

City of Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

Meeting Notes, November 18, 2010

Members Present: David Rabkin (chair), Quinton Zondervan (vice chair), Barry Hilts, Betsy Boyle, James Eliscar, Janet Curtis, John Moore, Kat Potter, Lauren Miller, Marguerite Reynolds, Heather Henriksen, Suzanne Shepard, Terry Smith, Bill Zamparelli

Staff Present: Susanne Rasmussen, Rosalie Anders, John Bolduc

Guests: Scott Wood, John Pitkin, John MacDougall

1. Approval of minutes for CPAC meetings held Sept. 16 and Oct. 14, 2010.
2. Report from the Environmental and Transportation Planning Director, Susanne Rasmussen:
 - Introduction of new Outreach Director of the Cambridge Energy Alliance, Meghan Shaw.
 - Cambridge chosen along with Boston as one of 8 cities participating in ICLEI's climate change vulnerability assessment program. Program will begin this winter with help from consultants (to be determined) and finish with an adaptation strategy plan. DPW staff has already attended third party trainings dealing with adaptation strategies.
 - Parking Permit Fee increase is now in effect. \$12 addition raises fee to \$20 on approximately 38,000 permits. Additional money is slated to be used to help make Cambridge a more sustainable city. Voluntary donations are also accepted for this purpose. No plan as yet as to specific use of the funds which will be substantially collected in January of each year.
 - Along with Cambridge, the "Stretch" energy code has been adopted by 61 other communities in Massachusetts. City staff attended the ICC national building code conference where the International Energy Conservation Code was upgraded. This code is similar to the stretch code and will take effect as base code in 2012.
 - Preliminary wind assessment for Danehy Park has begun. 6 months of data will be collected by MIT students before decision with regard to undertaking a full study. State wind maps indicate the location as inadequate.
 - NSTAR energy efficiency program has been additionally funded. 0% interest 7 year term loans will be offered for multi-family buildings and other commercial properties. Maximum loan amount unknown at this time. Also, recent rate case will result in 13% reduction in residential electricity rates in 2011.
3. Presentation by Heather Henriksen, Director, Harvard University Office of Sustainability:
 - Harvard campus consists of 11 separate schools, 700 buildings and 26 million SF of floor area. Harvard uses The Climate Registry standards to calculate, verify and publicly report greenhouse gas emissions utilizing 26 emissions factors. Goal is to reduce overall emissions by 30% by 2016 (including growth.) Focus on operations, energy efficiency and renewables (in that order.) Work with facility staff from each school to perform energy audits and create and rank projects using a financial life cycle costing tool created in-house and available to the public on the office

website. Office helps implement small student-designed projects throughout the University. Also has created a team of trained volunteers spread through campus to help with measurement and reporting, peer to peer trainings, and competition.

- Presentation of two recent projects: Canaday Hall retrofit solar hot water system in conjunction with waste heat capture from the central steam system supplies 60% of hot water for freshman dorms. Project yields 10 year pay back without tax incentives which are unavailable to Harvard. Second project was completed with HEET utilizing 50 student volunteers for one day to weatherize one building yielding \$24,000 per year utility cost savings.
- Focus on transportation as well. Harvard reports to City on parking and vehicles. Currently maintains only 13% single occupancy vehicle use- automobile parking is very expensive. Harvard bus system is available to the public, but ticket purchasing system makes it difficult.
- Advice for CPAC is to create clear goals and objectives yielding a strategic plan. Get the community to “buy in”. Create a team of stakeholders including building managers and assign tasks. Map out a time line and stick to it showing progress along the way to keep stakeholders enthused. Importance of assessment- cannot change what you cannot measure. This is of course easier at Harvard. Overall the strategy is simple, but the details get complicated.
- Offer of Harvard tools and staff to the City including software, engineers, auditors, etc. Much is available on the website including tools, case studies, etc. See: www.green.harvard.edu.

4. Election of Officers. Marguerite Reynolds nominated for Secretary, remaining officers nominated served last year. Slate approved by unanimous consent as follows: David Rabkin (Chair), Quinton Zondervan (Vice Chair), Marguerite Reynolds (Secretary.)

5. Review of proposed Climate Action Status Report by Rosalie Anders:

- Current draft will be adjusted for visual appeal. QZ suggested the goal of “carbon neutral” be revised to “carbon negative”. Discussion of circulation of report. Should utilize the City Manger’s office to circulate. Summary to be widely circulated, balance of report to be accessible through the web. Question of proper audience for different parts of the report. How to present to the City Council? How to engage the community? Recent survey shows climate protection low on list of concerns of citizens. Framing report around “climate change” may serve to tune out some citizens. Emphasis on energy and cost reduction could be helpful. It would be helpful to show progress with regard to the City’s projects as well as those of other local organizations (Harvard, MIT, HEET, etc.) With regard to adaptation, connection to greenhouse gases is not necessary, instead emphasize real impacts on Cambridge vulnerable populations and describe adaptive steps taken to minimize them.
- Next steps are to meet with subcommittee, finish draft and decide which aspects are important to emphasize graphically. City’s in-house graphic designer can help format. Idea of short videos to be incorporated on website. Somerville has produced a ½ hour video.

- Discussion about engaging neighborhoods through comparisons and competition between neighbors and neighborhoods. How can data be collected and shared? “OPower” reports highest gas users- currently has 25,000 customers and expanding to 50,000 in NSTAR’s territory. City survey includes sustainability as “topic area” and could provide neighborhood information. CEA has “Smarter Cambridge” facebook page. Community groups could utilize it. Energy bills 5 year history could be useful to present to customers.

6. Adjournment.

Notes taken by John Moore.