

Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

CPAC BULLETIN

August 2014

MEETING: The next meeting of the Climate Protection Action Committee is scheduled for August 14, 6:00 pm, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway. The meeting is open to the public. The [agenda](#) will be posted on the Community Development Department website. The meeting this month will include a discussion with DeWitt Jones of Boston Community Capital about solar financing and working sessions on urban heat islands and solar PV deployment.

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **Blower Door Testing & Diagnostic Demo** – August 12, 6:30 to 8:00 pm, Cambridge Community Center, 5 Callender Street. Multiple blower doors will be used to test the Cambridge Community Center along with the use of a computer-assisted multi-point blower door test on a small portion of the building. The latter is a test required for PassivHaus certification. The demonstration is presented by Paul Eldrenkamp of Byggmeister. Sponsored by HEET. RSVP to mduclos@deapgroup.com.
- **Net Zero Energy Buildings** – August 14, 8:30 am to 12:00 pm, 50 Milk Street, 15th floor, Boston. Workshop on net zero energy building design and construction with architect Eric Corey Freed. Sponsored by the MA Chapter of the US Green Building Council. Registration fees apply. [To register, click here.](#)
- **Earthwatch Trees** – September 6 & October 11. The Earthwatch Institute is working with the Cambridge Public Works Department Urban Forestry Program to collect data on the City's street trees to help protect the urban forest. Volunteers will be trained in techniques for identifying species, measuring and observing individual trees, and uploading data via mobile apps. Volunteers will work in groups to collect data on health, growth patterns, and the impact on buildings and streets of individual trees. This is a free one-day expedition hosted by a resident Earthwatch scientist. Use the promo code **TREES** upon registration and the \$15 registration fee is entirely waived. You can find more information about the [Urban Forest Program](#) and sign up by clicking the link.
- **Cambridge Repair Café** – September 27, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, Cambridge Community Center, 5 Callender St. What to do with a **chair** when a leg is loose? With a **toaster** that no longer works? Or a **sweater** with moth holes? **Toss it? No way! You can repair it at Repair Café!** Clothes, Electrical Appliances, Toys, Bicycles, Musical Instruments, Jewelry, Furniture, etc. Repair things together, receive expert advice, meet each other and be inspired. Free & open to the public. For more info, visit <https://www.facebook.com/CambridgeRepairCafe>.
- **HEET Methane Forum** – September 30, 6:00 to 8:00 pm, St. James Church, 1991 Mass. Ave., Cambridge. Natural gas leaks from old pipes under our communities cost taxpayers millions of dollars annually, are public health hazards, and are contributing to the climate crisis. Come out and learn more at an engaging event featuring community experts including Joel Wool from Clean Water Action, Bob Ackley community volunteer who maps leaking pipes, and Ashka Naik from HEET who will detail their local methane mapping project, [Squeaky Leak](#), in Cambridge and Somerville.
- **Massachusetts Green Career Conference** – October 1, Holiday Inn, Marlborough. [To register, 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](#).

- **Walk/Ride Day Corporate Challenge** – Annual workplace competition in which organizations throughout Cambridge and surrounding cities and towns compete one day each month from April through October to have staff check in their commute online and consider healthier and more environmentally friendly choices (transit, bicycle, walk, etc.) Data show significant green shifts among participants on Walk/Ride Days and other days throughout the month. Promoted by Green Streets Initiative, a Cambridge-based grassroots group. [Register your company for the Challenge here](#).
- **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. More info at www.350MA.org.
- **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

- **BEUDO Enacted** – The Cambridge City Council enacted the [Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance](#) by a vote of 9 to 0 at its meeting on July 28th. The ordinance requires larger buildings to benchmark and report their energy use annually to the City. Beginning in the second year of reporting, the City will post energy use online. The purpose of the ordinance is to provide building energy information to the real estate marketplace to drive improvements in building energy performance, and collect energy use data for more effective community energy planning. In Cambridge, building energy use accounts for about 80% of the community's greenhouse gas emissions. The ordinance applies to municipal buildings 10,000 square feet and larger, non-residential buildings 25,000 square feet and larger, and residential buildings with 50 or more units. Municipal building energy use data for 2013 will be reported by the end of 2014. Energy use data for non-residential buildings 50,000 square feet and larger and residential buildings with 50 or more units will be due on May 1, 2015. The Community Development Department will be working with building owners on the implementation of the ordinance and providing technical support.
- **LED Street Light Conversion** – The Cambridge Electrical Department is in the process of converting all of the City's street lights to LED technology. The first phase involves replacing all of the cobra head fixtures. The new system will also have a state of the art wireless control system to enable remote management of the lights. The LED fixtures will dramatically reduce electricity use and the associated greenhouse gas emissions. It should be noted that the lights are much brighter when they are first installed. Once the wireless control system is set up, most of the lights will only produce 70% of their initial brightness. Light spillage will also be adjusted where necessary. If anyone has issues with the installations, a report can be filed through the [Electrical Department webpage](#).
- **Energy Resiliency Technical Assistance** – Cambridge was among several municipalities to be granted technical assistance by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources to assess the feasibility of improving the energy resiliency of critical facilities with clean energy sources. DOER's consultants will work with the Water Department and the School Department to evaluate options at the Sullivan Water Treatment Plant and the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School. For more information about the DOER program, [click here](#).

