

City of Cambridge

CLIMATE PROTECTION ACTION COMMITTEE

Minutes

September 14, 2017

City Hall Annex

Attendees: Johanna Jobin (vice chair), Rosalie Anders, Betsy Boyle, Tom Chase, Peter Crawley, Olga Factorovich, Keith Giamportone, Brian Goldberg, Anthony Michette, Chris Neilson, Paula Phipps, David Rabkin, Bill Zamparelli, Quinton Zondervan

Staff: Susanne Rasmussen, Bronwyn Cooke, John Bolduc

Guests:

1. Approval of Minutes

Quinton Zondervan motion to approve June and July minutes. Minutes for June 8 and July 13 approved

2. ETP Director Report

- *Upcoming: National Drive Electric Week on 9/16*
 - From 11am-4pm on Danehy Family Day (9/16), and as part National Drive Electric week, people who own electric vehicles can register to bring them for display and/or test drives, and others can register to test drive cars. Likely brands will include at least Chevrolet (Volt, Bolts), Tesla (Model X), Mitsubishi and Nissan. Mass Energy, Sierra Club and Union of Concerned Scientists will be there, too, providing a range of information including information relating to electric vehicle incentives, charging stations, etc.
- *MassCEC Heatsmart Grant*
 - The City has applied for a Heatsmart community grant from the MassCEC, which is like the solarize grant but for renewable thermal systems (the MassCEC website calls them: “clean heating and cooling technologies”) such as heat pumps.
- *City Electricity Aggregation Program*
 - The program is going well. Over 500 households have signed up for 100% renewable energy, which is record-breaking, exceeding expectations and representing a far greater adoption rate than in most communities. The opt-out rate is <8% for commercial accounts and <9% for residential. The plan was developed assuming that a max of 10% would drop out.
- *Net-Zero Action Plan*
 - The Year 1 report should be published next week. It has taken a long time, which means that it will be followed pretty closely in November with the Year 2 report. CPAC should plan to review and discuss it in the November or December meeting.

- *Boston-Cambridge-Copenhagen Collaboration*
 - Boston, Cambridge and Copenhagen are starting a collaboration to help address climate change, both mitigation and preparedness. Copenhagen is reaching out to collaborate and make progress with other cities. We are also working with New York and DC.
 - CPAC members are invited to attend the kick off event September 22, 8-10am at Atlantic Wharf in Boston. See John Bolduc's email from 9/13.

2. Preview of Cambridge Sustainability Dashboard

Bronwyn Cooke provided a tour of the partially completed sustainability dashboard. It's a pilot, live for us to review. But the City website doesn't yet link to it. Bronwyn will send us the link to the site (sustainabilitydashboard.cambridgema.gov).

The site's emphasis is on telling a high-level story to the general public about how the City is doing relative to its climate goals. It was developed working with Kim Lundgren Associates.

There are limitations and idiosyncracies to it because of the tools used to build it.

Each section of the site relates to a specific goal. Currently, the site has sections for: commuting, municipal energy use, municipal greenhouse gas emissions, community greenhouse gas emissions, bike facilities, Hubway bike share membership, car ownership and solar power capacity. More will be added in the year to come.

Each section (or "tile") of the site is a single page of information, so users can get the complete picture of a goal without following many levels of links. Each one defines the metric being used, the goals that have been set and progress toward them, then offers some explanation, a few additional fun facts, links to data sources and ideas about actions the reader can take.

If, upon reviewing the site, CPAC members identify errors or important changes they'd like Bronwyn to consider, email them to her.

One change that was suggested was to substitute "city government" for "municipal" since some readers may not understand that "community" (e.g., community greenhouse gas emissions) represent activity by the entire city, whereas "municipal" represents only the city government's activities.

Note that the dashboard does not include topics for which the City has not set goals.

3. Green Infrastructure Modeling

John Bolduc reviewed work on modeling the impact of green infrastructure as a way to help guide priorities for policy and action. The work focused on three outcomes: heat island effect, runoff water quality and flooding, and considered the impact of a variety of strategies relevant to each. Among the strategies considered were use of white roofs, green roofs, replacing non-permeable surfaces with permeable ones, increasing tree canopy.

Each analysis considered one strategy and outcome at a time, with results shown graphically on a map of the city and also sometimes numerically (e.g., an X% increase in tree canopy will yield a Y-degree reduction in peak daytime temperature).

Limitations of the work so far include: It does not address the combined impact of multiple actions, and thus does not yet help identify an optimal combination of strategies. It has explored peak daytime temperatures, but not temperatures at night, which are also very important. And not all relevant strategies have yet been assessed.

4. Envision Cambridge Update

John Bolduc had just a moment to update the group on Envision Cambridge. The working group has agreed on six goals, each with a proposed set of actions. Some progress has been made on prioritizing those actions. Most recently, the advisory committee met to look across the entire plan to identify potential conflicts (and synergies) among the actions being proposed.

5. Committee Business

Next month, CPAC will hold elections for officers. Please nominate yourself, or others. If you want to know more about the roles, get in touch with Lauren and/or Johanna.

Notes by David Rabkin