

# Cambridge Climate Protection Action Committee

## CPAC BULLETIN

### January 2012

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**MEETING:** The next meeting of the Climate Protection Action Committee is scheduled for Thursday, January 12, 6:00 pm at City Hall Annex, Second Floor. The agenda will be posted on the [CPAC webpage](#).

#### EVENTS & MEETINGS

- **GreenPort Forum** - Tuesday, January 17, 2012 at 7:00pm; Cambridgeport Baptist Church, 459 Putnam Ave. **Historical Alewife Restoration Project / Save the Silver Maple Forest.** Presented by Ellen Mass, President, Friends of Alewife Reservation. The Alewife Reservation slide show will project the citizen environmental and climate benefits of a 5-year, 140 million dollar storm water/wetlands project. Find out how you can support preservation of the silver maple forest and come to plant or to enjoy the Alewife area.
- **CCEAG Discussion** – January 19, 7:00 to 8:45 pm, Cambridge Main Public Library, Community Room; *Coping with climate change today: Insights from the past*; An open and lively public discussion of what we can learn from *The Plague* by Albert Camus about responding to climate change in our lives will be hosted by the [Cambridge Climate Emergency Action Group](#). CCEAG suggests that you (re)read the book and/or the essay on *The Plague* in Wikipedia.
- **Building Energy 12** – March 6 to 8, 2012, Seaport World Trade Center, Boston. The annual conference and trade show on renewable energy and green buildings of the [Northeast Sustainable Energy Association](#).
- **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

- **DOER Commercial Building Benchmarking Pilot** – With funding from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Barr Foundation, the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources will be conducting a commercial building energy rating pilot program. The project intends to develop a methodology and techniques to establish asset ratings for commercial building energy performance. An asset rating differs from an operational rating in that it is based primarily on the physical attributes of a building and not the occupants' use of it. The rating would be useful in helping property owners, tenants, and the public understand the relative energy performance of commercial buildings. Two Cambridge buildings are participating in the pilot program, Cambridge City Hall Annex and 350 Massachusetts Avenue, along with buildings in Boston and Marlborough. The pilot program is based on a white paper issued by DOER in 2010, titled [An MPG Rating for Commercial Buildings](#).

- **SunShot Grant** – The U.S. Department of Energy awarded a grant of \$566,354 to Massachusetts from its [Sunshot Rooftop Solar Challenge program](#). The grant supports the Commonwealth’s effort to address the costs of installing solar photovoltaic systems related to permitting, zoning, the utility interconnection process, and other soft costs. These soft costs can account for a significant portion of the installed cost of solar PV systems. The state Department of Energy Resources is working with five communities on the program: Cambridge, Boston, Harvard, Winchester, and Hatfield. More details will be forthcoming when the details of the project in each community are finalized. [[New York Times, 12/9/11](#)]

## RESOURCES & IDEAS

- **CDD EV Webpage** – The Community Development Department has put up a [webpage about electric vehicles](#). The webpage provides information for people interested in acquiring an electric vehicle and will have links to maps showing EV charging locations as they become available. The City has received a grant from the Department of Energy Resources to install up to 12 EV charging stations around Cambridge. The stations will start to be installed early in 2012.
- **MPGe?** – An explanation from the [Christian Science Monitor](#) of the new miles per gallon equivalent rating that is posted on electric vehicles.
- **ZNEB at North Shore Community College** – A webpage about the new zero net energy building at [North Shore Community College](#), the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ first ZNEB project.
- **Energy Secretary Chu at MIT** – A [video](#) of Energy Secretary Steven Chu’s talk at MIT on November 30 on “Winning the Clean Energy Race”.
- **Grid Parity for Solar** – An interesting projection of when solar photovoltaics will achieve grid parity – cost of electricity without incentives equaling the price of power supplied by the regional grid. [Energy Self-Reliant States](#) projects this will happen in Boston in 2020.
- **NRDC Climate-Health Threats Maps** – NRDC created a [map](#) of public health threats posed by climate change.
- **Southeast Florida Climate Plan** – A [regional climate change plan](#), with a heavy focus on adaptation, has been developed by a regional compact of county and local governments in Southeast Florida. It includes specific analyses of key infrastructure and facilities that will be at risk of inundation from sea level rise.
- **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** – Residents, businesses, and organizations can indicate their interest in the services of the [Cambridge Energy Alliance](#) by going to the website and registering. No obligation is implied. Those who register will receive an email in response with a telephone number to call to schedule an energy audit.

- **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](mailto: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](mailto: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.