

Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

CPAC BULLETIN

January 2016

MEETING: The next meeting of the Climate Protection Action Committee is scheduled for January 14, 6:00 pm, City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway. The meeting will focus on the committee's 2016 work plan. The agenda for the meeting will be posted on the [Community Development Department website](#).

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **Fundamentals Of Organizational Sustainability**. This 'open enrollment' course is offered online through the Harvard Extension School. It features sustainability from the perspective of virtual organizations using Cambridge, Massachusetts as the external context. Information can be found on the [course website](#). [Register here](#). If you have questions about the course, please contact the instructor at rpojasek@fas.harvard.edu.
- **MIT CoGen Upgrade Project** – Thursday, January 14. The state MEPA Office will be holding two meetings in relation to the state environmental review process for the proposed upgrade to the MIT cogeneration facility. A site walk will be held at 4 pm; meet at 59 Vassar Street in the parking lot on Albany Street across from Portland Street, look for a tent. At 6 pm, a public meeting and scoping session will be held at MIT in Building 4, Room 270. For more information, see the [project website](#).
- **BASEA Forum** – January 14, 7:00 pm, First Parish Church, 3 Church Street. This month's topic is "What Does Paris Mean to You" with speaker Quinton Zondervan, President of Green Cambridge and CPAC Member. Quinton attended the Paris climate change summit as part of the delegation from the American Sustainable Business Council. This is the monthly meeting of the [Boston Area Solar Energy Association](#).
- **GUEP Outreach Meeting & Training** - Tuesday, January 12, 7:00 to 8:30 PM in the 4th Floor Conference Room, 344 Broadway, Cambridge. Launch of the 2016 outreach campaign for the Georgetown University Energy Prize. Block Captains, community members, and friends are invited for a meet-and-greet, idea share and brainstorm, and program training. Anyone who has helped with the Georgetown Prize or is interested in becoming more involved should join this special kick-off event. Refreshments will be served, and feel free to bring a friend! [RSVP here!](#) If you are interested in being a block captain, please fill out [this brief survey](#). Email Jessica at Outreach@CambridgeEnergyAlliance.org if you have any questions.
- **Local Solutions Conference** – April 4-6, 2016, Baltimore. This is the [Eastern Regional Climate Preparedness Conference](#) hosted by Antioch University and the EPA. Registration is open and agenda details are on the conference webpage. The third day of the conference has concurrent summits on business continuity and education.
- **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.

- **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

- **Cambridge Selected for SEED Collaborative** – Cambridge was selected as 1 of 10 cities that will participate in the U.S. Department of Energy’s [SEED Collaborative](#). SEED is a software application designed to help organizations manage, standardize and share large data sets about building performance. The goal of the SEED Collaborative aims to reduce the up-front implementation and ongoing administrative costs of data management for building energy performance programs, such as the Cambridge Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance (BEUDO). As part of this 3 year partnership the DOE will provide the City with technical assistance and free hosting of the SEED Platform. The City will upload its building energy use disclosure data to the SEED Platform and provide feedback to further develop the platform’s features and functionality. Currently, the City is managing the data received under BEUDO in spreadsheets. While this is currently manageable, given that only 1 year of reporting data has been received, the SEED Platform could provide a much better long term data management solution for sorting, cleaning, analyzing and storing building energy data that is collected over time.
- **MIT Proposes Cogen Power Plant Project** – MIT is [proposing to upgrade its on-campus Central Utilities Plant](#) which supplies electricity and steam through a combined power process. Cogeneration is a more efficient process than systems that generate power and steam separately. The existing facility is aging, so MIT is proposing to replace the existing gas-fired turbine and add a second one. MIT estimates that regulated pollution emissions will decrease more than 25% and greenhouse emissions will be lower by 10% compared to 2014 levels. The project is subject to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, which involves a mandatory environmental impact report in this case. MIT has submitted an Expanded Environmental Notification Form (EENF) and is requesting a Single EIR process. Comments on the EENF are due January 22. Copies of the EENF can be requested from Corinne Snowdon at csnowdon@epsilonassociates.com. [[MIT News Release, 12/16/15](#)]
- **DPW Reusable Bag Drive** – The Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee and Public Works Department are sponsoring a reusable bag drive through January. The goal is to collect 10,000 bags and give them to residents that need them. [Clean and empty bags are being accepted at 11 locations](#). The effort is being conducted in advance of the [Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance](#) taking effect on March 31st. The City will be reminding residents to bring their bag to avoid the mandatory checkout bag charge (minimum \$0.10/bag) on all checkout bags at businesses. Single use plastic bags will not be allowed under the ordinance. The purpose of the ordinance is to reduce disposable checkout bags by retail establishments to protect the marine environment, advance solid waste reduction, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and protect waterways. The ordinance seeks to reduce the number of plastic and paper bags being burned, used, discarded, and littered, and to promote the use of reusable checkout bags.
- **MA Solar Loan Program Launches** – The Commonwealth launched a new \$30 million [residential solar loan program](#). The program will support Massachusetts lenders in providing loans between \$3,000 and \$60,000 with low interest, fixed interest rates to homeowners. Mass Solar Loans are available for solar installations on single-family homes and residential buildings up to three units with all lenders offering between \$3,000 and \$35,000 and some offering loans up to \$60,000. The state program provides funding

