

# Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

## CPAC BULLETIN

May 2015

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**MEETING:** The next meeting of the Climate Protection Action Committee is scheduled for May 14, 6:00 pm, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor meeting room. The meeting will focus on consideration of a solar recommendation and updates on the Net Zero Task Force report and the Climate CoLab urban heat island contest. The agenda for the meeting will be posted on the [Community Development Department website](#).

### EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **Bicycle Events for 50+** - May 11, 11 am to 1 pm, Bicycle Maintenance Basics, Agassiz Baldwin Community Center, 20 Sacramento Street, please RSVP to [jlawrence@cambridgema.gov](mailto:jlawrence@cambridgema.gov); May 14, 3:30 to 5:00 pm, Intro to Hubway/Urban Cycling Workshop, 344 Broadway, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, no RSVP needed; May 20, 6:00 to 8:00 pm, Citywide Senior Center, 806 Mass. Ave., Dinner & Focus Group for conversation about barriers to bicycling, RSVP to [jlawrence@cambridgema.gov](mailto:jlawrence@cambridgema.gov); May 31, 10 am to 2 pm, On-bike Urban Cycling Refresher Course, Memorial Drive, location available upon RSVP, bikes available for free use during event & physical therapist on hand to teach basic strength and balancing exercises, RSVP to [jlawrence@cambridgema.gov](mailto:jlawrence@cambridgema.gov).
- **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](#).
- **Earthwatch Urban Forest Program** – Starting June 6. Earthwatch is offering a free program to learn about urban forests in the Boston area, including Cambridge, by participating in field work to collect tree data. The sessions are one day events with several days scheduled over the summer. For more information and to register, see the [Earthwatch website](#).
- **City Council Hearing on Net Zero Task Force Report** – June 9, 4:00 pm, City Hall, Sullivan Chamber.
- **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](http://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

- **Getting to Net Zero Task Force Final Recommendations** – The Getting to Net Zero Task Force appointed by the City Manager to develop a strategy on how to move Cambridge toward being a net zero greenhouse gas emissions community, focusing on buildings, has issued its [final recommendations and report](#) after 14 months of work. The recommendations have been sent to the City Council. The Council's Health and Environment Committee will hold a public hearing on the recommendations on June 9, 4:00 pm at City Hall in the Sullivan Chamber.
- **April Showers Bring Limited Time Offer on Rain Barrels** - Capture rainwater from your roof and store it in a rain barrel for later use in your garden. Purchase a 60-gallon rainwater collection system for \$79. This offer is valid until May 14. To provide the lowest cost, the company is arranging for a general delivery of rain barrels on Thursday, May 21, from 4-7 p.m., at Cambridge DPW yard, 147 Hampshire St. If rainwater is not captured and allowed to soak back into the ground, rivers and streams do not have the chance to sustain or "recharge" themselves. By capturing rainwater, you are reducing stormwater runoff, conserving water and recharging the groundwater. A local non-profit agency, Green Cambridge ([www.greencambridge.org](http://www.greencambridge.org)), is offering to install rain barrels for Cambridge residents free of charge. For more information, visit [www.greatamericanrainbarrel.com](http://www.greatamericanrainbarrel.com) click on "Shop Local Programs" and select "Cambridge". Also order by phone (800) 251-2352 and specify "Cambridge".
- **Harvard Sustainability Report** – Harvard University has issued an updated [sustainability report](#) detailing its progress from 2006 to 2014 in the areas of energy and emissions, campus operations, nature and ecosystems, health and well-being, and culture and learning. The report is available in an online, interactive version. University-wide, GHG emissions were reduced 21 percent from a 2006 baseline, accounting for campus growth. Excluding growth, emissions dropped 32 percent. Harvard has a goal to reduce emissions by 30 percent by 2016 compared to a 2006 baseline. The report also notes that Harvard has 97 LEED certified building projects, the most of any education institution in the world. Many other sustainability statistics are presented in the report. In 2014, Harvard also issued a 5-year [Sustainability Plan](#) to set priorities.
- **State Adaptation Legislation** – Representative Frank Smizik, of Brookline, has filed legislation to require the Commonwealth to establish a comprehensive climate change adaptation plan. [Senate Bill 752](#) would require the Commonwealth to establish a plan to assess vulnerabilities and set standards and guidelines which would be adhered to in state decision-making. Representative Tim Toomey of Cambridge is a co-sponsor.
- **Executive Order 562** – Governor Baker issued [Executive Order No.562](#) requiring that all state regulations be sunsetted unless they meet certain criteria in terms of need, cost effectiveness, not exceeding or duplicating federal requirements, effect on state competitiveness, and consideration of less restrictive and intrusive alternatives. Any new regulation must also meet the requirements of the executive order. [[Boston Globe, 4/12/15](#)]

