

# Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

## CPAC BULLETIN

August 2016

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**MEETING:** The Climate Protection Action Committee will not meet in August. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 8th, 6:00 pm, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway.

### EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **Urban Cycling Basics** – August 10, 12:00 pm & August 24, 8:00 pm, 344 Broadway. Learn about finding the right bike, route planning, safety equipment, locking properly, transporting small loads or children, multi-modal commuting, and rules of the road and safety tips. Sponsored by the Cambridge Community Development Department. RSVP for either session to [jlawrence@cambrigema.gov](mailto:jlawrence@cambrigema.gov). For more information, [click here](#).
- **Lunch Time Walks** – August 18, 12:00 noon. Cambridge Historical Walk led by Cambridge Historical Commission. Meet at 831 Mass. Ave. • August 24, 12:00 noon. Women's Equality Day Walk/Women's Suffrage Tour led by Siobhan Bredin, citizen journalist for CCTV's neighborhoodmedia.org, & Emily Shield, Cambridge Women's Commission. Meet at CCTV, 438 Mass. Ave.
- **iCan Bike Camp** – August 15-19. Be a volunteer spotter at Cambridge's new one-week [iCan Bike Camp](#), helping people with disabilities learn how to ride two-wheel bicycles. Volunteer for one or more 75 minute sessions that will meet at the same time each day. The program will take place in the Cambridge War Memorial Gym. Sign up [here](#) to choose your session, and invite your friends! [Here's a sweet video](#), to give you an idea of what it's like.
- **Solar 102, Solar for Multi-Family, Condo, & Landlords** – August 16, 6:00 to 8:00 pm, Lesley University Hall, 1815 Mass. Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 78, Cambridge. Jointly presented by the Sunny Cambridge and Solarize Somerville teams focusing on solar energy for multi-family properties, condos, and landlords. For more information, [click here](#).
- **BASG** – September 6, 6:00 pm, The Venture Café, One Broadway. *Topic:* GMOs: Science, Sustainability, and Consumer Transparency. *Speakers:* Gary Hirshberg, Chairman of Stonyfield Farm & Timothy Griffin, Associate Professor, Tufts University School of Nutrition. For more information and to register, [click here](#).
- **Crowds & Climate Conference** – September 28-29, MIT. The annual conference of the MIT Climate CoLab. For information and to register, [click here](#).
- **Boston's Climate Vulnerabilities & Solutions** – September 15, Federal Reserve Bank, Boston. Presented by A Better City and Boston Green Ribbon Commission. Symposium on latest climate projections, technological solutions, and panel discussions. For more information and to register, [click here](#).
- **National Adaptation Forum** – May 9-11, 2017, St. Paul, Minnesota. The call for proposals for presentations, panels, trainings, and work groups is open. 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](#).

