

LBNL COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP (CAG)

CAG Meeting Summary

Wednesday, March 17, 2010

7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

North Berkeley Senior Center

CAG Members Present:

Mark Berson, Berkeley Chamber of Commerce

Wendy Cosin, City of Berkeley Planning Department

William Gilbert, Claremont Elmwood Neighborhood Association (CENA)

Nancy Nelson, UC Botanical Garden

Rebecca Daly, UC Berkeley Student

Mark McLeod, Buy Local Berkeley

Dean Metzger, Berkeleyans for a Livable University Environment (BLUE)

Phil Price, LBNL employee

Phila Rogers, Berkeley community member

Carole Schemmerling, Strawberry Creek Watershed Council

Elizabeth Stage, Lawrence Hall of Science

Ann Wagley, Berkeley community member

CAG Members Absent:

Whitney Dotson, East Bay Regional Parks District

Welcome

Paul Alivisatos, recently appointed Director of Lawrence Berkeley National Lab (LBNL), thanked CAG members and meeting attendees for their interest and participation in the CAG process and shared brief welcoming remarks.

This is the start of a process in which the Lab will become more engaged with the community. Through this process, it will do what it can to learn from the community in terms of how it plans for the future growth and development of its facilities. Dr. Alivisatos shared that it is his job to help the Lab meet its goals related to energy and the environment around the globe. He also wishes to help meet goals in the eyes of the community and improve community relations.

Daniel Iacofano of MIG introduced himself as the CAG facilitator, commented briefly on the importance of the CAG process, and reviewed meeting objectives and the evening's agenda. Daniel explained that the main objective of this meeting is to get organized by agreeing upon the organizing framework for the CAG and identifying a potential set of topics to address in this process. Another objective is to help CAG members develop a common understanding of the Lab's Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP) and the status of LBNL proposed and upcoming projects.

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Daniel invited a round of introductions. Following introductions, he noted that the CAG will continue to welcome new members. Both CAG members and community members were given opportunity to provide feedback throughout the meeting.

To ensure that meeting information is accessible to the CAG and members of the community, notes will be kept to capture main points of discussion and action items. Meeting notes will be available on the CAG website, along with meeting presentations and other materials. The website URL will be made available before the next meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, April 28th.

Community Advisory Group Organizing Framework and Process

Daniel introduced the CAG Organizing Framework document distributed to CAG members and meeting participants. This is a charter for the group and outlines the CAG's purpose and charge, member responsibilities, operating principles, and a preliminary work plan and schedule.

The CAG will hold four to eight meetings per year. This schedule will vary according to how much time it takes to develop information on particular topics.

Participants then reviewed the summary document of preliminary community issues and concerns as shared during stakeholder interviews conducted by Daniel prior to the meeting. Issues were organized according to six topic areas:

- Future Lab Growth and Development
- Hazardous Materials
- Water Quality and Watershed Health
- Transportation
- Sustainability
- Community Relations

Daniel explained that the Organizing Framework and preliminary list of issues and concerns will be used as a starting point to organize a series of subsequent CAG meetings. Over the course of these meetings, the CAG will provide planning-related comments and will formulate a set of principles that can guide future planning and development of the Lab.

Daniel invited CAG members and the public to comment on the Organizing Framework and the list of issues. Initial comments, requests and recommendations, and action items identified in response to these comments, include the following:

- Create a plan for regular air, soil and water quality testing. LBNL will request that the Department of Toxic Substances Control, the Air Quality Management District, the Regional Water Quality Board, and other regulatory authorities as appropriate become involved in the CAG process.
- Provide CAG members a tour of the Lab facilities. LBNL will organize a tour to take place in advance of the April CAG meeting.

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- Interview Lab staff to provide them an opportunity to give information from their perspective.
- Gather information about similar facilities in the U.S. and identify best practices. Consider UC Mission Bay as a potential example of a successful second campus.
- Expand community outreach.

Brief Overview of LBNL Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP)

Laura Chen, Chief Facilities Planner at LBNL, provided an overview of the Lab's Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP). She introduced her colleague Jeff Philliber, the Lab's Environmental Planner. The following is a summary of key points.

