

Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

CPAC BULLETIN

April 2012

MEETING: The next meeting of the Climate Protection Action Committee is scheduled for Thursday, April 12, 6:00 pm at City Hall Annex, Second Floor. The agenda will be posted on the [CPAC webpage](#). The two main agenda items are presentation and discussion on the topics of how to expand solar energy use in Cambridge and how to increase participation in the NSTAR Green power program. Presenters from the state Department of Energy Resources, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, and NSTAR will be guests at the meeting.

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **Rivers of Ice** – The [MIT Museum](#) is presenting *Rivers of Ice: Vanishing Glaciers of the Greater Himalaya*, a photographic exhibit by mountaineer and filmmaker David Breashears. The exhibit opens on April 13. From 5:00 to 8:00 pm on April 13, MIT scientists and researchers will be on hand to talk about climate and hydrology as it relates to the exhibit. The MIT Museum is located at 265 Massachusetts Avenue.
- **Alaska & Climate Change** - April 16, 7:00 pm, Harvard Law School. Lawyers from the [Trustees for Alaska](#) will talk about their legal fight over the Pebble Mine case and coal development in Alaska. Headquartered in Anchorage, Trustees for Alaska is Alaska's only public interest environmental law firm, and their work in protecting the arctic ecosystem lies at the center of momentous decisions affecting global climate change. The event will be a wine and cheese gathering held at Harvard Law School, Wasserstein Hall, room Milstein East A, on Monday, April 16, 7 pm. For more information, and to RSVP, contact Susan Hackley, shackley@law.harvard.edu, and [read this letter](#) from board chair Steve Cotton. The event is free; contributions are appreciated.
- **The Changing Arctic Ice** – Tuesday, April 17, 6:00 to 7:30 pm, [MIT Museum](#). Explore the Arctic ice cap with photographer Chris Linder, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution scientist John Toole, and MIT oceanographer Patrick Heimbach. See stunning images from the pole, explore the latest data from deep beneath the cap's surface, and find out how such information can be used to forecast global environmental change. Part of the *Visualizing Science* series.
- **GreenPort Forum** - Tuesday, April 17 at 7:00pm; Cambridgeport Baptist Church, 459 Putnam Ave at Magazine St. **Emergency Preparedness Part 2: Continuing the Conversation.** Following up on last month's Forum, an open discussion of ways to work together as a community to prepare for climate-related emergencies. What are practical ways to start practicing mutual aid? How can we increase our reliance on sustainable local resources? How can we learn to live well while consuming less? What appropriate technologies can make us more resilient as we face extreme weather, rising ocean levels, and new scarcities? Bring your ideas and your spirit of resilience! Presentations on emergency preparation from the March Forum will be summarized for the benefit of those who were not able to attend.
- **Urban Cycling Workshop** – April 19, 6:30 to 7:30 pm, City Hall Annex (344 Broadway), 2nd floor community meeting room. Sponsored by the City of Cambridge and Mass Bike. No cycling experience necessary. This is a great class if you get the bike out only on nice days, are looking to use a bicycle for your daily errands, are looking into commuting everyday using a bike, or simply want to ride along with your children. This is a how-to informational class, a bicycle is not necessary. Those who complete the class are eligible for a free helmet. RSVP is recommended but not required. RSVP or questions can be sent to

John Pelletier at jpelletier@cambridgema.gov or 617-346-4631. Additional workshops will be scheduled throughout Cambridge over the next few months, please check the city calendar for more information.

