo; Rachael Han; Tawn Keeny; Tenaya Jackman.

- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Keener called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.
- 2. Roll Call:** Five Commissioners were present. Quorum was established.
- 3. Approval of the Meeting Minutes of April 12, 2021:** The April 12, 2021 meeting minutes were adopted (**AYE:** All; **NAY:** None; **ABSTAIN:** None).
- 4. Report on the Activities of the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (CCSR):**

Executive Director Matthew Gonser presented the following:

- On Earth Day, CCSR released the City and County of Honolulu's ("City") Annual Sustainability Report and the City's first-ever Climate Action Plan (CAP). Resolution 21-105 will be heard at the Transportation, Sustainability and Health Committee to adopt the CAP. It is expected the final adoption to be on June 2 at the full City Council meeting.
- CCSR is in the process of preparing for an internal City CAP implementation workshop in early June because it is an all-City effort to address community-wide emissions. Some actions are already underway, and they are looking forward to taking more actions.
- CCSR will be supporting a briefing at the next Transportation, Sustainability and Health Committee meeting on the City's energy services performances contracts for City building facilities to improve efficiencies and save money.
- CCSR's Climate Resilience and Equity Program is engaged in round two of community discussions, which is a follow up from initial analysis from round one conversations to further

refine information to carry forward. The Equity Program is also currently engaged in a five-week Equity Foundations Workshop series offered as professional development for all City employees provided by the Department of Human Resources. The series is based on a pilot training series conducted by and for CCSR last year.

- A new member is joining the CCSR team serving in the role of Budget and Operations Specialist.

Questions and Comments that followed:

1. Commissioner Fletcher congratulated Director Gonser on his Friday feature in the newspaper.

Comments and Public Testimony that followed: No public comments and testimony were received.

5. Communication and Correspondence from the Public

1. Commissioner Fletcher summarized public correspondence asking to discuss with the Commission a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for a new hotel in Maui. Chair Keener asked that the correspondence be re-shared with the Commissioners for further review and consideration at a future date. Pane Meatoga III from Hawai'i Operating Engineers Industry Stabilization Fund asked if it is usual for the Commission to review draft EIS. Chair Keener responded that the Commission has never received a draft EIS before to review. Henry Curtis from Life of the Land asked if the Commission has jurisdiction on the matter given it is for a project in Maui. Vice Chair Alegado responded that the Commission does not have jurisdiction.
2. Correspondence was received from Dr. Tawn Keeney who contacted the Commission about air travel impact on Hawai'i. Dr. Keeney stated he understands the issue of tourism is more of a state issue than a City one and, while feels the subject will need to be addressed, he understands if the Commission wishes to defer to the State Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission. Commissioner Coffman had responded to Dr. Keeney via email to let him know that there will be an upcoming examination by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the issue of short-term forcings but are still waiting for the methodology to assess greenhouse gas emissions including air travel to be released. Chair Keener noted that the Commission will wait until the methodology report comes out and see how it can apply to the Commission's work.

Comments and Public Testimony that Followed: No public comments and testimony were received.

6. Discussion and Action on the Social Cost of Carbon Guidance Document

- Commissioner Coffman stated that comments received and discussed at the last meeting was incorporated into the draft document. She noted that the substance of the recommendations has not changed but clarifying points were included.
- Commissioner Fletcher noted his appreciation of the inclusion of a glossary and suggested some additional editorial amendments.
- Commissioner Fletcher asked for clarification in regards to whether adopting a social cost of carbon at the City would create such line items in City agency budgets, then motivating the agency to look into activities that have lower-carbon alternatives. Commissioner Coffman clarified that is generally the idea. She referenced the example of Biki, where the audit centered around lost parking revenue and did not factor in the fact that it is a low-carbon alternative. Coffman discussed how having a cost of carbon can operationalize a methodology or way of thinking about how to include those additional factors. Commissioner Fletcher asked if there is a mechanism in place to compare costs to alternatives, because without seeing alternatives it can just look like there are negative costs involved. Commissioner Coffman noted that it will be up to the City to decide how to operationalize the guidance.
- Commissioner Fletcher asked how departments will assess the emissions of their various activities, which may be a new skillset that doesn't exist in the City currently. Commissioner Coffman responded that the City maintains a greenhouse gas emissions inventory.

Commissioner Fletcher moved and Vice Chair Alegado seconded for the Climate Change Commission to adopt the Social Cost of Carbon Guidance Document, as amended (**AYE:** All; **NAY:** None; **ABSTAIN:** None.) The motion was adopted on Monday, May 17, 2021.

