

## **Cambridge Climate Committee**

July 14, 2022

### **Present**

Rosalie Anders, Seth Federspiel, Ted Live, Trisha Montalbo, Nikhil Nadkarni, Steven Nutter, Paula Phipps, Jerrad Pierce, David Rabkin, Susanne Ramussen, Keren Schlomy, Julie Wormser, Eshaan Mathew

### **Director's report**

- BEUDO
  - The next hearing is Tuesday, 7/26.
  - The city is working to document people and organizations who have been invited to participate since 2018 to illustrate level of engagement.
  - The Council is handling the amendment language, while city staff are focusing on implementation and starting work on emissions factors for different fuel types.
  - The City is also working to let everyone know they are subject to the ordinance and to obtain contact information.
- GHG inventory
  - The City is working to update inventory to include data through 2019. The update will cover buildings, transportation, and waste.
- ARPA funds
  - The City has ~\$2 million in ARPA funds available for energy efficiency and renewable energy equipment. Target applicants are small businesses (<500 employees) and affordable residential housing.
  - While reporting requirements come with federal funding, the Committee discussed if the City could keep track of what was installed, vendors used, and resident level of satisfaction, to help identify and address barriers to upgrading equipment.
- A new City resiliency planner started on Monday.
  - Leila previously worked in Detroit on climate resilience and environmental justice.
- Community aggregation
  - The City anticipates to make decisions in near future and provide more information shortly.

### **Minutes**

- Minutes for June were approved.
- No meeting is planned for August, but work will continue on recruiting.

### **Decarbonization engagement/technical assistance program**

- Recap of the Clean Heat Program

- Cambridge worked with Abode Energy Management to offer resources on available technologies, opportunities to talk with a specialist, and a list of vetted installers
  - Supported ~150 households in consultations and offered webinars
  - Interest was primarily on space heating (less so on water heating)
- Recap of the Multifamily Retrofit Advisor Program
    - Cambridge worked with New Ecology to offer support on cost estimates, identify vendors, review quotes, etc.
    - Engaged ~110 buildings with an average size of 16 units
    - Primarily interested in weatherization, electrification, and efficiency
- Cambridge is now proposing a new residential decarbonization advisor program that would combine the previous programs—both residents and multi-family, as well as a range of strategies
- ***Point 1: The program would focus on decarbonization options, including heat pumps, solar, induction cooking, and battery and resiliency measures***
    - Weatherization would be a good place to start and accessible to many people
    - May also need to help people address wiring and electrical service access to support increased electrification
    - Possible to have consultants who can guide people through the process—such as which questions to ask, how to negotiate, how to right-size the system, etc.?
    - Possible to create case studies on building performance and outcomes to help guide decision-making?
      - Suggest reaching out to Efficiency Maine about recent heat pump work
- ***Point 2: Meet people where they are and offer a range of services. Try to connect with people multiple times over a few years and meet with them when they're ready.***
    - While having a long-term plan is good, people often replace systems only when they fail and are under pressure to get equipment working again
    - Could there be a different program for hand-holding when things go wrong—such as an emergency hotline?
    - Could tie decarbonization analysis to a home inspection as a way to support long-term planning. This would be in line with the Net Zero Action Plan's approach to engage people at time of sale / purchase
    - Also leverage MassCEC's triple decker retrofit program
- ***Point 3: City is considering fully subsidizing consultations for low-income residents and multifamily buildings, but only partly subsidizing other advisor consultations***
    - As an alternative, the City could offer a rebate for the consultation fee if someone completes the project, as well as leverage this interaction to get some data and feedback
      - Or reframe this as the City will pay \$75 out of \$100, and if you move forward, the City will pay the remaining \$25
    - If the consultations will cost money, the program should be clear what people will receive
    - Potentially use consultation as leverage point for further discussion and future projects

- **Point 4:** *Aim to reach more people by educating and training ambassadors. What messaging should the program use?*
  - Suggestions included talking to neighborhood associations or reaching out to people at hardware stores. Can also work to understand barriers the program will need to overcome (e.g. capital funding, fear of being ripped off)
  - The City previously tried outreach to installers and electricians—such as offering continuing education—but there was very little interest
  - Frame message as year-round comfort—can cool as well as heat your house—as well as environmental benefits. Perhaps also focus on weatherization.
- **Final question:** *How can Cambridge scale program to increase impact and work towards climate goals?*
  - Send feedback to: [nnadkarni@cambridgema.gov](mailto:nnadkarni@cambridgema.gov)

## Recruiting

- Discussed document drafted to recruit new members
  - Intended to answer why someone might want to join the Committee and what being on this committee means
  - Suggest framing as an opportunity to help the City of Cambridge
  - Suggest giving some examples of current or upcoming Committee work, as well as what the Committee is hoping to learn more about
- Seth is working with the City Manager's office and Law Department to open the application and publicize
- Goal is to have new members join at September meeting
- Will work to recruit through August. Keep an eye out for Seth's emails.

## Parting words

- There will be no August meeting, but recruiting will proceed. Please pay attention to email and support as needed!