

Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

CPAC BULLETIN

March 2015

MEETING: The next meeting of the Climate Protection Action Committee is scheduled for March 12, 6:00 pm, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, 2nd floor meeting room. The meeting will involve consideration of a recommendation on solar energy and work group deliberations on climate change entrepreneurship and capacity building.

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **Plastic Bag Ban Hearing** – March 12, 5:30 pm, Sullivan Chamber, City Hall. The City Council Ordinance Committee will hold a public hearing to discuss amendments and other related documents associated with the proposed plastic bags ordinance.
- **Vulnerability Assessment Public Meeting** – March 17, 6:00 to 8:30 pm, MIT Stata Center (Building 32), Kirsch Auditorium, 32 Vassar Street. This is the meeting that was postponed from February. The City will present and discuss results from the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, with a focus on the risks from inland flooding and increased temperatures. For information, including the agenda, [click here](#).
- **Getting Through on Global Warming** – March 31, 4:00 – 5:30 pm, E51-115, MIT. A panel discussion on how to rewire climate change communication. The panel includes Kerry Emmanuel, Judy Layzer, Thomas Levenson, and Drzen Prelec of MIT; Susan Hassol (Climate Communication), and Chris Mooney (Washington Post). For information, [click here](#).
- **Clean Energy Standard Hearings** – April 14, 1:00 pm, DEP offices, One Winter Street, Boston. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection is proposing a new clean energy standard to increase the amount of non-fossil fuel generated electricity for consumers. The standard is part of the Commonwealth's efforts to achieve an 80 percent reduction in GHG emissions statewide by 2050. [For more information, click here](#). The deadline to submit written comments is April 27.
- **Local Environmental Action Conference** – March 15, 9:00 am to 6:00 pm, Curry Student Center, Northeastern University. For more information, [click here](#).
- **Personal Fossil Fuel Divestment** – March 22, 3:00 to 5:00 pm, First Church in Cambridge, 11 Garden Street. Workshop on personal divestment from fossil fuels, featuring investment experts Chuck Collins, Institute for Policy Studies; Leslie Samuelrich, Green Century; David Schreiber, Progressive Asset Management; and Shelley Alpern, Green Yield Asset Management. This is an opportunity for people to be part of an important movement for dealing with climate change and to align their finances with their values. RSVP to rev.reebee@gmail.com with DIVEST in the subject line.
- **Governor Baker at KSA Annual Meeting** – March 25, 7:00 to 9:00 am, Tang Center, MIT. Governor Baker will be the keynote speaker at the 7th annual meeting of the Kendall Square Association. Space is limited. RSVP by [clicking here](#).
- **Climate Change & Plant Life** – March 26, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm, Microsoft New England R&D Center, Cambridge. An all day symposium sponsored by the New England Wildflower Society. The symposium will address how plants will respond to the predicted changes in temperature and precipitation from a warming climate. Five noted botanists and ecologists will present the state of New England's plants; the historical patterns and current evidence of climate-induced adaptation, migration, and loss; and strategies

for conserving and managing plant species and natural communities in the face of climate change. To register, [click here](#).