- **Boston Climate Preparedness Design Competition** – The City of Boston and The Boston Harbor Association will be holding an international design competition to solicit creative and innovative climate change resilient design solutions for three at risk waterfront sites. Details about the competition will be announced in the fall. The competition is by funded by an \$86,000 grant from the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management and \$35,000 from the Barr Foundation. [[BRA press release, 8/1/14](#)]

RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **Job – ELM Climate & Energy Program Director** - The Environmental League of Massachusetts (ELM) seeks a Program Director to lead its energy and climate policy work. The Program Director reports to the President, and is responsible to serve as ELM's lead staff person on clean energy and climate policy work and oversee and coordinate ELM's Global Warming Solution Project. The position is located in ELM's Boston office on Beacon Hill and is open until filled. [The full job description here.](#)
- **Donate Unwanted Furniture - Moving August 31st and can't take it all?** Plan ahead and arrange a free pick up from inside your Cambridge home on August 27, 28, 29 or September 2, 3 with the Coalition for the Homeless. Items must be clean and usable. Someone's gonna love your stuff. [Email pictures of your good-condition furniture to donations@mahomeless.org and include your address, phone number and put "Cambridge Pickup" in the subject line.](#) They take kitchen tables & chairs, couches & sofa chairs, ottomans, hutches, end tables, coffee tables, bed frames, dressers, bookshelves, cabinets, rugs, lamps, dishes, pots & pans, and blankets & linens. *Also, Cambridge Public Works is thrilled to announce that beginning this September, the Coalition will schedule pickups in Cambridge for the last Friday and the first Monday of every month, except holidays. More info: [CambridgeMA.gov/Furniture](#).* A little effort makes a big difference. Your donation helps low-income and formerly homeless families furnish their apartments at no cost to them. This spring, the Coalition collected nearly 800 pieces of furniture from Cambridge households totally nearly 59,000 pounds. Thank you!
- **New Cambridge Land Use Map** – The Community Development Department has created a new [map showing parcel by parcel land use](#) in the city current as of July 1, 2014.
- **TBHA Designing with Water Report** – [Designing with Water: Creative Solutions from around the Globe](#) is a new report from The Boston Harbor Association on how to improve resiliency to climate change induced flooding.
- **Alewife Wetland Video** – A video produced by MWH, one of the City's stormwater management consultants, about the [Alewife Wetland project](#), a man-made wetland that helps improve stormwater management in the Alewife Brook watershed.
- **Cost of Delaying Action** – The White House issued a report on its analysis of the cost of delaying action on climate change. [To see the report, click here.](#)
- **Cost of Adapting Multi-family Housing for Resilience** – [The Price of Resilience: Can Multifamily Housing Afford to Adapt?](#) is a new report from NYU's Furman Center based on a post-Superstorm Sandy design charrette that looked at how to make multi-family housing more resilient.
- **Hurricanes Damage Economies** – Researchers at UC Berkeley and Columbia University looked at 6,712 cyclones, typhoons, and hurricanes to assess the economic consequences of the storms. The data decisively concludes that the storms were very bad for economic growth. There was no evidence of "creative destruction" where economies grew back stronger through rebuilding. [[CityLab, 8/6/14](#)]
- **State of Climate 2013** – [State of the Climate in 2013](#) is the federal government's annual report on climate indicators; the report continues to show trends of a warmer planet.
- **Benchmarking Utility Clean Energy Deployment** – CERES ranks 32 of the largest investor owned utilities, including Northeast Utilities (NSTAR) on energy efficiency and renewable energy in its report [Benchmarking Utility Clean Energy Deployment: 2014.](#)

- **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.