

September 2, 2015 IPM Committee

Public Comments from Michael Sullivan

I, Michael Sullivan, on behalf of Parents for a Safer Environment, wish to comment on the Weed Subcommittee Recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

The community is 100% in support of removing lawns for aesthetic purposes and commend the Committee for recommending the institutionalization of a county-wide policy to prohibit its planting to reduce water and preclude or reduce pesticide usage. This makes sense. However, I am not clear why the Grounds Program has not proposed this straight forward recommendation and instead the IPM Advisory Committee had to meet five times to make this matter-of-fact recommendation that most of all the municipalities are doing throughout the state.

Prevention is key, but the community is not happy with the fact that one, that Staff steered the Weed Subcommittee to not address pesticide spraying at all in the Grounds Program and it's not even mentioned in the Final Report. Christine Steck has provided a public comment for both the IPM Advisory Committee and the Weed Subcommittee regarding the most commonly used pesticide by the Grounds Program that is listed as a probable human cancer causing agent by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research of Cancer and there is no mention of how this pesticide usage will be curtailed or eliminated. This pesticide usage will not be reduced by removing lawns since this probable human cancer causing agent is never applied onto lawns, being able to kill turf grass.

Susan JunFish presented data to both the full IPM Advisory Committee, and the Weed Subcommittee showing a table with toxicity categories for each product and graphs showing quantity of each product in each toxicity category. Nowhere in the final report are current toxic pesticide usage and how they will be curtailed or eliminated or why the Grounds Program has to use a Bad Actor pesticide and if it will eliminate is mentioned in the final report. This is very concerning that the county staff leads and the community members on the Committee follow an agenda to address the minimal and non-controversial issues rather than tackle harder questions.

In addition, I have asked why the Weed Subcommittee Meeting Minutes did not Document how it chose to address the Grounds Program rather than the Right of Ways Program that currently uses more than 70% of the herbicides being applied by the county programs that are applied in most part by broadcast spraying that drift into the air that we breathe, that end up leaching into our waterways upon a rain storm, and that end up in the dust that we bring home on our shoes, on our bicycle or stroller wheels, and in the furry paws and nails of our pets who track them indoors.

It is sad that the few concerns expressed by the Community over the year continues to be ignored by the county's IPM Program.

September 2, 2015

Public Comment from Michael Sullivan, Lafayette resident

Agenda Item on Proposed Changes to the By-Laws of the IPM Advisory Committee

I thank Staff for including my public comments regarding the inconsistencies I have observed in the county's IPM program and its ByLaws dated December 20, 2010.

I agree with the obvious changes of "General Services" to "Public Works Dept," but I find it appalling that Staff would propose to totally eliminate the By-Laws language that requires a timely distribution of the meeting minutes to the IPM Advisory Committee. It has been difficult to read all the documents required for review within 5 days they are provided, which is a recent improvement to providing it 3 days prior to meetings that was practiced before my letter earlier this year. I thank you for the slight improvement.

The By-Laws currently states that minutes be distributed 1 week after the meeting. The one week provides ample time to review all the materials and for Committee members to follow up on items they may forget about once the meeting ends. I believe it's reasonable to amend it to distributing the materials within 2 weeks after the meeting to give time to Staff to prepare the meeting minutes, but eliminating this important timeline is not acceptable to the community.

September ~~15~~², 2015

Public Comments

Re: CCC IPM Adv Comm By-Laws changes proposed by IPM Coordinator

I have observed many meetings in the past where there is absolute silence on issues and Staff rush community members to vote on issues that were not discussed at all.

Case in point was several years ago, Ms Drlik changed all the directive language in the IPM Policy holding staff accountable in implementing the IPM Policy. Terms like Staff "shall" investigate were changed to "Staff investigates" and submitted it for approval to the Advisory Committee and it was approved without one utterance of discussion. Community members also missed reading these changes particularly because the tracked change document was *not* provided in a legible nor clear format although it was submitted in a legible format to the TWIC Board of Supervisor members for approval. That was when the Community members were able to clearly see the changes that would have dropped any directive language within a week of the TWIC meeting. We pointed this out to the Board and well as pointing out the fact that Ms Drlik chose to stop reporting Bad Actor pesticide usage without discussion with the IPM Advisory Committee nor approval from the Board. The Board instructed Ms Drlik to retain the original directive language in the By-Laws and also to report the annual Bad Actor usage to the Board.

People are often reticent to admit that they have not had time to review documents before voting on minutes and other items. Committee members are likely to just go along with the majority and vote to accept documents as Staff submits them. This is a highly risky practice as shown by past experience. It is more reasonable to provide at least four to six weeks of time for volunteers to fit in the review amongst a busy schedule. With more careful review of all the materials, it increases the chance that members would be able to participate with a fuller understanding of the issues and make wiser decisions.

Susan JunFish
Program Director,
Parents for a Safer Environment

