

City of Cambridge

Climate Protection Action Committee

Meeting Minutes Thursday February 9, 2012

Attendance: Jackie Cefola (vice chair), Marguerite Reynolds (secretary), Milton Bevington, Betsy Boyle, Peter Crawley, Janet Curtis, Nathan Gauthier, Barry Hilts, Lyn Huckabee, Steve Lanou, Ted Live, Lauren Miller, Tom Page, David Rabkin, Keren Schlomy, Victoria Wolff, Scott Wood, Quinton Zondervan; *staff:* Susanne Rasmussen, Rosalie Anders, John Bolduc

Guests: Steve Wineman (Greenport), Audrey Schulman (HEET), Janie Katz-Christy (Green Streets Initiative), John Pitkin (CCEAG), Eric Gruenebaum

Approval of Minutes January 12, 2011

- Meeting minutes approved
- Jackie Cefola is chairing the meeting tonight

Report of the E&TP Director

- The first of the EV charging stations funded by the Mass. Department of Energy Resources in Cambridge has been installed at the DPW parking lot at 147 Hampshire Street and will be open later at an official event. The city is determining how much to charge people based on getting a return on the investment but keeping the price competitive with gasoline. The station will be open to DPW during the day and to residents during nights and weekends. Other stations are being installed on City and private property in publicly accessible places.
- The RFP for a vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning services is out for proposals. The deadline has been extended until February 16.
- Due to contracting issues and supply availability, the City has acquired additional national wind energy renewable energy certificates from its current vendor to use toward the municipal goal of obtaining 20% of its electricity from renewable sources.

Introductions

- Guests introduce themselves: Audrey Schulman (HEET), Janie Katz-Christie (Green Streets Initiative), Steve Wineman (Greenport), John Pitkin (Cambridge Climate Emergency Action Group), Quinton Zondervan (Green Cambridge).

Meeting goals

- Share information for engaging people
- Address the working draft
- Discuss process in communicating and revising goals
 - Focus is on the PROCESS for getting feedback

- Work together to develop goals
- How to engage different constituents in the city
- How to best engage people in carrying out the plan

Cambridge Green Organizations Presentations

Audrey Schulman, HEET

- Current and past projects
 - The signature activity is the energy “barn raising” events. During these events, volunteers learn hands on skills while helping to make community homes and buildings more efficient.
- 2012 Agenda
 - There will be a landlord workshop at MIT in March.
 - Heet is working with Sagewell to do an infrared scan of all of Cambridge buildings, to make each homeowner’s information available to him/her and to offer free assessments.
 - HEET may be involved in a solar canvassing effort this summer.
- Who
 - The HEET constituency includes people anywhere within an hour of Boston, and surveys show that they reach a pretty broad demographic.
- Effective outreach and engagement tools
 - When people get engaged, they start to feel they are energy efficiency people and take actions accordingly.
 - Talking directly with people is highly effective.

Janie Katz-Christie, GreenStreets

- Mission
 - Spread use of sustainable and healthy transportation in Cambridge and the community.
- Current and past projects
 - They are known for their signature walk/ride days which encourage people to use greener transportation one day a month.
- 2012 Agenda
 - Walk-ride days
- Who
 - The main constituency include schools and other businesses and institutions
- Effective outreach and engagement tool
 - Institutions or retailers reward people for their ride choices. This program has not taken off fully yet.
 - Monthly email with about 6,000 people on the list and other social media
 - Partnerships with other organizations
 - The goal is to make walk-ride day as a useful vehicle for organizations to use to address their green goals
- Difficulties

- It is hard sometimes to get people involved who are already sympathetic to the cause (those that walk or ride a bike to work) and who could do a lot to persuade others to change their commute practices.

Steve Wineman, Greenport

- Mission
 - Greenport is a neighborhood climate action group in Cambridgeport. They aim to build community and awareness at a very local level based on an understanding that we need to deal with climate as a community.
- Current and past projects
 - Monthly forums hosted to raise awareness of climate issues.
 - Action projects launched, such as a project that became HEET.
 - Played a central role in the climate emergency campaign (which led to the climate congress and then to the climate emergency action committee).
- 2012 agenda
 - Encouraging people to get energy audits and improve energy efficiency in their homes.
 - Starting a community kitchen that will form community and bring to light the issues that will arise around food shortages.
- Who
 - Attendance at Forums varies.
 - It is Cambridgeport based, but the boundaries have always been porous.
- Effective outreach engagement tool
 - Use an email list of about 300.
 - Launching projects have proved most effective for engaging people.

John Pitkin, Climate Emergency Action Committee

- Mission
 - CEAC grew out of the Climate Emergency Congress. They aim to fight climate change through citizen activity.
- Current and past projects
 - Organized a climate change week in May.
 - Hosting a carbon pledge at cceag.org – limited uptake so far.
 - Hosted a book discussion on learning about climate change from the past.
- 2012 agenda
 - Organizing door-to-door, person-to-person contact with the goal of engaging people in daily actions that will really make a difference.
- Who
 - They are focusing on the finding meaningful things for people already sympathetic to the cause to do .
- Challenge
 - Sustaining energy and interest in climate change efforts.