- **Sustainable Communities Conference** – Friday, April 20; UMass Boston Campus Center. A day of workshops, speakers, and exhibitors on sustainable communities. For the agenda and registration info, click [here](#).
- **Sustainable Campuses Conference** – Saturday, April 21; UMass Boston Campus Center. Associated with the Sustainable Communities Conference, a day of workshops, speakers, and exhibitors focused on sustainable campuses and environmental education. For the agenda and registration info, click [here](#).
- **Cambridge Science Festival** – The Cambridge Science Festival starts on April 20 and runs through the 29th. For information on the schedule, click [here](#).
- **Accelerating Clean Energy Innovation Reception** – Tuesday, April 24, 5:00 to 7:00 pm, MIT-SUTD International Design Center, 265 Mass. Ave., Building N52, 3rd Floor, Cambridge. A discussion of ongoing clean energy and electric vehicle innovation and research at MIT and local companies. Sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts' Clean Energy Program, MIT Energy Club, MIT CSSA, and the MIT Economics and Talent Forum. This event is free and open to the public. Please RSVP to laurie@1620associates.com or 508-479-8034 or through [eventbrite](#).
- **MIT Sustainability Summit** – April 27, Microsoft New England Research & Development (NERD) Center. Experts tell us that the strain human society is placing on the planet's resources is accelerating us towards an environmental event horizon, a point beyond which there is no turning back. But there is another story developing—one of innovative business models and technologies that are leading us to a sustainable future. The 4th annual MIT Sustainability Summit, The Horizon Event, will address the urgency of developing and implementing these breakthrough ideas. The one-day Summit will provide a unique forum for students and leaders from business, academia, government, and NGOs to engage in dialogue and ideation to advance the field of sustainability. Speakers and panel sessions will highlight cutting-edge solutions, emerging breakthroughs, and visionary ideas in sustainable business models, technologies, and policies. The Horizon Event will inspire attendees to reshape their organizations and propel sustainability into escape velocity. Fees apply.
- **SILA** - Monday, April 30, 7:00 pm, Central Square Theatre, 450 Mass. Ave. Playwright Chantal Bilodeau will read from her play in development titled [Sila](#). On a remote island in the Canadian Arctic, eight characters – including a scientist, a poet, and two polar bears – respond to a rapidly changing climate, environment, and world. Blending Inuit myth, contemporary Arctic policy, and three different languages (English, French, and Inuktitut), *Sila* investigates the competing interests shaping the future of our planet. The reading is free and open to the public. Reservations are strongly recommended; email info@centralsquaretheatre.org.
- **Green Streets** – This initiative encourages people throughout Cambridge (and Somerville and surrounding cities and towns) to use a green form of transportation (transit, bicycle, walk, skate) on a designated day of the month and to wear a green-colored item of attire. The goal is to make Cambridge and neighboring cities safer, quieter, and friendlier for pedestrians and cyclists, and to minimize the use and impact of cars. Generally, the designated day is the last Friday of the month. Check the [Cambridge Green Streets Initiative website](#) for more info and incentives.

NEWS

- **Cambridge Solar Hot Water Grants** – The City of Cambridge is offering through the Cambridge Energy Alliance a limited number of grants for solar hot water installations. The City grants are intended to complement rebates from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and existing tax incentives. The City grant will pay up to 50% to a maximum of \$2,000 of the property owner's out of pocket costs after other

incentives. Applications for the grant must be received by November 19, 2012. For more information, see the [Cambridge Energy Alliance website](#).

- **2012 GoGreen Award Nominations Sought** – The City of Cambridge is seeking nominations for the 2012 GoGreen Awards. The awards recognize actions by businesses, institutions, and community organizations in the areas of waste reduction, transportation, stormwater management, energy, climate protection, and community sustainability. Awardees will be honored on May 22 at a morning event at the MIT Museum. Nominations are due by April 16. To obtain a nomination form, click [here](#).
- **Hubway Bike Share Agreement Signed** – The City of Cambridge has finalized an agreement with Alta Bicycle Share which is operating the regional Hubway bike sharing system. The City expects 22 bicycle docking stations to be installed around Cambridge and be operational by early this summer. Hubway was launched in Boston last year and is expected also set up stations in Somerville and Brookline. [[Boston Globe, 4/3/12](#)]
- **Cambridge is Best Walking City in U.S.** – [Prevention Magazine](#) named Cambridge the best walking city in the United States in their list of 25 cities noted for their walkability. Cambridge's [Walkscore](#) is 88.8, better than second-best New York City's 85.3.
- **EV Charging Station Network Launched** – The City formally launched a starting network of electric vehicle charging stations in Cambridge at an [event](#) held at the Cambridgeside Galleria Mall parking garage. Eight stations that are capable of charging 18 vehicles at any one time have been installed at various publicly accessible locations around Cambridge. With a grant from the state Department of Energy Resources, the City worked with private partners and City agencies to install the stations. The Chargepoint stations were provided by Coulomb Technologies, which received funding support from the U.S. Department of Energy. The currently operating stations are located at the Cambridgeside Galleria Mall (2); Porter Square Shopping Plaza; Boston Properties' West Garage at Cambridge Center; and the MIT campus at 43 Vassar Street and 34 Brookline Street. Stations that will be operational soon are at the Department of Public Works, 147 Hampshire Street; at Lot 5 on Bishop Allen Drive in Central Square; and at the First Street Garage. The stations will provide a charge at no cost to the user for the first year. Afterwards, the owners may choose to apply a fee. Use of the stations requires a credit card with a RFID chip or a RFID card issued by Coulomb Technologies. Smartphone apps are available to locate EV charging stations and their status. For example, the [Coulomb Chargepoint app](#) enables the user to determine if the charging station is available or occupied. More information is available on the Community Development Department EV webpage [here](#).
- **CEA Live Better Porter Square Campaign** – The City's Cambridge Energy Alliance is launching a pilot called Live Better Porter Square as a campaign to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy while facilitating healthy economic growth in the Porter Square area. By signing up for an audit, residents and businesses will support a healthier environment, the local economy, and community organizations. For more information about the campaign, click [here](#).
- **School Composting Expands** – The Cambridge Schools [Food to Flowers lunchroom composting program](#) has expanded to the Tobin School, the fifth elementary school in the project. Food and dirty paper collected from the school cafeterias are trucked to a local farm to be composted. Styrofoam trays and bowls are sent to a special recycling program at a high school in Boston to be upcycled into new trays. The other participating elementary schools are the King Open, Graham & Parks, Peabody, and Cambridgeport. The 9th grade campus and the CRLS culinary arts kitchen also participate.
- **Green Streets Corporate Challenge** – The Green Streets Initiative is conducting a Walk/Ride Day Corporate Challenge that runs through September 28, 2012. Cambridge and Boston employers can compete to determine which is the green commuting champion. The challenge takes place once a month on the last Friday. It involves having employees check in and registering their form of commute. See the [Green Streets Initiative website](#) for details on how to sign up.