- **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

- **Existing Solar PV in Cambridge** – The [Mapdwell solar tool for Cambridge](#) has been updated to show recently installed solar photovoltaic systems. The map shows 420 PV systems with a total capacity of 4.473 megawatts. However, some systems that have not been uploaded to Mapdwell should bring the total close to or over 5 megawatts. The data was compiled by the City's [Cambridge Energy Alliance](#) program, which helps property owners and residents to become more energy efficient and use renewable energy, including accessing various rebates and other incentives. Any PV system owner can upload their system information directly to Mapdwell through the "Upload System" function of the tool.
- **Energy Legislation Enacted** – Governor Baker signed into law new energy legislation passed by the Legislature on July 31<sup>st</sup>. The legislation will advance the use of wind and hydro power in the Commonwealth by requiring electric utilities, including Eversource, to contract for 1,200 megawatts of "clean energy" and 1,600 megawatts of offshore wind energy. The former is expected to come from Canadian hydropower, but could also come from land-based wind farms in northern New England and New York. The legislation also authorized the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency (MassDevelopment) to set up a commercial PACE (property assessed clean energy) program to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements in commercial buildings. This includes multifamily residential buildings with 5 or more units. A proposal for a residential PACE program that would have covered residential buildings with less than 5 units was not included. After MassDevelopment sets up the program, municipalities can opt in and administer low interest clean energy financing through property tax bills with financing provided by MassDevelopment or private financing backed up by MassDevelopment. The legislation also authorizes the use of energy storage technology (batteries, flywheels, thermal and compressed air storage) paired with renewable energy generation. The Department of Energy Resources will determine if energy storage goals are prudent and if so propose procurement targets. [[Governor's media release, 8/8/16](#)]
- **2015 Set All Kinds of Climate Records** – The American Meteorological Society issued its annual [State of the Climate report](#), which documents that 2015 was a record breaking year for climate in many ways. Highlights include: average global temperature was the highest ever; it was more than 1° Celsius (1.8° F) compared to the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century (the Paris climate agreement is aiming to limit warming to 2°C). Carbon dioxide levels (CO<sub>2</sub> increases from human activity is the main driver of climate change) in the atmosphere averaged over 400 parts per million for the first time (pre-industrial levels were 280 ppm) at the Mauna Loa observatory, which has the longest running data. At Mauna Loa, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> increased by a record 3.1 ppm, continuing an accelerating trend. Ocean heat has reached record levels. Ninety percent of increased goes into the ocean, where thermal expansion contributes to sea level rise (2.75 inch increase since 1993 based on satellite altimeter readings) and increasing surface temperatures cause

ecological impacts such as coral bleaching. The Arctic ice cap reached its lowest peak extent in 2015, continuing a trend. [[Climate Central, 8/2/16](#)]

- **MBTA to Install Solar Canopy at Alewife Garage** – The MBTA, which is the largest electricity user in Massachusetts, has entered into a lease agreement with Omni-Navitas Holdings to install solar photovoltaic systems at 37 parking garages and lots, including the Alewife Garage. The systems will generate an estimated 48 million kilowatt-hours of electricity, which is equivalent to the electricity used by about 42,000 households. The agreement is for 20 years and Omni-Navitas will pay \$1.9 million in rent the first year with an annual 3% increase over the term of the agreement. The canopies will also shield parking spaces from snow and sun. The T projects it will save \$5 million in snow removal costs over the term of the agreement, for a total of \$55 million in savings and revenue. The agreement calls for a two year installation period. [[MBTA press release, 8/1/16](#)]
- **Zillow Projects Housing Lost to Sea Level Rise** – [Zillow, the real estate listing provider](#), used data from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to estimate the impact of 6 feet of sea level rise on U.S. cities. Many assessments predict at least 6 feet of sea level rise due to climate change by 2100. Zillow estimates, that if this degree of sea level rise occurs, almost 300 cities would lose half their housing stock (assuming at least first floor flooded) and 36 cities would be completely lost. In Florida, one in eight homes would be underwater. Nationwide, 1.9 million homes worth a combined \$882 billion are at risk of being inundated by 2100. In Massachusetts, there are 62,069 properties worth \$51.2 billion potentially at risk or 3.1% of the state's housing stock. In Boston (proper), 21,629 homes (17.8% of the city's housing) worth \$24.5 billion are at risk.

## RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **Surging Seas Risk Finder** – Climate Central has upgraded its [Surging Seas](#) sea level rise flood risk tool.
- **Jobs** – [Energy Specialist](#), Town of Concord, MA. • [Energy & Sustainability Internship](#), Cambridge Public Works Department, 19.5 hours/week for 6 months; support DPW's work on municipal energy efficiency, GHG reduction, and sustainability goals.
- **Corporate Renewable Energy Procurement** – ACORE issued a [report](#) with useful insights on how large corporations are procuring renewable energy supplies.
- **Cambridge Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment** – The City is nearing completion of its climate change vulnerability assessment that will serve as the foundation for a climate change preparedness plan that will follow. The CCVA Report – Part 1 was issued in November 2015, which covers the risks of increasing temperatures and precipitation. A second report will be issued on the risks of sea level rise and storm surges. 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!

- **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.

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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.