

Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

CPAC BULLETIN

September 2013

MEETING: The Climate Protection Action Committee will meet on Thursday, September 12, 6:00 pm at City Hall, Sullivan Chamber (note this is not the usual meeting location). The agenda for the meeting will be posted on the [Community Development Department website](#). The featured topic in September will be a meeting with the City Manager and City department heads.

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **BSA-COTE** – September 11, 8:00 to 10:00 am, BSA Space, 290 Congress Street, Boston. Presentation and discussion on the Cambridge Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment with Nathalie Beavais of Kleinfelder and John Bolduc of the Community Development Department. Sponsored by the Boston Society of Architects/Committee on the Environment. [RSVP here](#).
- **Massachusetts Car-free Week** – September 16-22. This is part of the annual World Car-free Day event that promotes the benefits of sustainable transportation modes. To find out how to participate, [click here](#).
- **Bill McKibben at Harvard** – September 17, 4:00 pm, Sanders Theatre, Harvard University. Environmentalist Bill McKibben will speak on “Oil and Honey: Notes from a Rapidly Changing Climate”. The lecture is free but tickets must be obtained from the Harvard Box Office. [For information, click here](#).
- **Greenport Forum** – September 17, 7:00 pm, Cambridgeport Baptist Church, 459 Putnam Avenue (corner of Putnam and Magazine). *Large-scale Development in Cambridge: Assessing the Impacts*; speakers: Jonathan King and Shelley Rieman of the Cambridge Residents Alliance.
- **PACE Green Energy & Green Buildings Forum** – September 18, 8:30 to 11:30 am, District Hall (in Boston Seaport/Innovation District on Northern Avenue near the ICA). Presentations on how commercial property assessed clean energy finance programs are working in Connecticut and other parts of the U.S. Free. Sponsored by the Massachusetts Green Building Council and National Grid. For more information and to register, [click here](#).
- **Chasing Ice** – September 18, 5:30 to 7:30 pm, Science Center, One Oxford Street, Harvard. Screening of the documentary *Chasing Ice* and a panel discussion with Harvard climate scientists. The event is free. [For more information, click here](#). This is an excellent and entertaining film.
- **PARK(ing) Day** – September 20, 9:00 m to 5:00 pm. The annual global event that temporarily transforms metered parking spaces into public places will be observed in Cambridge with 35 sites all around the city. Community organizations and City agencies will convert parking spaces into places with a range of themes. Teams of 1 to 4 people can visit the sites and qualify for prizes. For information about the spaces and the prizes, [click here](#).
- **Extreme Weather: The Small Business Bottom Line** – October 1, 8:00 to 9:45 am, The Non Profit Center, 89 South Street, Boston. The event is a business breakfast and interactive panel discussion on climate change risks for Boston’s small business community. Sponsored by The American Sustainable Business Council, Climate Action Liaison Coalition, & Sustainable Business Network. For more information and to register, [click here](#).
- **Green Career Conference** – October 3, Holiday Inn, Marlborough. To register, [click here](#).

- **Crowds & Climate Conference** – November 6-7, Kresge Auditorium, MIT. This conference will focus on bottom-up approaches to climate change using new information technologies such as crowdsourcing, social media, and big data to develop innovative ideas and stimulate action. Sponsored by the MIT Climate CoLab. For more information, [click here](#).
- **Global Clean Tech Meet Up** – November 12-14, Boston & Cambridge. Seaport World Trade Center, Boston. For more information, including registration, [click here](#).
- **EcoDistricts Summit** – November 12-14, Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. For more information, including registration, [click here](#).
- **ArchitectureBoston Expo** – November 19-21, Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. Annual conference and tradeshow for the design and construction industry. Many sustainability topics on the agenda. [For more information, click here](#).
- **Friends of Alewife Reservation Walks** - Wildlife walks sponsored by [FAR](#) impart the history and background to the DCR's Alewife Reservation, a rare urban wild in Cambridge. The walks are led by a professional wildlife assessor, Dave Brown. Tours last 2 hours. To prepare for the tour, or to get a "Virtual Tour", [click here](#).
- **Green Streets** – This initiative encourages people throughout Cambridge (and Somerville and surrounding cities and towns) to use a green form of transportation (transit, bicycle, walk, skate) on a designated day of the month and to wear a green-colored item of attire. The goal is to make Cambridge and neighboring cities safer, quieter, and friendlier for pedestrians and cyclists, and to minimize the use and impact of cars. Generally, the designated day is the last Friday of the month. Check the [Cambridge Green Streets Initiative website](#) for more info and incentives.
- **350.Org** - 350 Massachusetts is a volunteer-led, campaign-focused initiative connecting and organizing a strong grassroots coalition to address climate change and build a just and secure future beyond fossil fuels. Meetings are held every two weeks. All meetings are held at First Church Cambridge, 11 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA and begin at 6PM for potluck and networking, with the general meeting and working groups at 7PM. For more info, [click here](#).
- **Green Cambridge** - Green Cambridge is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization and a founding chapter of the Massachusetts Climate Action Network (MCAN). Green Cambridge works to create a more sustainable Cambridge, and to protect the environment for the health and safety of all. Green Cambridge meets monthly at the Eastern Bank community room in Harvard Square, usually on the first Thursday of every month at 6:30pm. All are welcome and invited to attend! For more information and a listing of community events, please visit: <http://www.greencambridge.org/>