- **Renewable Heating & Cooling** – The [Massachusetts Renewable Heating and Cooling: Opportunities and Impacts Study](#) calls for renewable thermal systems for homes and businesses to play a key role in the Commonwealth's reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. It examines the technical status, cost effectiveness, market barriers, and greenhouse gas benefits associated with four promising and emerging renewable thermal technologies. The study finds that because the majority of expenditures on thermal energy flow out of the region, little or no economic benefit accrues to Massachusetts. Technologies such as solar hot water and solar air, biomass thermal, advanced biodiesel, and high efficiency heat pumps can help retain those dollars in the Commonwealth. The study states that with the right policy supports, renewable thermal technologies could create about 5,900 jobs and reduce GHG emissions by over two million tons by 2020 in Massachusetts and the greater New England region.
- **NSTAR Signs On to White House Green Button Initiative** – NSTAR has joined the White House [Green Button Initiative](#). The Green Button Initiative is an effort to make energy use data more easily accessible and to set up national uniformity for how the data is accessed, delivered, and used. NSTAR customers can go to the company's [website](#), enter the account information, and view 13 months of electricity data and make it accessible third parties in a standardized format.
- **Surging Seas** – Climate Central, a organization that works to make climate change science accessible to the public, has created an interactive map tool for the United States that allows users to view different levels of sea level rise and flooding at the neighborhood scale in 3,000 coastal cities, towns, counties, and states. The map tool is accompanied by a report. The project is called [Surging Seas](#). It should be noted that the map tool appears to be limited by not taking local protection systems, such as the Charles River Dam, into account.

RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **New York City White Roof Study** – Scientific report in [Environmental Research Letters](#) on the energy performance of three different types of white roofs in New York City.
- **Energy Efficiency as Adaptation** – The Alliance to Save Energy put out a [white paper](#) on how energy efficiency can make communities more resilient to climate change.
- **Adaption Lessons Learned** – A report titled [Implementing Climate Change Adaptation: Lessons Learned from Ten Examples](#). Written by Headwaters Economics, a non-profit research organization.
- **SREX Report** – The IPCC issued the [full special report](#) on managing the risks of extreme climate events and disasters. The summary of the report was released in November 2011. The video on the IPCC website features former CPAC member Susi Moser.
- **Carbon Counting Book** - *How Bad Are Bananas?: The Carbon Footprint of Everything* by Mike Berners-Lee looks at the relative carbon footprints of about 100 products to help put things in perspective. Recommended by CPAC member Milton Bevington. A review of the book is in the [Christian Science Monitor](#).
- **ZNEB Report** – A [report](#) from the New Buildings Institute, the people behind the commercial buildings portion of the Stretch Energy Code, on some of the first zero net energy buildings in the U.S. The report covers the characteristics, costs, and features of the projects.
- **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.
 - **MCAN Low Carbon Living Program** – The [Massachusetts Climate Action Network](#) works with its local member organizations to develop teams of 5 to 8 households to assess their household carbon footprints and undertake actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The program is based on the Low Carbon Diet workbook and involves 3 to 4 meetings.
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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 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.