

Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

CPAC BULLETIN

June 2012

MEETING: The next meeting of the Climate Protection Action Committee is scheduled for Thursday, June 14, 6:00 pm at City Hall Annex, Second Floor. The main topic is commercial building energy use. The agenda will be posted on the [CPAC webpage](#).

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **dasHAUS in Cambridge** – June 18 – 27; MIT parking lot at 219 Vassar Street. The North American tour of a traveling pavilion features German innovations in advanced technologies for home construction that achieve high energy savings and for solar energy use. Sponsored by MIT, the City of Cambridge, the German Consulate, Passivhaus, NESEA, Fraunhofer Institute, and others. A series of events is scheduled around the pavilion. See the [dasHaus website](#) for more information.
- **SoL's Leading and Learning for Sustainability Workshop** – November 7 to 9, 2012, Bedford, MA; with Peter Senge, Joe Laur (SEED), and Darcy Winslow (Nike Foundation and Former Head of Women's Performance Division). The Leading and Learning for Sustainability workshop is a synthesis of core organizational learning disciplines—systems thinking, mental models and collaborative inquiry, personal mastery and building shared vision—and the practical know-how developed within the SoL Sustainability Consortium over the past decade, much of which is captured in the book, [The Necessary Revolution](#). This workshop will focus on how these core learning disciplines can build capabilities for Sustainability Leadership—seeing systems, collaborating across boundaries with ease, and shifting from reactive problem solving to creating new futures. For more information, please [click here](#) or contact Lisa Kim at programs@solonline.org or 617-300-9560. Fees apply.
- **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.

NEWS

- **2012 GoGreen Awards** – The [2012 GoGreen Awards](#) were presented on May 22 at an event hosted by the MIT Museum. The awards are presented by the City of Cambridge to recognize achievements in energy, waste reduction, stormwater management, transportation, and climate protection were given to Mystic River Watershed Association (community organization); Karma Yoga Studio (waste reduction/recycling); Harvard Law School (waste reduction/recycling); TD Bank/Central Square Branch (energy); CRB Consulting Engineers (transportation); Amgen (transportation & energy); and Tsoi/Kobus & Associates (transportation & climate protection). Christina Giacobbe of the Police Commissioner's office also received the GoGreen City Employee Award. More information about the awardees and their achievements will be posted on the [Community Development Department website](#).

- **LBJ Apartments Recognized** – The Lyndon Baines Johnson Apartments, a property of the Cambridge Housing Authority, received the [Residential Energy Efficiency Award](#) for multi-family projects from the *State & Local Energy Report* and the National Association for State Community Service Programs. The 178 unit high rise building for seniors and younger disabled people has been renovated with many energy efficiency and clean energy measures which are expected to achieve a 55% reduction in energy costs or about \$280,000 annually. The formerly all-electric building was retrofitted with a highly efficient gas fired hydronic heating system and central cooling. The project also incorporates a 150-kilowatt combined heat and power system and a solar photovoltaic array. The new building envelope was overhauled with a high-performance window wall system, added exterior insulation, and reduced air leakage. Floor-by-floor blower door testing has been performed. State Commissioner of Energy Resources Mark Sylvia stated “The revitalization of Cambridge’s L.B. Johnson Apartments is one more step toward achieving the Commonwealth’s nation-leading goals for energy savings, a healthier environment, and comfortable living for Massachusetts residents. These apartments are now a better place to live. They’re also a sign of the advances made in Cambridge, one of our Green Communities, thanks to the incentives delivered by the Mass Save programs and the federal stimulus.
- **National Tree Award for Cambridge** – The City of Cambridge was recognized as a [Tree City USA](#) by the National Arbor Day Foundation, the 20th year of receiving this designation. The City also was recognized with the Growth Award for the fifth consecutive year. The Foundation specifically recognized the City for its public outreach efforts including the Junior Forester program, tree protection improvements in construction zones, and significant improvements to our tree inventory.
- **CO2 Hitting 400 ppm in the Arctic** – The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports that atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, the primary global warming gas, have reached 400 parts per million at monitoring stations across the Arctic this spring. Many scientists consider 350 ppm to be the safe level to maintain a stable climate. The average global concentration of CO2 is currently at about 395 ppm. Prior to the industrial age, CO2 levels were below 275 ppm. According to scientists, it has been at least 800,000 years, probably more, since CO2 levels were in the 400 ppm range. CO2 concentrations in the atmosphere are increasing about 2 ppm per, so it is expected that the global average concentration will exceed the 400 mark soon. [\[Washington Post, 5/31/12\]](#)
- **Microsoft Carbon Neutral Goal** – Starting July 1, 2012, [Microsoft is pledging to become carbon neutral](#) in its global operations. To implement the goal, the company has instituted a carbon emissions tracking system and an internal carbon price. Every division of the company will be responsible for offsetting their own emissions. It appears the company is relying on reduced energy use and renewable energy certificates to meet its commitment.
- **Boston Announces Intention for Building Energy Disclosure** – [Mayor Tom Menino announced the City of Boston’s intention to institute a Building Energy Disclosure Ordinance](#) for all commercial and residential properties larger than 50,000 square feet. Energy use in these buildings would be reported annually with the data to be posted online. Similar ordinances have been passed in New York City, Seattle, San Francisco, and Washington DC. A committee of City staff and stakeholders are expected to draft the ordinance over the summer and present it to the Mayor in the fall.

RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **Solar Hot Water Grants** – The [City’s Cambridge Energy Alliance program is offering grants for the installation of solar hot water systems](#). The City grants complement the [state solar hot water rebates available from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center](#) and government tax incentives. The City grant covers 50% of out of pocket costs up to \$2,000 after the MassCEC rebate is applied. Applications must be received by November 19, 2012.

- **Energy Finance Report** – CPAC member Milton Bevington, who currently lectures at UMass Boston and is a former Clinton Foundation staffer, co-authored a paper with Christopher Seelye of the foundation on [Making Energy Efficiency Bankable: Lessons Learned from a Global Market Transformation Effort](#).
- **Green Affordable Housing Video** – A [video interview](#) of Beverly Craig, Capital Energy Planner for Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. Beverly talks about her work on energy efficiency and renewable energy at HRI, which is one of Cambridge's main affordable house developers and managers.
- **Green Affordable Housing Job** – [Program Officer](#) for the Massachusetts Green Retrofit Initiative of the Greater Boston LISC. Applications are due by June 18.
- **Sustainable Cities Job** – The Urban Ecology Institute, which has its offices in Harvard Square, is seeking a [director for its Sustainable Cities Program](#).
- **ICLEI Adaptation Survey** – A report on a global survey about climate change adaptation conducted by a partnership of MIT and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, has been released. The survey received responses from 468 cities, including 298 in the U.S. According to the survey, 74% of U.S. cities perceived changes in the climate; 59% of U.S. cities are pursuing adaptation planning, compared to 65% worldwide. The report is titled [Progress and Challenges in Urban Climate Adaptation Planning](#).
- **Honest Buildings** – [Honest Buildings](#) is a software platform for building occupants, people who work with buildings, and building owners to comment, display projects, and solicit business with the goal of creating a more sustainable environment. The website provides map of buildings across the nation with profiles of specific buildings and space for comments.
- **A Climate of Corporate Control** – A new report from the [Union of Concerned Scientists](#) looks at 28 corporations and their statements and actions on global climate change.
- **Residential Solar Guide** – The [Massachusetts Residential Guide to Solar Power](#), from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, provides a guide on determining whether solar photovoltaics are technically and economically right for a property, reviews the installation process, and provides advice on finding and selecting an installer.
- **Reduce Junk Mail** - Easiest way to save resources? Say no to junk mail! Each year American households receive a total of 104.7 billion pieces of junk mail or 848 pieces of junk mail per household, requiring 6.5 million tons of paper. Unwanted mail isn't just a nuisance it's also a source of tremendous waste as trees, water and other resources used during production and printing are wasted along with the fuel during the delivery and recycling process. Help save paper, water and fuel resources by stopping the waste at its source - tell these companies to stop sending you things you don't want. Anyone can sign up and create a free account at [catelogchoice.org](#) and start opting-out of unwanted catalogs, junk mail, phone books, and credit card offers today. For more information, contact the [Product Stewardship Institute](#).
- **Energy Financing Report** – [Borrowing to Save Energy: An Assessment of Energy-Efficiency Financing Programs](#) is a report from Resources for the Future. It describes how energy-efficiency financing works and reviews private and public programs.
- **EU Urban Adaptation Report** – [Urban Adaptation to Climate Change in Europe: Challenges and Opportunities for cities together with supportive national and European policies](#) describes how European cities are planning for climate change impacts. The report is from the European Environment Agency.
- **Climate Solutions & Entrepreneurship** – [Cold Cash, Cool Climate: Science-based Advice for Ecological Entrepreneurs is a new book by Jonathan Koomey](#). The book argues that government, big business, and academic institutions are too conservative to develop and deploy approaches to rapidly change technology and society to stabilize the climate. See a review at [Think Progress](#).
- **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.
- **MCAN Low Carbon Living Program** – The [Massachusetts Climate Action Network](#) works with its local member organizations to develop teams of 5 to 8 households to assess their household carbon footprints and undertake actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The program is based on the Low Carbon Diet workbook and involves 3 to 4 meetings.

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.