

City of Cambridge  
Climate Protection Action Committee

**Minutes**

August 14, 2014  
City Hall Annex

Attendees: Quinton Zondervan (chair), Milton Bevington (secretary), Rosalie Anders, Keren Schlomy, Peter Crawley, Lyn Huckabee, Sarah Brylinsky, Jan Dillon, Sarah Kennedy, Ted Live, Barry Hilts, , David Rabkin, Lauren Miller, Tom Page; *staff*: John Bolduc, Bronwyn Cooke, Hanaa Rohman  
Guest: Tim DeGarmo (Cambridge Health Alliance), Dewitt Jones (Boston Community Capital)

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, and July 10 were approved.

ETP Update

- 9/11 meeting – City Manager is confirmed to attend with department representatives.
- 7/28 City Council meeting was good for CPAC. The building energy use disclosure ordinance passed the council. The City be kicking off an adhoc committee of stakeholders that will address issues that came up through the process. Council also accepted the CPAC goals & recommendations.
- Legislation passed the State House to create a renewable thermal incentive program at the state level. It would make solar hot water, ground source heat pump systems, and some biomass and biofuels eligible for renewable energy incentives which makes them economically viable options.
- House bill 4185 would have lifted the net metering cap and change the way net metering works. The bill wasn't approved; there was divided opinion about it within renewable energy circles. A short term lifting of the cap was approved to ensure that the net metering incentive would continue for about a year. A working group will come together in the fall to look at long range goals and issue recommendations in the spring.
- Homeowner's Rehab, one of Cambridge's non-profit housing developers, applied for the Kresge Foundation grant for resilience for low income populations. The program provides an initial \$100,000 for planning & additional \$200,000 for an additional 3 years for implementation. This would compromise
- City made it to quarter finals (about 30 other small & medium sized communities) in the the Georgetown University Energy Prize competition; the competition to reduce community energy use. Meghan Shaw from CDD is coordinating the City's participation.
- Net zero task force is getting to the home stretch. They will be issuing recommendations by the end of the year. Sept 17th meeting will be a 4 hr meeting work on the recommendations together. There will be limited opportunity for public comment.
- Street light conversion to LEDs is in progress. Some complaint calls have come in about how bright they are, though once the remote management system is in place the brightness can be adjusted, down to 35-75%.

- Courthouse renovation project. The City asked MEPA to make the developer assess the potential of connecting to the Veolia district steam system. Including this, they could get 75% energy reduction. Many questions still remain on the consistency & reliability of this energy source. The City sees hesitance from commercial building owners to connect due to concerns about cost distribution/efficiency. Genzyme Center and other commercial properties are connected.

### Solar Financing

DeWitt Jones, of Boston Community Capital, a community development financial institution, presented about their solar projects. Washington Elms development, a Cambridge Housing Authority property, was their first project. Many of their customers are owners of affordable housing units, unable to raise rents when electricity prices change; fixed price is important to this clientele. Virtual net metering is a way to benefit from solar that's not at your own building. Community solar projects are becoming more popular. (You generate solar thru a solar farm on open space that's been set up as one, sell the credit to someone who needs the benefit & can't install on their roof but by purchasing the credit that's applied to their bill, they obtain cheaper electricity and support solar development. They've come up with a standard contract, to help consumers understand the potential benefits & savings & protect them from predatory offers. A minimum of 15,000 uninterrupted square feet is required to do an installation. Solar canopies were discussed- it's possible to build them over parking lots, provides the benefit of covered parking, very popular in California, harder in New England, although there are examples here. BCC is looking into how to do battery integrated projects- where solar can regenerate batteries, and battery can generate power for communities after a weather event, enables people to shelter in place. Thinking through how Cambridge can organize the affordable housing developers/owners to help them negotiate better deals & to be primary recipients as a group of consumers.

### Work groups

The committee broke into two workgroups to develop recommendations on urban heat island mitigation and solar energy.

*Prepared by Sarah Kennedy*