to Massachusetts banks and credit unions to incentivize lenders to make solar lending a part of their portfolios and to make solar loans available to borrowers with lower incomes or credit scores. To date, solar loans are being offered by Bank Five, First Citizens' Federal Credit Union, North Brookfield Savings Bank, Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union, UMassFive College Federal Credit Union, and Weymouth Bank. More lenders are due to begin participating soon. [[EOEEA news release, 12/17/15](#)]

- **MIT Campus Energy Planning Tool** – MIT has developed a new tool that enables MIT campus planners to forecast energy usage on the campus and identify opportunities for improvement. The tool enables users to assess upgrades in lighting, building controls, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. The tool grew out of the MIT Net Zero Working Group which was formed in response to Cambridge's carbon reduction initiatives. Atelier 10, an environmental design consultancy, was commissioned by the working group to develop the tool. [[Energy Futures, Autumn 2015](#)]
- **Governor Baker Signs Subnational Climate Agreement** – Governor Charlie Baker signed the [Under 2 Subnational Global Climate Leadership Memorandum of Understanding](#). Under the MOU, each signatory commits to limit greenhouse gas emissions to below 80 to 95 percent below 1990 levels, or two metric tons per capita, by 2015. This level is generally agreed to be required to limit global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. [[The Boston Harbor Association, 1/4/16](#)]
- **2015 Second Hottest Year for U.S.** – [According to NOAA](#), 2015 was the second warmest year in the continental U.S. on record. The 2015 annual average U.S. temperature was 54.4 degrees Fahrenheit, 2.4 degrees F above the 20th century average. 2015 was also the third wettest year for the U.S. in the 121-year period of record. The West and Northeast were drier than average, while the central and southeastern U.S. was much wetter. [[Washington Post, 1/7/16](#)]

RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **MA Local Food Action Plan** – The Massachusetts Food Policy Council issued the [Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan](#). The plan was developed for the council by a collaborative of regional planning agencies and the Mass. Workforce Alliance.
- **Commercial Real Estate Efficiency** – The Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance issued a report prepared for it by the New Buildings Institute titled [Commercial Real Estate \(CRE\) Market Test Assessment: Understanding Delivery, Partnership Strategies and Program Channels](#). The report focuses on how delivery, partnership strategies and program channels can promote the adoption of energy efficiency best practices in commercial real estate.
- **Cooling Effect of Trees** – A clear explanation, "[Can trees really cool our cities down?](#)", describes how trees cool cities and reduce heat stress. It's not just shade.
- **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 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 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.