- **Governor Baker Opposes Raising Net Metering Cap** – The state’s [Net Metering and Solar Task Force issued its report](#) on the long-term viability of net metering and incentives and programs to support the deployment of 1,600 megawatts of solar generation facilities in Massachusetts. Net metering is a state policy mechanism that allows owners of solar photovoltaic systems to feed excess electricity into the power grid and be credited for it. It is an important incentive for solar energy. Under state law the amount that utilities are required to accept is capped. The cap in Massachusetts is nearing exceedence, although there is more capacity in the Eversource territory, and the state needs to decide on whether to raise it or restructure it’s incentives. Solar PV systems under 25 kilowatts in size are not capped. The task force and the governor support the goal of deploying 1,600 megawatts of solar generation. But there is not agreement on the policy mechanisms including raising the net metering cap. The Task Force report presents majority and minority positions on the policy recommendations. Governor Baker has sided with the opinion that the net metering cap should not be raised because of concerns with the cost. [[Boston Globe, 5/4/15](#)]
- **Global Average CO2 goes over 400 ppm** – According to the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#), the monthly global average concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere surpassed 400 parts per million. Monitoring stations had begun to record concentrations over 400 ppm but this was the first time the global average exceeded the threshold. The growth rate in CO2 concentrations has also been accelerating in recent years, and was up to 2.25 ppm per year in 2014. Carbon dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas. The concentration has risen from about 280 ppm since the beginning of the industrial revolution.

## RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **CDD Zoning Associate Planner** – The Community Development Department is seeking a [Zoning Associate Planner](#). The closing date for applications is May 28.
- **Los Angeles Sustainability Plan** – Los Angeles launched its first-ever [Sustainable City Plan](#). Associated with the plan is an [online dashboard of sustainability metrics](#).
- **Enterprise Green Communities Resiliency Criteria** – [Enterprise Green Communities](#) provides support for the development of sustainable affordable housing. Their criteria have been updated to include standards for resiliency.
- **USGCRP Climate & Health Assessment** – The U.S. Global Change Research Program, a federal office, has issued a draft report on [The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment](#). Public comments are sought.
- **Warning If All Fossil Fuels Used** – If we burn all the fossil fuels on the planet, it would raise global temperatures by 16.2 degrees Celsius. The [calculation was done by Michael Greenstone](#), Milton Friedman Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago based on a methodology published in the journal *Nature* in 2009.
- **Sustainability of Rooftops in Cold Climates** – A recent article in the Journal of Industrial Ecology titled [Sustainability of Rooftop Technologies in Cold Climates](#) compares green roofs, white roofs, and rooftop solar PV under Canadian climate conditions on a life cycle. Solar PV wins out. [Thanks to Sarah Hill for the tip.]
- **Depave Guide** – A nice guide titled [How to Depave: A Guide to Freeing Your Soil](#) on how to organize projects to remove pavement.
- **CLASP** – The Northeast Climate Science Center at UMass Amherst is offering help in finding climate projections to use in adaptation planning. Postdoctoral Fellow Alex Bryan, who leads the [Climate Assessments and Scenario Planning \(CLASP\) project](#), will field questions
- **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](mailto: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](mailto:katrina@sbnboston.org).

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#### ***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](mailto: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.