

Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development
September 22, 1997; 9:00 a.m. - noon
PG&E; 77 Beale St; San Francisco
Minutes

After introductory remarks by Dick Clarke, self introductions were made around the room. The attendance list is attached.

Scoping Committee: Tom Hinman provided the Scoping Committee report on behalf of Michele Perrault. The Committee has met several times since July to discuss the Alliance's vision and principles, and to come to closure on the specific components of sustainability for initial focus. It recognized several potential obstacles to achieving the objectives of the Alliance: the perceived tension between local and regional governance; more literacy on the issue of sustainable development is required; single issue advocacy tends to hurt interdisciplinary problem solving; and there seems to be disconnect between existing education and workforce preparation.

The Committee has identified five points which it recommends the Alliance pursue, two of which are value-based and three action-based. The Committee recommends that these points comprise the "prism" through which the Alliance views all its work:

- 1) how can the concept of region be made a value in the Bay Area?
- 2) how can the concept of sustainable development made a value in the Bay Area?
- 3) how can the housing and job growth areas be linked, either by geography, mobility, or affordability?
- 4) how can a regional program of infill development combined with urban growth boundaries be provided in equitable and fiscally responsible manner?
- 5) how can more value be obtained from existing transportation dollars to ensure efficient and equitable service?

The need for much outreach and an education process on sustainable development was also emphasized by the Committee.

Inventory Working Group: John Wise reported that ABAG and EPA is collaborating on the inventory project which entails surveying the Bay Area to identify sustainable development efforts in the Bay Area. The inventory is being conducted for three purposes:

- 1) to help the Alliance further refine its Working Plan. The foundation for refining the Working Plan is an inventory of the efforts already completed and those underway. This will help the Alliance determine where and how it can add value.
- 2) to help organizations with similar goals to network and achieve their own goals.
- 3) to leverage political, financial, and community support for the Alliance and commitment for the concept of sustainable development.

The Working Group designed a survey and mailed it to about 450 people/organizations. To date, about 100 have been returned. EPA and ABAG will follow up with those that

have not yet responded. The database created will be made available on a home page on the Internet. The hope is to be able to demonstrate the database at the December meeting of the Alliance.

Sustainability & Justice: Arnaldo Garcia, of Urban Habitat (UH) reported that UH is working with, and has a data base of, several hundred organizations in the Bay Area which work on equity issues. He cited the example of the Bay View/Hunters Point area and the community's high general awareness of environmental issues and social equity. UH will be linked with five other groups working on housing, air/water quality, immigrant rights, economic development, and food security -- issues that define regional sustainability and have justice as a foundation. UH proposes to focus on the PCSD indicators that are "doable" now, rather than those that need to be further negotiated. On October 30, UH will post a "bio regional tour" -- an all-day tour of six sites in three cities around the Bay Area, meeting with 15 groups to see what communities are currently doing "on the ground level." UH is hoping to set up a similar type of tour every other month. It was suggested that might be good for the Alliance to take such a tour. It was also suggested that we take advantage of the opportunity to link the community oriented database that UH is putting together with the Alliance inventory.

Concern was a raised about insufficient emphasis on education by the Alliance.

Funding and Infrastructure: on behalf of Charlotte Powers, Gary Binger reported that in August the Alliance submitted an application in the EPA's Sustainable Development Challenge Grant program. The grant will allow the Alliance to carry out its work for the next two years. A status report is expected in October or November. He also listed a number of the organizations that committed to work with the Alliance, and are part of the application. Gary reiterated the Alliance goal -- to come up with a compact of policies, programs and actions that all the entities can agree to work toward. John Wise reported that nationwide, \$5 million is available under this EPA program. He also indicated that 948 applications have been received by EPA.

History of Sustainability: Gary provided a matrix with a brief history of sustainability efforts in the Bay Area over the last 20-30 years, starting with proposals by Assembly member Knox in the 1969-75 time frame, the last of which failed by two votes. Common amongst the efforts described by Gary, all of which failed to institute a regional government or regional governance, was the expressed concern about the loss of local control, especially as related to land use. It was suggested that the Alliance analyze and learn from the past failures and successes and revisit these often during the course of the Alliance's work. It was also pointed out that those efforts that have been successful, e.g., the Regional Water Quality Control Board, generally had legislation behind them that included "teeth."

Social Equity Panel - Carl Anthony led the discussion which included five panelists.

Hannah Creighton from Urban Habitat displayed several graphic approaches to understanding minority community housing, transportation and toxic/public health relationships surrounding San

Francisco's Third Street Corridor, Laotian communities in Contra Costa County, and "flatland" zip codes in Oakland/Western Alameda County. Attendees agreed that the mapping process contributed dramatically to understanding these relationships.

Richard Toshiyuki Drury, from Communities for a Better Environment, challenged attendees to make sustainability meaningful by adding teeth to a noble cause. He cited "convenient" practices like recycling, that have been well publicized but noted that hard choices with financial impacts must be made on the path to true sustainability. Economic structures that recognize externalities and incorporate regulatory or tax incentives or penalties are likely outcomes/tools in this process. Bringing models like "Good Neighbor Agreements" into the industrial decision making process is a goal of Communities for a Better Environment.

Shelley Poticha, from Congress for the New Urbanism, noted that "place" does matter in integrating land use and transportation policy and that a single issue approach will not provide meaningful solutions. She advocated work on a county basis leading to regional solutions, linking jobs to affordable neighborhoods and letting transit linkages guide community rebuilding through such mechanisms as location-efficient mortgages. She advocated corridor-based planning as a vehicle in this process noting that the Regional Transportation Plan will be updated in 1998. Like others, she stressed the need to identify resources for the community building process.

Catherine Bullock Theuriet, from Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California, cited the need for very low income housing serving diverse family backgrounds. She noted continued public perception and regulatory barriers to higher density housing and the need to demonstrate successful projects to counter the notion that ghettos are being created. She hoped that this initiative would provide an opportunity for greater mutual understanding of affordable housing issues by developing and implementing more informational programs.

Cathi Tactaquin, from the National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights, reiterated points raised by Hannah on regional distribution of minorities and the correlation of lower education and greater toxic exposure to these groups. Besides legal/racial concerns, she cited barriers of language in educational, health care and employment contexts. She also noted that growth of suburban job centers without affordable housing or transit access impacted immigrant job opportunities. She hoped that civic participation of immigrant groups could be improved and that public/private cooperation toward sustainable communities might be a vehicle toward inclusiveness.

Next Meeting: December 5, 1998