



THE TOWN OF

# LOS ALTOS HILLS *California*

## ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES COMMITTEE

Approved Meeting Minutes

**Date:** March 4, 2021

### Attendees:

- Members: Vrinda, Steve, Pat, Anand, Peter, April, Sasha, Aileen
- Council Liaison: Stan
- Public: Peter Brown (LAH resident; on EPC and Open Space committees; interested in preserving environment and semi urban-rural landscape, conservationist)

### 1. Call to Order (roll call)

### 2. Approval of Minutes of the meeting on February 4, 2021

- Sasha moved to accept as is; Steve 2nd; unanimous support.

### 3. Agenda Review

### 4. Topics of Interest / Open Discussion

- Steve described Green Town Los Altos/Los Altos Lunch webinar on Electrification last Tuesday the 23rd.
  - Everybody's home is different, need to measure energy use, what you can reduce the energy use, and measure your carbon footprint
  - Why we have to reduce the use of natural gas, the options available for reducing the energy use and reducing the carbon footprint
- About 40 attendees. Good response in terms of final poll on "what actions will you take?" (see attached)
- Peter: We should add links in LAH website to GTLA lunch webinars, Carbon Calc tool, HEA tool, Killawatt, Rainforest.  
Links:
  - GreenTown Lunch Series funded by Los Altos which : <https://www.greentownlosaltos.org/post/lunch-with-greentown-a-speaker-series-at-lunch>, a nonprofit promoting sustainability issues, like low water use, biking, trees( Plant 500 trees), etc
  - GTLA Lunch Webinar with Steve: <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/0qsBnKL5dyJz>

[0f1qH7VN4AKjB-s3g6IH1rcYPsHrhJokUzMN\\_VC1ySpqQV8PeeNT.bxCrw1wfJCgJIPOV](https://coolclimate.org/calculator)

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- Free Carbon Footprint Calculator: <https://coolclimate.org/calculator>
- PG&E's Free Home Energy Service by local company HEA: [HomeIntel.hea.com](http://HomeIntel.hea.com)
- Killawatt meter: <https://smile.amazon.com/P3-International-P4460-Electricity-Monitor/dp/B000RGF29Q/>
- Sasha: Rainforest device to show real-time energy shows in granular details of all the phantom loads around the use: <https://www.rainforestautomation.com/homeowners/>
- Steve offered to do a similar webinar for LAH anytime, but getting an audience is tough. Los Altos published the Lunch series, got a half-page story in the Town Crier, GTLA & The Sereno group promoted it. but only got 40 attendees.
- Stan: If we did a seminar we could use the town's list of email addresses...?
- Vrinda: Need to get the approval of the City Council.
- Peter: Can promote it on Nextdoor as neighbors.
- Q: Should we promote webinars? April: Maybe wait for in-person. Steve: We need someone to take the lead.
- The topic to be added to next months agenda
- Sasha: Question on PG&E's limit on residential solar before you are classified at a Power Plant. 30-50kW? What if used for siding on 4 sides? Though the capacity is nameplate rating-in practice you can never produce that much power. Peter: At a certain size, PG&E may not approve.

## 5. GHG Inventory Update

- Zach's response: CSG contract is already used up, and town staff has no time for this.
- Steve: The council approved annual inventories in 2008 and 2016, done by Staff. AB-32 requires updates. We found that the staff was not doing it. This year the staff contracted CSG consultants to do it.
- Stan: Town Staff is asking for big bucks on other stuff, should be able to find \$15k more to finish the GHG inventories.
- Request: Council liaison Mok to sit with Zach to find out about the CSG contract
- Peter AB 32 requires the town to have a Climate Action Plan. Doing it annually is a best practice and the City Council agreed to do it annually when they saw the CAP
- Anand: Town can be held liable for not completing GHG inventory.

- Steve: On Per capita basis LAH may not be as high as Atherton but we are close. GHG inventory will give us exactly where we stand. Even though our electricity use has become cleaner our gas use has increased every year. We need to do the GHG inventory annually and Climate Action Plan every 5 years or when there are big changes. The last one was before SVCE started. So we need to update the CAP but we cannot start work on CAP until we have GHG inventory done.
- Stan: we will need to assess the cost of being carbon neutral but still adhere to the laws.
- Peter: CAP will address the trends in GHG inventory and see if we can address those issues. If we are using more natural gas why is it so and what can we do about that.
- Steve: In the discussion on electrification: the heat pumps are 5 times more efficient than the gas in terms of energy used. So the price of electricity has to be 5 times higher than natural gas. Right now it is somewhere close to that depending on your rate structure.
- Peter: The new reach codes require heat pumps for both water and space heating for new construction
- Steve: In Menlo Park "Replace on burn out" for retrofits-can be a part of the new CAP,--has to be feasible and approved by CEC -- it has to be cost effective with calculations made by extremely expensive consultants at the state level.  
The gas use may be going up because 2000 sq. ft homes are being replaced by more efficient 6000 sq. ft. homes.  
Switch-is-on (<https://www.switchison.org>) is good website. It is going to be promoted on the same level at the Stop Smoking campaign.
- Sasha: the calculations did not show that heat pumps will be feasible when the forecast used CPUC electricity price index from 2019, but did not use the gas price index
- Steve: Many efforts under way-- improvements in efficiency , 110v appliances
- Peter Brown: Price of Electricity is going to be going up dramatically, due to bankruptcy etc. Time to invest in EV and PV
- Sasha: at the present prices-favors gas. Exploring of adopting Microgrid-like in the Town of Mathews
- Steve: SVCE has all-electric rates, PG&E has special rates for all electric home--Paying less to PG&E than before electrification @ \$0.17 kWh, (shifting the loads to off peak--85% of electricity use is off peak)

#### 6. Next EIC meeting: April 1, 2021:

- Steve: Include CAP planning on the next agenda based on the draft inventory.
- Peter: Estimate GHG savings from electrification ordinance will be over time. Should also analyze/forecast the impact of our Reach code over time, based on the number of homes to be built in town.

- Sasha: He may have some info to present from the town of Matthews close Monterey that has moved off PG&E, with their own microgrid.
- Also: Request update on Undergrounding: Nicole leaving creates a big hole! George to present. who's in charge?

7. Adjournment at 7:50pm