- **The Pursuit of Sustainable Living** – April 16, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Devens Common Center, Devens, MA. This conference is the combined Sustainable Communities and Sustainable Campuses conferences held the past several years. For information, including registration, [click here](#).
- **Boston Area Sustainability Group** – April 7, 6:00 – 9:00 pm, The Venture Café, One Broadway. *Topic:* Supply Chain Logistics, Big Data & Megacities with Dr. Edgar Blanco, Research Director at the MIT Center for Transportation & Logistics. For more information and to register, [click here](#).
- **MIT Sustainability Summit** – April 24 & 25, MIT. The 2015 summit is focused on local and global agricultural systems. For more information, [click here](#).
- **National Adaptation Forum** – May 12-14, 2015, St. Louis. This is the second national meeting on climate change adaptation organized by a group of public and private sector professionals. [For more information, click here](#).
- **Fresh Pond Day** – May 30, Fresh Pond Reservation, 250 Fresh Pond Parkway. A City sponsored celebration of water, wildlife, and sustainability to connect residents with watershed, urban wild, and local community resources. The event includes music, wildlife demos, tours, and a parade. Organizations interested in participating in the event should contact Kirsten Lundquist, 617-349-6489 or [register here](#).
- **Climate Ride Northeast** – September 17-21. This event raises funds for climate action organizations, raises awareness of climate change, and promotes sustainable lifestyles. The Northeast bicycle ride follows a 320 mile route from Bar Harbor, Maine to Boston. Riders can choose from among more than 100 beneficiaries to support. [For more information, click here](#).
- **Friends of Alewife Reservation Walks** - Friends of Alewife Reservation is a stewarding and educational non-profit for the Alewife Reservation in northwest Cambridge and for the surrounding city natural resources of marshes and wetlands abutting Belmont and Arlington. Free wildlife and history educational tours, clean ups and conservation initiatives for the silver maple forest. "Virtual" Tour of the Reservation: [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](#).
- **350MA.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 6:30 PM. 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 Help Desk Launched** – The first deadline for larger buildings to report their energy and water usage under the Building Energy Use & Disclosure Ordinance is approaching on May 1st. The Community

Development Department has been reaching out to building owners, trustees, and their agents to make sure the requirement is understood and to facilitate reporting. CDD has launched a technical assistance help desk operated by ICF International, the consultant to the City. The help desk fields questions about the use of Energy Star Portfolio Manager, the platform that must be used to submit the required information; how to obtain data and information; and general issues about the applicability of the ordinance. This year, non-residential properties with 50,000 or more square feet of floor space and residential buildings with 50 or more units must submit 2014 energy and water usage data and some basic information about the buildings. The first year of data will be analyzed by the City and a report will be produced about the aggregate results. In the second year of reporting, the annual usage data and associated statistics will be publicly reported for each building. In 2016, non-residential properties with 25,000 to 50,000 square feet of floor area will also begin reporting. The energy reporting ordinance is a foundational element of the City's sustainability and climate protection efforts.

- **Sea Level Fluctuation** – According to a recent paper in *Nature Communications*, there was a temporary but unprecedented increase in sea level of 5 inches between 2009 and 2010, based on tide gauge data, along the Northeast coast from New York to Atlantic Canada. The rise in sea level resulted in coastal flooding and accelerated beach erosion. The researchers linked the rise to an unexpected rapid slow down in the Gulf Stream current. [[Mashable, 2/24/15](#)]

RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **MIT Climate Conversation** – MIT has been conducting a campus wide Conversation on Climate Change to develop the university's role in helping solve the problem. The [Conversation webpage](#) includes resources, an idea bank, blog, and calendar of events.
- **Global Sea Ice Extent Shrinking** – According to a study by NASA researchers, sea ice is shrinking overall even with growth in Antarctic sea ice. Overall, the planet is shedding sea ice at an average annual rate of 3,500 square miles, which is an area larger than the state of Maryland. [[Science Daily, 2/10/15](#)]
- **All Glass Buildings** – [An interesting blog post by Andrea Love](#) about the energy efficiency implications of all-glass buildings on the NESEA BuildingEnergy website.
- **SciCheck** – From the people who brought us FactCheck, [SciCheck](#) focuses on false and misleading scientific claims made by partisans to influence public policy.
- **CRA Forward Fund** – The Cambridge Redevelopment Authority has established the [Forward Fund](#), which is a microgrant program intended to reinvest development funds generated in the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area to fund projects by non-profits, community groups, and small businesses across Cambridge. The Fund supports physical improvement projects that advance social equity, economic vitality, livability, and sustainability or involve innovative projects to take advantage of local knowledge.
- **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 Mapdwell 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. The Mapdwell tool was upgraded in September 2015 and can now be viewed in Spanish.

- **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.
- **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.