The Lab is located on 202 acres of more than 1,100 acres of UC Regents land and sits in two different cities, Berkeley and Oakland. The campus experiences an elevation change of approximately 500 feet in a one-mile stretch. The Lab also has off-site leased facilities in Oakland, Emeryville and Walnut Creek.

The Lab's LRDP focuses on three key parameters: population projections, space growth and land use.

The LRDP establishes four land use zones, which will guide the location of new buildings and site improvements: Research & Academic, Central Commons, Support Services, and Perimeter Open Space.

Laura provided a brief summary of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) process for the LRDP, which took seven years to complete. After a series of outreach meetings with City of Berkeley, the draft LRDP and EIR were circulated with reduced growth figures. UC Regents approved the LRDP in July 2007

CAG members and meeting participants shared comments following Laura's presentation:

- The Lab is messy, aesthetically displeasing and has an "unplanned" look to it.
- Land is not used efficiently. Lab facilities are very spread out.
- Reduce LBNL's building footprint at the current site.
- The use of space is an historic legacy. The priority should be to spend money to ensure that buildings are highly functional, not pretty.
- Consider the role of parking facilities in inefficient land use.

Currently Proposed and Possible Future Projects

Jerry O'Hearn, Department Head for capital projects at the Lab, gave a PowerPoint presentation on seven proposed projects. These projects are scheduled for the period from 2010 to 2018. This timeline is contingent upon funding and completion of environmental review.

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Jerry provided an overview of the following seven projects:

- Old Town Demolition
- Solar Energy Research Center (SERC)
- Seismic Phase 2
- Seismic Phase 3
- Berkeley Lab Laser Accelerator (BELLA)
- User Test Bed Facility
- Computational Research and Theory Facility (CRT)

Jerry oriented participants to project locations, summarized each project, and shared the timeline for project completion. Compared to the other projects, Seismic Phase 3 is very early in its lifecycle.

CAG members and meeting participants then commented on the projects:

- The CRT facility is “an objectionable building.” Ample infill alternatives exist for its placement, as opposed to its proposed site on an undeveloped hillside.
- Consider the costs of developing and constructing buildings on hillsides relative to the cost of building on other sites.
- Avoid “lease-back” agreements with private developers, such as that proposed for the building which had been designated as Building 49.
- Send the notice of availability for the CRT project to CAG members and meeting participants. Provide timely information about how to participate in the environmental review process for all LBNL projects.
- Identify how far into projects the CAG can influence process and outcomes. Think about what can change and what is unlikely to change so the CAG can direct comments towards those activities for which its influence is feasible.
- Budget projects and identify funds to mitigate project-related impacts on the community..

Potential CAG Meeting Topics and Schedule

Following Lab presentations and related discussion, CAG members identified potential topics for future CAG meetings. Discussion topics include both issue areas and proposed LBNL projects.

- Commercial activities taking place at the Lab and how these activities benefit the community.
- Site hydrogeology, watershed management and the use of hydrogels, and the Lennart aquifer.
- The Computational Research & Theory Facility (CRT).

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- The Berkeley Lab Laser Accelerator (BELLA).
- Emergency preparedness plans for all projects.
- The Molecular Foundry (nanotechnology facility).
- Community impacts of Lab projects and activities, both positive and negative, and how the City and the community can be compensated for negative impacts.
- The feasibility of building a second campus.
- The need for transparency from all sides.
- Efficiency of land use at the Lab.
- Transportation and transportation-related impacts.
- Toxic waste and air and water quality issues.

The CAG meeting schedule will be designed to address these topics.

Next Steps

Daniel invited meeting participants to suggest additional stakeholder interviewees and/or potential CAG members. He also invited input on the process, including the evening's format and proceedings, and directed participants to email him and Sam Chapman.

MIG will follow up with CAG members regarding scheduling a tour of Lab facilities.

In closing, Paul Alivisatos thanked the group and commented on how valuable community input shared through this process is to the Lab. He believes that the Lab as a whole has a tremendous amount to gain from the CAG.