



VIDEO: Ashland, Cherryland March Towards a Greener Community

September 26, 2011

Ashland Cherryland Garden & Arts Network hosted a day-long event on Saturday to educate locals on the importance of reducing fossil fuel usage as well as introduce them to the future site of a community-driven neighborhood marketplace.

A crowd of over 30 people from Ashland, Cherryland and nearby communities marched down East 14th Street on Saturday, rallying for a greener, safer neighborhood.

It was one of thousands of events put on around the world as part of 350.org's Moving Planet Movement, a grassroots initiative aimed at solving the climate crisis.

The Ashland Cherryland Garden & Arts Network hosted the local day-long event. Members said their goal was to educate the community on finding alternatives to using fossil fuels.

The rally was also joined by Union City's Ollin Anahuac Aztec Dance Group and was funded by Supervisor Nate Miley and Mercy Housing.

The parade down East 14th Street began at Ashland's Jack Holland Sr. Park and ended at an empty lot on the corner of Mission Boulevard and Mattox Road. The site is in the process of becoming a co-operative neighborhood marketplace and has gained support from Supervisor Miley.

There's also discussion of possibly relocating the Cherryland Community Center from Hampton Road to the site of the future marketplace.

Mandela Marketplace, a non-profit promoting co-op food enterprises, will help supply some of the produce. However, many items will come from farms and gardens in Ashland and Cherryland.

For those living in these communities, the marketplace will be a resolution to their long-time struggle of being a food desert, organizers say.

Currently, over 1,500 people living in these areas have low access to fresh, affordable produce, according to The Food Desert Locator, a data provider supported by multiple government agencies.

Also among that population, 4.1 percent of housing units have low access and live without a car.

Not only would the marketplace provide these people with produce, it would be community-driven, placing Ashland and Cherryland residents in the forefront of revitalizing their local economy.

The event ended with a potluck dinner at one of Cherryland's community gardens. ACGAN member Susan Beck offered her front yard fence as a canvas for a bee-inspired mural completed that same day.



The Oakland-based organization Community Rejuvenation Project painted the mural to serve as an artistic reminder how these gardens have been pollinating positive change among the community.

Check out the video above to see all the components of the event and how they unfolded throughout the day.

Source: <http://castrovalley.patch.com/articles/video-ashland-cherryland-march-towards-a-greener-community#video-7913195>