

Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

CPAC BULLETIN

June 2017

MEETING: The Climate Protection Action Committee will meet on June 8, 6:00 pm at City Hall Annex, 2nd floor. This meeting will focus on the community GHG inventory and climate action plan; and the climate change goals and objectives. The agenda for the meeting will be posted on the [Community Development Department website](#).

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **Cambridge Community Electricity Program** – Public information sessions are being held this month about the new [Cambridge Community Electricity Program](#). This is the community aggregation program which in Cambridge focuses on increasing the amount of renewable energy in our electricity supply without increasing costs. For more information, see the website or the news item below. The information sessions will be held on **June 12**, 6:00 pm, Lesley University, Room 3-076, 1815 Mass. Ave.; **June 13**, 12:30 pm, Citywide Senior Center, 806 Mass. Ave.; **June 26**, 6:00 pm, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway.
- **BASG** – June 6, 6:00-8:30 pm, Venture Café, One Broadway. *Cleaning the Air: Carbon & Health* is the topic for the monthly meeting of the Boston Area Sustainability Group. Speakers are Jonathan Buonocore, Harvard School of Public Health and Dr. Brita Lundberg, Mass. Medical Society, Environmental & Occupational Health Commission, and Green Newton. For more information, [click here](#).
- **Cambridge Net Zero Action Plan** – June 29, 8:30 – 10:30 am, 50 Milk Street, 16th floor, Boston. Former Mayor Henrietta Davis and Net Zero Planner Seth Federspiel will speak about the Cambridge Net Zero Action Plan and also participate in the discussion about creating a net zero “handbook” for smaller municipalities. To register, [click here](#).
- **Clinton Global Initiative University** – October 13-15, Northeastern University. The event brings together over 1,100 students to make a difference in five focus areas, including the environment and climate change. The deadline to sign up is May 1. For more information, [click here](#).
- **Climate & Energy Executive Course** – October 15-20; Harvard Kennedy School. Executive Education course on [Climate Change and Energy: Policy Making for the Long Term](#). Application deadline is August 15th; course fee is \$8,500.
- **I2SL Annual Conference** – October 15-18, Boston Marriott Copley Place. The [annual conference of the International Institute for Sustainable Laboratories](#) will be held in Boston this year. The conference will feature a panel about the initiatives underway in Cambridge and Boston to increase the energy efficiency of our laboratory buildings.
- **GreenBuild 2017** – November 2017, Boston Convention Center. The international green building conference and expo of the U.S. Green Building Council will be held in Boston again next year. Persons interested in serving on the host committee or conference subcommittees should [visit the USGBC Massachusetts Chapter website](#).
- **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. It focuses on implementation of federal stormwater regulations, flooding and water quality in the Little River, and development improvement projects such as work at Blair Pond.

