

Climate Crisis Working Group [Updated 9/13]

Meeting findings [2 pages] and DRAFT Workplan [3 pages]

Meeting Notes and Outcomes

First meeting (9/1)

- **Summary of discussion:**
 - There has been a lot of good planning, good ideas, goals set, analysis, reports, commitments. There have been notable successes and many look to Cambridge as a climate leader.
 - Much of what can and needs to be done is on the table.
 - And yet...
 - Our actual accomplishments - progress towards meeting many of the goals set - don't match up to our aspirations or to the need.
 - We haven't held ourselves accountable for the goals we've set and too often we haven't set SMART goals
 - There are undoubtedly missing pieces, including important big things not explicitly being considered and small, easy-to-implement action items that haven't made it to the priority lists.
 - Equity is critical to consider in exploring the impacts of climate change and of proposed solutions.
 - Progress will require mandates, despite the fact that the City has often been hesitant to impose them.
 - It's not [yet] clear how the CCWG should organize its work in order to make a real difference.
- **Things observed about how the CCWG might approach the work:**
 - Focus first on implementing what we know can be done, starting with known actions, and then also incorporate new and impactful actions that we can readily identify.
 - Focus on actors rather than on sectors, as the city's work has in the past. While the two are correlated, by focusing on the decision-makers (as opposed to thinking at the sector level), we're more likely to identify the barriers to action that *real people* face. And to make progress, we need real people to overcome the barriers to action that face them; only then will we see movement in the sectors that they comprise. And the communication about what to do should be clearer.
 - BARRIERS to implementation and action should be front and center in the work - since often the actions are known, and yet don't happen, we need to identify, understand and then eliminate the barriers to action.

- **Additional thoughts upon reflection and conversations after the meeting:**

- City's reluctance to dictate solutions needs attention. To date the city has chosen to set outcome targets (e.g., reduced GHGs, improved energy efficiency) and not require specific solutions - which allows for adaptability but avoids mandates.
- No accountability built in
- Barriers - and thus what the city might do to help address them -- differ depending on the particular solution, making oversight challenging.
- The various parts of the city are not always aligned - climate is not front and center despite a decade of the emergency - e.g. EVs are not widespread, buildings can still be built with affordable housing dollars that are gas dependent.
- The CCWG may come up with action recommendations for implementation in the short run. Some may be related directly to carbon reduction. We may want to develop a list of longer-term items for the City to take up, perhaps even prioritized.
 - A focus is GHG reduction in the city. But the city has a large scope 3 GHG footprint - i.e. emissions generated elsewhere and consumed in the city. How can we reduce this impact? Is this impact so large and possible to address, that it should be a focus now?
- There is pride and emphasis on Cambridge being a "leader."
 - Sometimes Cambridge leads in starting off then other cities surpass Cambridge in implementation in some areas - why?
 - A key role could involve being a regional convener - bringing together other towns and cities. Build on successful efforts like the work being done with MAPC, other towns, the Mystic River Watershed Association on regional planning for sea level rise mitigation.
- Even as the CCWG will focus on individual actions by actors (who represent sectors), it is clear the larger culture that shapes our thinking and actions needs transformational change. This culture plays out in all of our – the city's and other actors' – decision-making. How can we shift that culture? Is that a priority for the City?
- Conversion away from fossil fuels, generating renewably sourced electricity, improving energy efficiency are all critical. Yet continuing life-as-is but with renewable energy is not enough. The functioning of the Earth itself cannot be ignored in the short or medium term and will impact our food choices, land use, soil restoration, water cycles, growth.

DRAFT WorkPlan for future meetings

Next (2nd) meeting (Actors, CCWG's plan)

NOTE: unlike the others, this meeting is 90, rather than 120, minutes.

