

DOCKETED

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Submitted On: 6/12/2019
Docket Number: 19-BUSMTG-02

EcoBlock - community involvement - Docket EPC-18-013

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

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TO:

California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street, MS-14
Sacramento, California 95814
PublicAdviser@energy.ca.gov,

RE: EcoBlock "community involvement" (Docket # EPC-18-013)

June 4, 2019

This letter is regarding the proposed EcoBlock in the City of Oakland block bounded by Powell St., Fremont St, 59th St. and Marshall St.

The undersigned residents and interested individuals are concerned about the incomplete and opaque communication, unintended consequences, and long-term responsibilities of the EcoBlock proposal. We just recently learned of the pending \$5 million grant for the "implementation" phase.

We do not oppose the purpose of the micro-utility technology, but we are extremely concerned by the inappropriate methods of "community outreach" which did not respect the amount of our time which was consumed on their behalf.

In addition to the technological energy and climate advantages of the program, it is importantly a human subjects experiment which has not been conducted as such. The Berkeley promoters informed residents that nothing would be implemented without 100% agreement and that all legal and financial elements would be taken care of by the project.

It became clear that not all the residents were willing to participate for a number of reasons which included aggressive sales tactics, misrepresentation of the level of support, distrust that the permitting process guarantees would continue past the initial phase, no disclosure of risks, costs and responsibility for maintenance and replacement of the systems after installation. There has been no disclosure of financial interests of the grant recipients to profit from implementation or future sales and do discussion of mitigating unwanted and unnecessary daily life changes. The lack of experience of the Project Manager in inclusive community engagement is apparent.

Micro-utilities are common in rural areas. The technology or concept in general is not new. Applying the concept to urban areas on a community-scale is new. It is possible that one of the important advantages would be the social learning of neighbors working together to manage these systems. However, the known risks and responsibilities of daily maintenance and monitoring of the systems, emergency repairs, future permitting issues after promotion dies down, and shared costs have not been disclosed by the EcoBlock staff. The "community" to which they refer appears to be members of the Siddha Yoga Ashram who may agree amongst themselves, but who do not have a trust relationship to many others in the neighborhood. In contrast to representations by Mr. Nahas, all the residents were not asked if we would like to become a study site. We were informed that he had chosen our homes by means of a sales pitch about free services.

We believe that it is important that the funders and institutional stakeholders are aware of these concerns because of the disruption the project methods have already caused and the unnecessary negative reputation these striking lacks in governance and planning could cause for an otherwise promising technical approach.

We, the undersigned, are not willing to participate in the EcoBlock project as it is proposed.

We believe that it is important that the funders and institutional stakeholders are aware of these concerns because of the disruption the project methods have already caused and the unnecessary negative reputation these striking lacks in governance and planning could cause for an otherwise promising technical approach.

We, the undersigned, are not willing to participate in the EcoBlock project as it is proposed.

PARTIAL LIST ONLY DUE TO LACK OF NOTICE.

1170 POWELL ST.
[Signature] owner

Robert Brundage, owner

5812 Fremont St.
Nancy Friend, owner
[Signature] owner

5816 Fremont St.
James Medley, owner
James Medley

5837 Fremont St.
Patricia A. Charley
Patricia A. Charley
owner

5837 Fremont St.
Mark L. Balkar - owner
Mark E. Balkar

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Paul Post

5820 FRENCH MOUNT

OAKLAND

~~5820~~

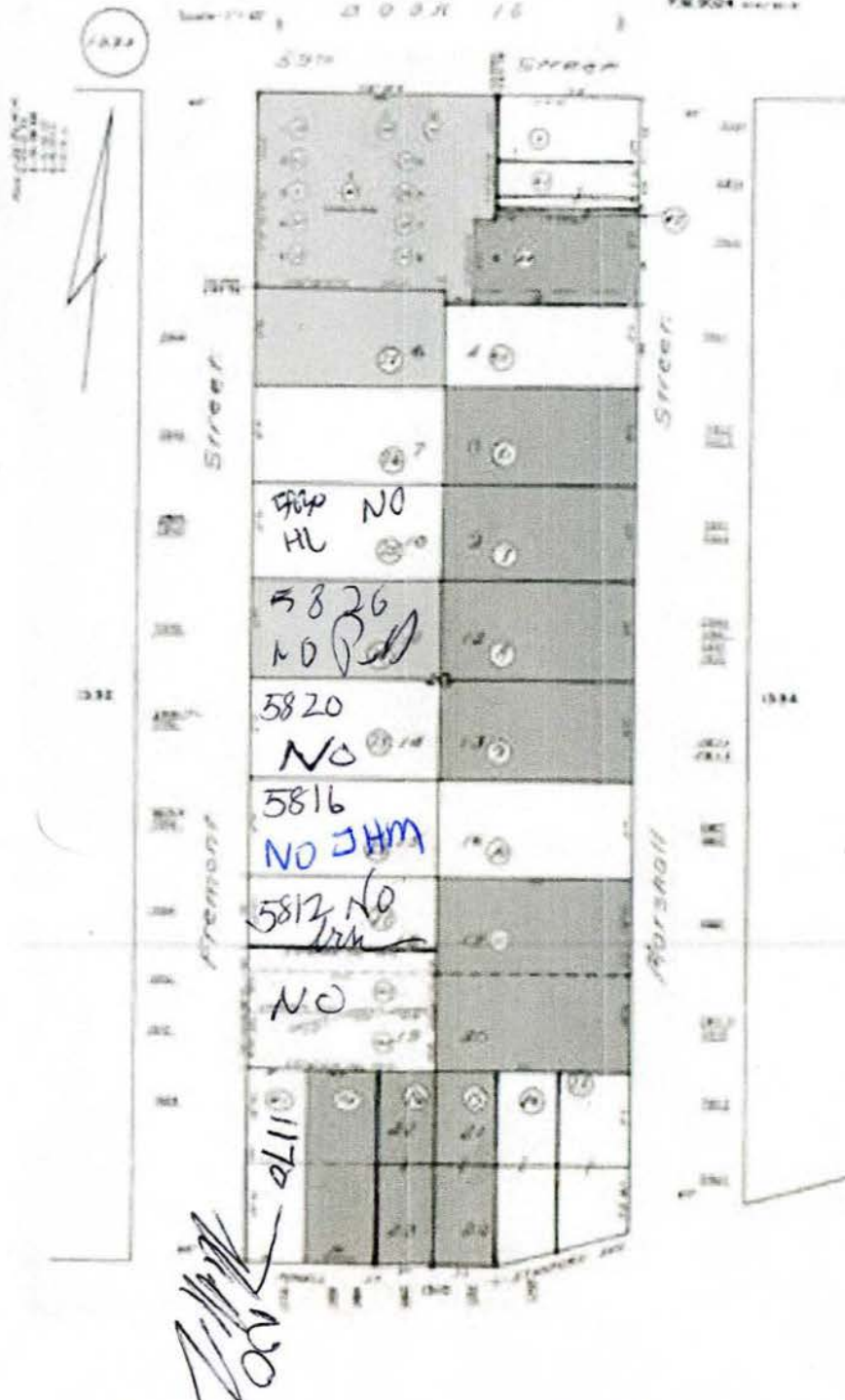
Fremont St

Oakland, Ca, 94608

~~5820~~

5830 Fremont St. Oakland CA 94608

Mary K. Shisler



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PARTIAL LIST ONLY DUE TO LACK
OF NOTICES

Figure 8: The Oakland EcoBlock; Red Shaded Areas Indicated Minimum Viable Project and Committed Participation. Cyan Shaded Areas Indicate Additional Owner Commitment.