- **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

- **Local Response to Trump Withdrawal from Paris Climate Accord** – Following President Trump’s [announcement](#) of his intention to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Accord, the City of Cambridge reaffirmed its commitment to fight climate change and do its part to meet the Paris targets. Mayor E. Denise Simmons joined with the 211 [U.S. Climate Mayors](#) representing 54 million Americans in declaring that these cities will adopt, honor, and uphold the commitments of the Paris Agreement goals and intensify efforts to meet the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Cambridge also signed onto the [We Are Still In statement](#) organized by Michael Bloomberg, the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change and former Mayor of New York City, which affirms the commitment of 125 cities, 9 states, 183 universities and colleges, and 902 businesses to support climate action to meet the Paris Agreement (cities, universities, and businesses can still join the initiative). Bloomberg intends to quantify each sector’s aggregate actions and submit the report to the UN as “America’s Pledge” to the world under the Paris Agreement. Eventually, he intends to submit a “Societal Nationally Determined Contribution” to the UN to account for the efforts of the signatories. On the academic front, [12 leading research universities](#) including Harvard and MIT reaffirmed their commitment under the American Campuses Act on Climate Pledge, which is consistent with the Paris Agreement. MIT Present Rafael Reif issued a [letter to the MIT community](#) in response to the announced withdrawal, stating “I believe all of us have a responsibility to stand up for concerted global action to combat and adapt to climate change.” MIT also issued a [separate media release](#) countering the President’s assertion that the Paris Agreement “accomplishes LITTLE for the climate”, which he attributed to analysis done by MIT researchers. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts also responded. [Governor Charlie Baker announced](#) Massachusetts is joining the bipartisan [U.S. Climate Alliance](#), which was initiated by Governors Jerry Brown of California and Andrew Cuomo of New York to commit to achieving the U.S. target of reducing emissions 26-28 percent below 2005 levels. Twelve states and Puerto Rico have joined so far, including Vermont, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. [[Bloomberg Philanthropies media release, 6/5/17](#); [Georgetown Climate Center blog, 6/5/17](#)]
- **Cambridge Launches Community Electricity Aggregation** – The City of Cambridge has launched the [Cambridge Community Electricity Program](#) as a strategy to increase the amount of renewable energy in Cambridge’s power supply. The program uses group purchasing with a competitive bid to obtain a cleaner supply of electricity. Eversource continues as the city’s electric utility in delivering the electricity, but the supply is determined by the aggregation. Through a competitive bid, the City awarded Agera Energy an 18 month contract that will take effect in July. The program offers two alternatives. The default offering provides 25% more solar energy than required by the state, with the solar energy coming from projects located in or near Cambridge. All Eversource Basic Service customers will be automatically enrolled in this *Standard Green* offering, which has a rate of 10.486 cents per kilowatt-hour. Customers may opt out of the program and stay with Eversource’s Basic Service. Customers may also choose the *100% Green* option, which is 100% renewable at a rate of 12.180 cents per kilowatt-hour, by calling Agera at 1-888-589-7790.

The rate of the Standard Green program is the same or less than the Eversource Basic Service supply costs at the beginning of the program. The Standard Green rate will be fixed for the 18 months, while Eversource's rate will fluctuate over that time.

- **2017 Participatory Budget Process Begins** – Cambridge's [participatory budget process](#) is now accepting proposals through July 31st. The participatory budget provides for \$800,000 to be allocated by citizens. In previous years, projects have been proposed and funded that involve greenhouse gas mitigation and sustainability.
- **MIT GHG Report** – MIT has issued its [Campus Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Strategy](#). The strategy lays out a roadmap to reach and surpass MIT's goal to reduce campus GHG emissions by 32% by 2030. The document also discusses the integration of climate resilience into campus planning.
- **Boston Properties Named Green Lease Leader & Achieves Sustainability Goals Early** – Boston Properties was named a [Green Lease Leader](#) by the Institute for Market Transformation. The company was recognized for its efforts in its properties aligning the financial and energy incentives with its tenants to achieve higher energy efficiency, resource conservation, and financial savings. Boston Properties is a real estate investment trust that develops, redevelops, acquires, manages, operates, and owns a portfolio primarily of Class A office space totaling 47.7 million square feet in 164 properties in the New York, Washington, DC, Boston, San Francisco, and Los Angeles real estate markets. [Boston Properties also announced](#) it has achieved its energy, emissions, and water intensity reduction goals early. As reported to the Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark (GRESB), Boston Properties reduced its energy use intensity by 19.8%, water use intensity by 21.8%, and greenhouse gas emissions intensity by 31.5% below a 2008 base year.
- **Harvard House Zero** – Harvard University will renovate a pre-1940s house into a super-efficient [headquarters for the Center for Green Buildings & Cities](#). The goal of the project is to use almost zero energy for heating and cooling; 100% natural ventilation; 100% daylight autonomy; and zero carbon emissions, including embodied energy in materials. [[Fast Company, 5/23/17](#)]
- **SLR Rate Nearly Tripled Since 1990** – According to a [new scientific analysis](#) published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, sea level is rising nearly three times faster compared to most of the 20th century. This acceleration is faster than previously thought. Before 1990, oceans were rising about 1.1 millimeters per year. From 1993 through 2012, oceans rose 3.1 millimeters per year or 1.22 inches per decade. [[Washington Post, 5/22/17](#)]
- **Last Major Coal Power Plant in New England Closes** – The Brayton Point power station in Somerset, the last major coal fired power plant in New England closed at the end of May. The plant had a capacity of 1,600 megawatts and at its peak employed 250 people. Seeing the future, Representative Patricia Haddad has been leading efforts to promote the development of a new wind power industry in the southeastern part of the state to help replace jobs and the tax base. [[E&E News, 5/30/17](#)]
- **US Electricity 19.35% Renewable** – Renewable energy – hydro, wind, solar, biomass, geothermal – provided 19.35% of US electricity during the first quarter of the year, according to US Energy Information Administration. [[Cleantechnica, 5/31/17](#)]

RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **Jobs** – C2ES is seeking to hire a [Resilience Fellow](#), working out of Arlington, VA. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs has an opening for the [Assistant Director](#) of the MEPA Office. The Urban Land Institute Boston/New England Chapter is seeking a [Manager](#) and an [Associate](#).
- **Chicago Urban Forest Vulnerability Assessment** – The US Forest Service Northern Research Institute published the [Chicago Wilderness Region Urban Forest Vulnerability Assessment and Synthesis](#).

The assessment analyzes the impact of climate change in the Chicago region and outlines management considerations.

- **Evaluation of Building Energy Benchmarking Programs** – Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory issued a report on its [Evaluation of U.S. Building Energy Benchmarking and Transparency Programs: Attributes, Impacts, and Best Practices](#). The report reviews the impacts of the 24 municipal building energy benchmarking ordinances, including Cambridge's Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance.
- **Barcelona Re-Greening Plan** – The City of Barcelona, Spain released its [Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Plan 2020](#), which envisions how the dense, historic city could be transformed through the application of a wide range of green infrastructure strategies. [[CityLab, 5/17/17](#)]
- **Climate Clock** – The Human Impact Lab, a non-profit based in Montreal, has created a [Climate Clock](#) which visualizes how much time is left before the world reaches the 2 degree Celsius increase that is part of the Paris climate agreement and is commonly considered the temperature increase at which catastrophic climate change becomes unavoidable. The Climate Clock can be downloaded and embedded in websites or used in displays. [[National Observer, 5/19/17](#)]
- **Harvard Speaks on Climate Change Video Series** – [Harvard Speaks on Climate Change](#) is a compilation of short video presentations by its faculty and staff looking at climate change from the perspective of a range of disciplines. The series was developed by the Harvard University Center for the Environment.
- **Climate Friendly Cars** – Climate Central created the [Climate-Friendly Cars tool](#) to help consumers identify vehicles with the least climate change impact. The vehicles are assessed in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, the electric grid, and power per mile. Interestingly, there are conventional hybrids that do better than all-electric models in terms of emissions (e.g. Hyundai Ionic Blue vs Tesla S 60D). Tool seems to work best in Chrome browser.
- **Voluntary Resilience Standards** – Meister Consultants wrote a new report titled [Voluntary Resilience Standards: An Assessment of the Emerging Market for Resilience in the Built Environment](#). The report is informative for people developing policies to understand existing standards and guidelines that can help make the built environment more resilient to climate change.
- **Guide to Public-Private Resilience Collaboration** – C2ES issued a [Guide to Public-Private Collaboration on City-Climate Resilience Planning](#).
- **Planting Trees Cannot Replace Cutting GHG Emissions** – A [new study from the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research](#) finds that planting more trees cannot replace direct reduction of CO2 emissions. The study finds that growing biomass in well-selected places with increased irrigation and fertilization could complement emissions reductions in stabilizing the climate. [[EurekAlert!, 5/18/17](#)]
- **Cambridge Recycling News** - Waste reduction fights climate change! [42% of US greenhouse gas](#) emissions are from materials management. Help us meet Cambridge's waste reduction goals and stay informed with the monthly [Cambridge recycling e-newsletter](#). Full of practical information, helpful tips, and fun events, this newsletter regularly receives compliments from the many Cambridge residents already subscribed! You can sign up quickly [here](#).
- **Cambridge Climate Change Preparedness & Resilience** – The City's climate change vulnerability assessment that is serving as the foundation for a climate change preparedness plan that is being developed. The CCVA Report – Part 1 covers the risks of increasing temperatures and precipitation and CCVA Report – Part 2 focuses on the risks of sea level rise and storm surges. Both reports are available on the [CCPR project webpage](#), which also provides other information and documents from meetings. The CCPR Plan development has started with a focus on the Alewife area. After a second neighborhood is studied, the full plan will be developed with a goal of completion in 2018. Interested people can send an email to jboulduc@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.

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 jbalduc@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.