- Goals:
 - Review/refine the work plan
 - Identify the actors on whom we'll focus
 - Lay a foundation for thinking about the actors, needed research, what experts/representatives we might consult with or invite to future meetings.
- CCWG organizers' preparation for meeting:
 - Create a work plan for the next 5 meetings (this document)
 - Create a preliminary list of actors for the committee to consider
 - On a preliminary basis, identify the most important actions for each one to take, the potential cumulative impact of those actions across their sector, and the barriers to those actions that these actors face.
 - On a prelim basis, identify potentially appropriate mandates, policies, etc.
- Pre work for committee members:
 - Review and think about the actors, actions, impacts, barriers and mandates
 - Review and think about the work plan
- Meeting agenda (90-minute meeting):
 - 10 minutes: Discuss refinement of the work plan if needed (noting that we'll identify the actors and the sequence in which we address them later in the meeting)
 - 50 minutes: Discuss the actors
 - Articulate the list of, and perhaps prioritize, the actors.
 - Start to identify the actions the top actors need to take.
 - Start identifying barriers they face and potentially useful mandates or actions on which we may want to focus. Basically, we're refining and focusing the pre-work to inform and help us organize our future work.
 - 10 minutes: Discuss how we'll take the actors on in the meetings to follow. This will inform the organizers' decisions about which actors we take on and when in the next three meetings.
 - 10 minutes discussing a preliminary outline of our committee's work product (which will NOT be a long report but will involve some writing, perhaps 2-4 pages, and some recommendations for action on the Council's part, which in turn will drive action elsewhere).
 - 5 minutes: Standing item: What have we left out? What are we not [yet] thinking about?
 - 1 minute: Review of the next meeting's goals and the pre-work for it.
- Product:
 - Set of targeted actors, actions and barriers, mandates, other actions
 - Preliminary list of what we've missed

3rd , 4th and 5th meetings Each of these three meetings will follow the same format in discussing and developing a plan of actions to take - by the different actors we've identified and selected. The

third meeting will have an additional item: review and gain agreement on a vision for the final work product.

- Goals:
 - Create a prioritized set of actions for the first group(s) of actors
 - Identify barriers to their actions
 - Identify steps the City can take directly, or with/through influencing other actors to help address those barriers and otherwise motivate action
 - Identify targets and timelines
 - Refine the concept for the committee's work product
- CCWG organizers' preparation for meeting:
 - Research on this meeting's focal actor(s): who they are, key actions, scale of impact, key barriers, initial list of potential ways to address the barriers and mandates that might be appropriate in supporting those actions.
 - Outline for the committee's work product based on the discussion in the last meeting.
- Pre work for committee members:
 - Review the research on the actor(s), think about it, and perhaps do a bit of your own research about what's most important for these actors to do, the barriers they face and how to overcome them, reasonable time-frames, etc.
 - *Review the outline of the work product in preparation for discussion.*
- Meeting agenda:
 - 20 minutes: Discuss the preliminary outline of CCWG work product - NOT be a long report - an action plan with specific recommendations for action including timelines. The writing part is expected to be a summary of 2-4 pages. The report will include actions the City Council can take and what other actors need to be engaged.
 - 80 minutes: Discuss and expand on each actor on this meeting's roster:
 - Who are the actors, their key actions, the potential scale of impact
 - Barriers to action - and possible ways to address them, including potential mandates
 - Goals relating to those actions and their timing
 - Recommendations on goals relating to the actions for these actors and actions the city can take to reduce/eliminate barriers and/or mandates it can impose.
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 - 10 minutes: Standing item: What have we left out? What are we not [yet] thinking about?
 - 1 minute: Review of the next meeting's goals and the pre-work for it.
- Product:
 - Action plan for the actors targeted in the meeting.
 - Key unanswered questions and/or work for the future.

6th and final meeting (Wrap up, review of, and final input to the committee's work product.)

- Goals:
 - Review of the CCWG work product to generate recommendations for edits, tweaks, notes, next steps, what hasn't been addressed, etc.
- CCWG organizers' preparation for meeting:
 - Draft final product
- Pre work for committee members:
 - Read the draft final product, think about it, comment, improve
- Meeting agenda:
 - 60 minutes: Discuss and specify any final changes to the plan
 - 30 minutes: Create recommended next steps for the City and other relevant actors
 - 10 minutes: Standing item: What have we left out? What are we not [yet] thinking about... that needs some kind of note to go into the final product? What might that note say?
 - 15 minutes: What else needs to happen -- recommendations to the City, the Council, ourselves, other players
- Product:
 - Recommendations for final editing of the work product and actions to be taken with it.