



SUSTAINABLE SONOMA COUNCIL
MEETING NOTES
Sonoma Community Center, Room 110
276 E Napa St, Sonoma
June 20, 2018
2:00-4:00pm

I. Welcome, overview and updates

Community context that highlights the need for Sustainable Sonoma:

- a. The decision-making about the future of Sonoma Developmental Center embodies the same triple bottom line as Sustainable Sonoma: people, environment, and economy.
- b. There has been a string of departures from high-level positions at Sonoma Valley nonprofits due in part to lack of affordability.

Updates

- a. Updated Council roster. Working toward having an alternate for each interest group.
- b. Timeline extended for deliberation and expert input between the end of listening sessions (now approx. August), selecting Action Priorities, and creating Work Groups (approx. January 2019).
- c. Sustainable Sonoma was a finalist for the Impact100 Grant and was awarded \$10,000. Several Impact100 members have subsequently offered strategic support.

II. Interactive exercise: Code of Conduct of Action

Introduce Mike Courville of Open Mind, consultant to Sustainable Sonoma on community process design. Mike has guided communities and organizations through similar efforts.

We all have more than one role in the community. By being a Sustainable Sonoma Council member, you are agreeing to move a larger vision forward together with other community leaders. The purpose of the Code of Conduct exercises is to think about when certain scenarios come up in the future. One Council member called it “blowing up the land mines before we come upon them.”

Code of Conduct 1. “If there is a conflict between Sustainable Sonoma and another entity, let the response be a coordinated message from Sustainable Sonoma as a whole, not an individual.”
Task for small groups: discuss what this would look like.

Feedback on exercise

- Members need more information about Sustainable Sonoma, to be comfortable as ambassadors. “I haven’t talked about it because I don’t know what to say.” Members need talking points.
- One’s primary “hat” might conflict with speaking for Sustainable Sonoma. How can executive directors, or elected officials, ever speak as Sustainable Sonoma?
- If the Sustainable Sonoma Council comes to a consensus about a statement or platform, it is important to honor that.
- Many of us hold multiple positions. We need to support each other when it comes to “hat changing”.
- Concerns that professional reputation, time and energy may conflict with participating in Sustainable Sonoma. What if Sustainable Sonoma doesn’t succeed?
- Situations in which Sustainable Sonoma Council members would be acting as ambassadors would be in projects that could fall beyond the regular scope of your organization

How challenging will it be to uphold this Code of Conduct item, on a scale of 0 to 10? 5-10 (going to need a little practice and support)

Code of Conduct 2. “Be clear when you are representing Sustainable Sonoma and when you are representing another interest.” Task for small groups: discuss what this would look like.

Feedback on exercise

- What is our decision making process? Practical consensus (see p. 6 in Charter).
- Don’t take a position if you don’t know.
- There is a time and place for speaking as “I” versus “we” not only on behalf of Sustainable Sonoma, but for the organizations and interests each of us represent.
- Sustainable Sonoma won’t take a position on every important issue.
- This part of the Code of Conduct will come up more often once Work Groups are active.

Challenge Scale: 6

III. First glimpse at Listening Session input

Why: We are looking for where people align and diverge across communities. (Communities means different kinds of people, not just different locations of people.) Listening session input should inform what we decide to work on. Also informs different possible interventions. We will eventually share what we’ve learned with the community.

What: It’s qualitative input gathered via listening sessions and the website using a consistent set of 9 questions. The questions are based on the sustainable development literature, the STAR Communities assessment tool, two focus groups in 2015 and 2016, and Council input in December.

We have a “convenience sample”—if it was convenient for people to attend a listening session, they might have. If not, they didn’t. People who did attend might have similar or different points of view than those who did not attend. People select which questions they want to answer. Some people attend more than one session, some provide more input than others. We cannot conclude that those issues with fewer responses are less important.

See handouts. This material is not for circulation, because it is highly preliminary and incomplete.

Discussion: What did you learn so far from the input from the listening sessions?

- Interesting, nothing revolutionary.
- The numbers are too low to take a position.
- Feedback seems to be negative—what’s missing and what’s wrong.
- Surprised that business growth is on the radar—that we need economic drivers beyond the ones that we have. Have not seen that in other communities.
- There are lots of data sets and polling out there—are we looking into using the data sets that are being paid for by others? County Regional Parks, county housing, city economic study in 2019, Measure M polling, Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau study on economics of tourism, youth surveys done with Sonoma Valley Fund monies by Teen Services, La Luz, etc.

IV. Next meeting

August 16

3:00-5:00pm

Location TBA