Questions and Comments that followed:

1. Commissioner Fletcher stated his excitement for the document as a way to embody the true hazardous nature of emissions in the form of economics and as an internal system for the City to look at regarding the cost of activities hopefully driving City activities towards lower carbon emissions.
2. Director Gonser asked for a training from Commissioner Coffman for methodology on using the recommendations in the paper. Commissioner Coffman said she would be happy to provide training, but clarified that the guidance is high-level to conceptualize the operationalization of a social cost of carbon and not a how-to playbook.

Comments and Public Testimony that followed:

1. Henry Curtis from Life of the Land shared some of his concerns on the document in regards to a carbon tax. Commissioner Coffman clarified that the document is not recommending an explicit tax, as the City does not have the jurisdiction to do so, and rather addresses internal City decision-making.
2. Anu Hittle from the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission shared that the State Commission is involved in engagement with a federal Interagency Working Group on this topic and she looks forward to coordinating with the Commission as they move forward on this guidance.
3. Nancy McPherson, a planner with the Department of Hawaiian Homelands and former student of economics, agreed with Commissioner Fletcher that this guidance is needed and commended economists for working to operationalize and include environmental damages into economics.

7. Update from Anu Hittle, Mitigation and Adaptation Coordinator for Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, on the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission *Nature-Based Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change in Hawai'i* working paper – 15 minutes

- Hittle shared a presentation, which can be found here: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e3885654a153a6ef84e6c9c/t/60a6a917f1f34945c7b6d67b/1621535006763/Presentation+Slides_Jainey+Bavishi.pdf.
- As a multi-jurisdictional effort, Hittle introduced the State Climate Commissioners and reviewed the State Climate Commission's mission.
- Hittle discussed the outline of the *Nature-Based Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change in Hawai'i* working paper: <https://climate.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/CRHI-Working-Paper-V5.pdf>.
- Hittle introduced the core writing team of the paper, including Leah Laramee, Diana Lopera, and Megan Gonsalves. Hittle noted that about 20 to 30 individuals and agencies were represented in the reviewing, commenting, workshopping, and writing of the working paper. The working paper is a living document and is subject to change.
- Hittle outlined climate threats in Hawai'i and discussed the priority of putting equity first in government planning through the use of a vulnerability framework specific to Hawai'i.
- Hittle reviewed the points in the working paper that they focused on including ahupua'a and moku frameworks, soil health, Hawai'i's food system, and more.
- The paper leads to the next steps to readiness, which include measuring resilience and progress, operationalizing equity, and developing a knowledge exchange.

Questions and Comments that followed:

1. Chair Keener noted that Hittle's presentation was good timing as the Commission had identified nature-based solutions as a future topic to delve into. Chair Keener is interested in the metrics and tracking approach to measure how these different adaptation plans are helping.
2. Commissioner Fletcher asked if the working paper will make any recommendations. Hittle responded that the next steps will get them to recommendations, however, unofficial recommendations exist and she hopes to bring them to the Commission at some point to consider.

3. Commissioner Fletcher asked if there are state requirements for permitting to evaluate the climate change impact of any activities, and used the example of tracking trees. Leah Laramee responded no, there are no current regulations that are tracking this, but there are many goals to protect existing trees. Commissioner Fletcher said that it could be good to identify various nature-based solutions in Hawai'i and put them into legal status.
4. Commissioner Coffman stated that Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 343 on Environmental Impact Statements does include a greenhouse gas assessment, which could be required for projects that trigger an environmental review.

Comments and Public Testimony that followed:

1. Nancy McPherson asked if anyone at the University of Hawai'i (UH) is doing ongoing land cover and land use analysis. Leah Laramee responded that their working team includes some researchers at UH, and they are looking at land use cover. Chair Keener added that U.S. Geological Survey also does five-year updates on land use.
2. Dave Raney from Sierra Club stated Sierra Club's support for nature-based solutions.