Quinton Zondervan, Green Cambridge

- Mission
 - They aim to create a more sustainable Cambridge and protect the environment for all through a variety of actions.
- Current and past projects
 - They were a founding member of the Massachusetts Climate Action Network.
- 2012 Agenda
 - media campaigns
 - community dinners
- Who
 - Over 250 members
 - Constituency includes everyone in Cambridge
- Effective outreach engagement tool
 - Partnerships
 - Newsletters
 - Website and Facebook page
 - One-on-one interactions have been the most effective tool for getting people engaged
 - They maintain a good working relationship with city government

Small Group Setup and Discussions

- Jackie Cefola introduced the purpose of the discussion. The focus, she explained, should be to better engage the community in communicating climate goals. Before breaking into group discussion, she asked for one initial outreach idea from each guest
 - Quinton suggested hosting community dinners around environmental issues.
- Audrey suggested using words and issues that people care about and that aren't necessarily related to climate such as energy bills, comfort, health, and children's future.
- Janie suggested publishing personal profiles or stories in the media that people can relate to.
- Steve mentioned that he had found it helpful to talk with people in farmer's markets about climate issues. From his experience doing that, he recommended that the city create public spaces for people to talk about the emotional side of this emergency.
- John recommended we find ways to talk about goals in a way that can engage people's feelings about climate change.
- Discussions on the following topics ensued:
 - Incentives
 - Incentives could be social and involve social media. For example, people could check in on something like facebook if they had gone green that day.
 - Like smoking, we could work towards making non-sustainable choices a social taboo.
 - Engage new people
 - For example, HEET is starting a \$50 referral incentive that goes to a house of worship for its energy efficiency project. Not only do houses of worship in

- Cambridge need extensive energy upgrades, it is also a good way to get the word out to a whole community.
- CPAC has limited energy and time
 - Can we proceed on action and formation of the goals at the same time?
- Look for messages that resonate with people
 - Sell the positive, fun side of responsible actions
 - Wisdom from a sixth grader: “nobody is going to do this unless it’s fun”.
 - People may enjoy the many benefits of walking or biking around the city.
 - People can be motivated by the opportunity to help someone else.

Small Group Reports

- Representatives of each group briefly reported out on their discussions
- Group 1:
 - The community should be involved in discussing goals.
 - Actions should be fun to get people engaged.
 - Social media could be used in a manner where people check in and get points toward becoming “climate heroes”.
 - Peer-to-peer interaction, such as book clubs, can be a powerful venue for the message.
 - Learning skills while partaking in climate events is appealing.
 - We should make sure that the message is being communicated to everyone (for example, in multiple languages, and not just on the internet).
- Group 2:
 - Emphasize the personal benefits of sustainable activities and provide people with information on the actions that they can take
 - Identify key stakeholders related to different goals and objectives
 - Some organizations might need to have more buy-in during the goal setting process
 - Reach out to faith based communities, large organizations and other places where we can have one point of contact that expands our reach to many
- Group 3:
 - Financial incentives may work in some situations but not all
 - People’s commitment to the sustainability aspect has to be more than just superficial
 - However, the financial incentive could be enough to make people take action, and once they do, they might begin to see themselves as climate/sustainability people
 - We could ask Cambridge residents to compare our carbon footprint to that of people in our sister cities who might not be as environmentally aware but may have lower carbon footprints
 - We could challenge people’s assumptions about what is fun. For example, a local vacation could be as fun as an international one, but have a reduced carbon footprint.

- A connection should be made between travelling outside of cars and health
- Encourage a broader discussion about how sustainable living can actually improve quality of life and how consumption does not necessarily lead to a higher quality of life.
- Make sure our questions for the public are not too abstract.

Next Meeting

- In March, the City Manger, Robert Healy, and Deputy City Manager, Rich Rossi, are expected to join CPAC to talk about the climate goals
- The group discussed what the purpose of the meeting should be. Questions for the City Manger could be related to the content of the document, outreach and process, funding needs for implementation of the process and goals, a request for more regular communication with the Mayor's office, creation of cross-departmental teams.
- Clarification was provided on the process with city officials
 - City manager can accept the goals document, but there are things in it that can not be carried out without the involvement or approval of other areas of government (for example, creating a new ordinance)
 - Presumably the City Manager could adopt the goals as a framework and a roadmap
- Staff will invite other department heads to the next meeting
 - And we could invite them to additional meetings whenever we want
- The group discussed the legal issue of communicating outside of meetings (related to open meeting law) and a wish that there was a way that discussion could be had in an online forum that would be open to the public between formal meetings.
- If people have questions that they would like to address with the City Manager at the next meeting, they should be sent those to John Bolduc by March 1.

Meeting adjourned

Notes by Victoria Wolff