NEWS

- **CRLS Earns LEED Gold** – [Cambridge Rindge & Latin School earned a LEED Gold Certification](#) from the U.S. Green Building Council. The 400,000 square foot high school complex was renovated recently. Sustainable design elements include chilled beams, a small cogeneration system, 30 kilowatt solar photovoltaic array, low-flow water fixtures, rainwater collection, a small rooftop garden, high efficiency lighting, operable windows, bicycle racks, durable rubber flooring, FSC-certified wood, recycled building materials, and low-VOC finishes. A lobby display shows real time energy information. City Manager Richard Rossi said “As far as we know, less than 10 renovated school buildings nationwide have achieved LEED Gold, so we are especially proud.”
- **Harvard Blackstone South is Double Platinum** – When Harvard renovated the brick buildings at 46 Blackstone Street in 2006, it earned a LEED Platinum certification for the project under the New Construction system. But Harvard did not rest on its laurels. It followed up with an energy audit in 2008 that found the building was consuming 30 percent more energy than expected. Factors involving usage

patterns and a malfunctioning energy-recovery wheel contributed to the lower level of energy performance. The building is now part of a continuous commissioning process to monitor performance and identify opportunities for improvement. After another energy audit in 2011 and implementation of projects to increase the efficiency of lighting systems and reduce plug loads, Harvard applied for and received a second LEED Platinum certification under the LEED for Existing Buildings: Operation and Maintenance system. Blackstone South is one of only 10 buildings in the world to receive platinum certifications under both LEED-NC and LEED EBOM. The building has also achieved an Energy Star rating of 96 from the U.S. EPA. Energy Star rates buildings on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 100 (highest) based on actual energy performance. [[EcoBuildingpulse, 8/27/13](#)]

- **Cambridge Leads Region for Venture Capital** – According to a zipcode analysis of venture capital investment by [The Atlantic Cities](#), Cambridge has surged ahead of Boston as the number one jurisdiction in the region for venture capital, with \$1.1 billion in investment compared to the city of Boston's \$669 million. The Greater Boston region attracted \$3.3 billion in VC funding in 2011, second only to the San Francisco Bay Area. Two Cambridge zipcodes around MIT account for about \$900 million of investment.
- **West Nile Virus Update** - It's West Nile Virus season. As of September 4th, two human cases of WNV have been reported (in Norfolk and Plymouth Counties), although not in Cambridge so far. The virus has been detected in mosquitoes in Cambridge. While temperatures are cooling, the Cambridge Public Health Department cautions that mosquitoes carrying the virus are very active and that residents should take precautions to prevent exposure. To read the Public Health Department's update and guidance on West Nile Virus, [click here](#).
- **Demand Response in New England** – Demand response (DR) is a strategy used to reduce the demand for electricity at peak times such as during heat waves in order to ensure that the power distribution system can deliver electricity to consumers to run air conditioning and building systems in a reliable manner. Major consumers, like industrial users, are paid to reduce their demand for electricity at critical times. The Independent System Operator of New England, which manages the regional electric grid, runs the demand response program. During a heat wave this past July, demand response was able to deliver 193 megawatts of electricity reduction for seven hours, which was the longest DR event in the region's history. In addition to making the power grid more resilient to heat waves and other events, DR also has environmental benefits because it can forestall the use of dirtier generation sources at peak times. While DR worked successfully during the July heat wave, it raised a question. Demand response providers (there are firms that contract for and deliver the electricity reductions) had committed to a DR capacity of 1,300 megawatts. It was not clear what happened to 800 megawatts of DR that were called. So this raises questions about the future effectiveness of DR to ensure the reliability of the system and forestall the need to call on dirtier generation sources. [[PowerOptions, 8/8/13](#)]

RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **MAPC Energy Planner Position** – The Metropolitan Area Planning Council is seeking an Energy Planner. For the job announcement, [click here](#).
- **Public Health & Climate Change Risks in Cambridge** – A [blog post](#) by Sarah Hill, CPAC member, about the risks of climate change to public health in Cambridge.
- **Suburb vs City** – Canadian researchers find that the *individual* contributions of greenhouse gas emissions vary negligibly between urban and suburban dwellers. They found that while suburbanites had higher transport-related emissions, city residents had higher home-energy emissions due to fewer household members to spread the electricity bill around. On an individual basis, exurb residents were the highest GHG emitters. [[The Atlantic Cities, 8/22/13](#)]

- **Cambridge Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment** – The City is working on preparing a vulnerability assessment that will serve as the foundation for a climate change preparedness plan that will follow. The [project webpage](#) provides background information and documents from meetings. Interested people can send an email to jbolduc@cambridgema.gov to be placed on the project email list.
- **Cambridge Solar Map** – The [Cambridge Solar Tool](#) provides a web-based interactive tool to find out the potential for installing solar photovoltaic systems on rooftops in the city. The tool also evaluates the financial feasibility of installations and makes comparisons to alternative investments. The tool is designed by Modern Development Studio and based on the research of the [MIT Sustainable Design Lab](#) led by Dr. Christoph Reinhart. The City's [Cambridge Energy Alliance](#) program can assist interested property owners with finding installers and understanding the financial aspects.
- **Opt Out of Unwanted Mail** - Do you get unwanted mail from retailers, credit card companies, or cable/phone companies? You can opt out of mailings from over 4000 companies with Catalog Choice and help reduce waste. For example, you can stop getting weekly circulars from Global Direct, they will honor opt-out requests, so add them to “your choices”. Just register for FREE at <https://cambridge.catalogchoice.org> to create an account to start cleaning out your mailbox. To date, over 3700 Cambridge residents have signed up and opted out of nearly 25,000 different unwanted mailings!
- **Check Out Watt Meters at the Library** – Cambridge residents can borrow a “kill-a-watt” meter from the Main Public Library to measure how much electricity their home appliances and devices use. The meters come with a guide on how to use them and information on how to save energy. The meter kits and guide were developed by the [Sprouts of Hope](#) group based at the King Open School.
- **MBTA Rider Tools** – The MBTA has a number of [rider tools](#) that help riders to anticipate arrival times of buses, subways, and commuter trains and to receive alerts of delays. These tools can be used on iPhones, Android phones, text messages, emails, and the Web. There is also a trip planning tool.
- **NSTAR Green** – Residential and small business electric customers of NSTAR can opt to purchase renewable electricity generated by wind energy farms. To sign up for the service, visit the [NSTAR website](#).
- **Cambridge Energy Alliance** – The [Cambridge Energy Alliance](#), a program of the City of Cambridge Community Development Department helps residents, businesses, and organizations to obtain energy efficiency and renewable energy services. You can sign up for energy audits and ask questions through the energy advisor service.
- **Sustainable Business Leader Program** - SBLP is a comprehensive certification program that supports local businesses in improving their environmental business practices and reducing their carbon footprint. For more information please visit the [SBLP website](#) or email to katrina@sbnboston.org.

About the CPAC Bulletin:

The Climate Protection Action Committee (CPAC) is a City of Cambridge advisory body appointed by the City Manager to assist in the implementation of the Cambridge Climate Protection Plan. Please forward this bulletin to other interested people. Anyone who would like to be added to the email distribution list should contact John Bolduc at jbolduc@cambridgema.gov or 617-349-4628. For more information about Cambridge climate protection activities, see <http://www.cambridgema.gov/climate>. Recent issues of the CPAC Bulletin are posted on the webpage.