8. Presentation on prioritization, coordination and implementation of climate change adaptation projects from Jainey Bavishi, Director of New York City Mayor's Office of Climate and Resiliency – 30 minutes

- Bavishi shared a presentation, which can be found here: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e3885654a153a6ef84e6c9c/t/60a6a917f1f34945c7b6d67b/1621535006763/Presentation+Slides_Jainey+Bavishi.pdf.
- Bavishi provided a broad overview of the work being done in New York City (NYC) for climate change. Bavishi works with almost every agency in NYC to adapt governance systems as they are working to adapt to climate change.
- Bavishi discussed how Hurricane Sandy in 2012 was a pivotal moment for NYC's climate change adaptation efforts.
- Bavishi outlined NYC's unique characteristics and vulnerabilities including sunny-day flooding, extreme heat, extreme precipitation, and hurricanes. To address these threats, they are employing a multi-layered approach.
- Bavishi discussed one focus area of hardening coastlines and used the example of the east side coastal resiliency project. She noted how community engagement was critical to the project and used the investment to provide other amenities needed by the community in the park.
- Bavishi shared efforts to protect a million buildings, and discussed the Cool Roofs program that was used in Brooklyn, which lowers building and ambient temperatures. She shared how a major challenge with this was financing, as there aren't currently any financing streams for resilient retrofits. NYC is working on modifying its Property Assessed Clean Energy Program to allow for these retrofits.
- Beyond retrofitting, NYC is upgrading its building code which currently uses FEMA's 2015 flood maps. They are working with FEMA to develop future flood-risk maps to use as a regulatory tool, which will be released in the next few years.
- Bavishi discussed NYC's Climate Resiliency Design Guidelines and Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation guidance documents.
- Bavishi shared the work being done with residents and small businesses to prepare them for climate change. They have focused on flood insurance workshops and are offering home resilience audits, as well as looking into activating social networks during heat waves.

Questions and Comments that followed:

1. Commissioner Fletcher asked if NYC had established any targets or deadlines in regards to retrofitting and renovating buildings. Bavishi responded that they have established targets on the clean energy side but not on the resilience side.
2. Commissioner Fletcher asked where the fill came from for the east side coastal resiliency project. Bavishi responded that she does not know exactly, but they have a clean soil bank program.
3. Commissioner Fletcher asked if groundwater flooding has been a concern, as hardening the edge doesn't necessarily protect the City. Bavishi responded that it is definitely a concern, and when hardening the edge they are also investing in interior draining and sea bridge barriers. Bavishi also noted concerns in regards to underground infrastructure, particularly in places susceptible to

tidal flooding but where infrastructure is so dense above and below ground it is difficult to build new infrastructure.

4. Chair Keener discussed the concern of matching planned development with needed upgrades in infrastructure. Bavishi responded that NYC is still exploring this and needs a framework for better coordination. She noted this discussion is not included in the climate resiliency guidelines report because they are for asset-level, not for whole infrastructure systems.

Comments and Public Testimony that followed:

1. Director Gonser commented that a learning group exists as an outgrowth from the 100 Resilient Cities network, and he has an opportunity to connect with Jainey and others monthly.

9. Report on the outcomes from the construction industry stakeholder meeting and discussion on the Climate Change & the Construction Industry Guidance Document

- Chair Keener and Commissioner Mehnert summarized the stakeholder workshop that occurred Friday, May 14. Chair Keener reviewed the purpose of the stakeholder meeting and discussed relevant findings from the Climate Change and Social Equity document published last year and how it relates to the construction paper, as well as relevant climate projections and construction impacts. Chair Keener shared the attendance list of the discussion and the organizations that will receive a survey to gather more input. Chair Keener introduced the questions that guided the discussion with the stakeholders.
- Chair Keener and Commissioner Mehnert presented the range of themes that came out of the discussion. They discussed the next steps for the stakeholder discussion, which includes targeted outreach through a Google Form survey, thematic analysis of focus group and survey results, and revisions to the guidance document for review at the June 15 Commission meeting.

Questions and Comments that followed:

1. Commissioner Fletcher asked how they answered a question from a stakeholder about how decreasing Hawai'i's greenhouse gas emissions will affect sea level rise. Chair Keener clarified that the purpose of the meeting was to facilitate discussion and not to answer questions.

Comments and Public Testimony that followed:

1. Nancy McPherson noted that the Department of Hawaiian Homelands will offer additional input in the survey.

10. Public Input for Matters Not on the Agenda: No public comments were received.

11. Tentative Next Meeting Date: The next meeting date is June 15, 2021 at 9:00 AM via Zoom.

12. Announcements:

1. Commissioner Fletcher shared the information to watch Green Island Films' documentary about food security in Hawai'i called Ketchup and M&Ms.
2. Vice Chair Alegado shared a learning series from the Global Council for Science and the Environment which discuss the integration of indigenous solutions for climate change adaptation. More information can be found here: <https://www.gcseglobal.org/indigenous-knowledge-western-science-learning-series>.
3. Director Gonser shared that Resolution 20-105 will be heard at the Transportation, Sustainability and Health Committee meeting, along with a briefing on the energy services performance contract for City building facilities.

13. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 AM.