

Meeting Minutes
Town of Concord
Climate Action Advisory Board
Tuesday, March 3, 2020

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Climate Action Advisory Board (CAAB) was held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 7:00 pm at the Concord Town House. CAAB members present were Brian Foulds, Jake Swenson, Michael McAteer, Pam Hill, Brian Crounse, Peter Nichol, Ruthy Bennet, John Bolduc, Courtney Eaton, and Warren Leon. Also present was Kate Hanley, Director of Sustainability.

1. [Welcome Visitors](#)

2. [Meetings and Minutes](#)

March 18th is the next scheduled meeting and KLA will be present.

The minutes from the January 15th meeting were approved unanimously. Michael McAteer noted that the minutes were great summary of the tensions between climate mitigation and resiliency. The Town is going to be 'bold' in addressing both.

3. [Chair's Update](#)

Brian Foulds commented that his update would be covered under Discussion of Town Meeting Articles.

4. [Director's Update](#)

(Refer to Director's report)

Kate has been actively involved in the Middle School Building Planning process, as a member of the building committee and the sustainability subcommittee. The subcommittee has recommended specific sustainability goals for the project charter. The subcommittee has not yet decided what, if any, certification to pursue. To date the subcommittee's role has been to educate the full school building committee on what these sustainability goals and concepts mean. Kate noted that there is an informative YouTube recording CMS Building / Sustainability presentation at the League of Women Voters meeting.

Ruthy asked what else the CAAB could do to support including sustainability components in the design concepts. At the CAAB's suggestion, Ruthy agreed to draft up a letter of support to the CMS building committee to encourage inclusion of specific concepts and strategies. CAAB members will review and agree to submit to the Middle School Building Committee at the next meeting.

Kate noted that she participated in a School District Sustainability Committee meeting where the issue of parking and transportation at CCHS was discussed. The Superintendent has offered to come to the April CAAB meeting to discuss the Town Meeting article.

5. [Climate Action Plan Update](#)

Kate gave a detailed update of the Climate Action Plan Progress as well as provided CAAB members and public with previews of several elements within the Plan. ([See detailed update](#))

Members discussed the plan format and scope and the fact that it is bound by the requirements of the MVP grant funding. John Bolduc suggested that the Plan can offer a good foundation and the jumping off point for more in-depth analysis and implementation strategy review.

Kate shared updated Fact Sheets, a new Evaluation Summary, and a sample Implementation Blueprint that KLA has developed to date integrating feedback from the CAAB members and the municipal team. Some specific comments from the CAAB on these draft plan components included:

- Warren Leon suggested that the order of the actions should either be by priority or alphabetical, rather than random as readers will put an order to it in their head. He also recommended that we begin to think of the next steps of the roadmap (in July) once the deliverable for this grant is complete.
- Michael McAteer noted that many actions received an 'o' rating which indicated neutral impacts; with so many of them receiving that rating, he was concerned about the validity of the ratings of these priority actions. Michael would like for the CAAB to be able to discuss the prioritized actions and the trade-offs/details/costs in comparison with each other.
- John Bolduc suggested that the quantitative values be taken out of the criteria as this evaluation is too high level at this point to warrant such detail.
- Pam Hill wondered if there are any of the actions that are not able to be measured by the metric set forth or proposed.
- Brian Foulds envisions that the deep dive discussion on the priority actions and development of more specific strategies will take place once the Plan is developed; the Plan will serve as the Roadmap for that discussion.
- Ruthy Bennet noted that "done is the enemy of perfect"; she made the case for keeping the Plan moving so that we have a finished product that we can draw from and upon.
- John Bolduc added that the Plan needs to have a cohesive Town vision for climate leadership in this Plan with a particular focus on mitigation, resiliency and climate adaptation. John also noted that he would provide Kate with more specific comments in writing.

Kate noted that she would be sending the CAAB a survey that asks the Board to prioritize their top 5 actions in each major category. Kate suggested that the evaluation criteria developed by KLA can be used as a resource in that prioritization process, but it doesn't need to be used if it is not helpful. She encouraged Board members to consider tradeoffs / costs and benefits as we think about how to answer the top priorities survey.

6. Discussion of Articles

Brian Foulds recommended that the CAAB members review the articles on the warrant for the upcoming Town meeting, to be held in April 2020. He surveyed the CAAB to understand which of the articles were top priorities for the members, related to the charge of the Board.

- Article 28. Concord-Carlisle Regional High School Capital Projects article, focused on design and construction of a new parking lot onsite. It was agreed that Brian would invite the Superintendent to meet with CAAB to discuss the article and a plan to consider other alternative pathways / strategic approaches with less climate impact than a new parking lot.
- Article 40. General Bylaws Amendment - Fossil Fuel Infrastructure, which seeks to limit on-site installation of fossil fuel infrastructure in new construction. Ruthy Bennet motioned that we

write a letter of support for this Article and voted unanimously in support. Brian Crouse will draft a letter of support for this article for CAAB review.

Brian Foulds moved the presenters chair to the other end of the table and excused himself as chair for the discussion of the next two articles (as the primary author and sponsor of the articles); John Bolduc stepped in as Acting CAAB Chairperson.

- Article 30. Healthy School Buses for Students, which seeks to further the purchase of electric buses for the Town. Brian Crouse inquired about the return on investment (ROI) and GHG reduction of Article 30. Brian Foulds noted that he has all of that information in a presentation that he will give at the public hearing on the article. There are several if-thens to the ROI, based on a typical bus lifespan of about 12-15 years.

Warren Leon commented that the study is within CAAB's wheelhouse as to the planning of GHG reductions / climate and felt that the CAAB should support it unless the Select Board has a compelling reason otherwise. Warren also requested a full cost benefit analysis of Article 30.

Michael McAteer wondered whether the monetary commitment the Town would be making with Article 30 is the first and highest use of the 'free cash' that is being proposed? He also questioned why the School Committee can't take on this cost as part of the Education Budgets? Brian Foulds replied that it is due to a trade-off between goals for education vs. goals for sustainability. The overall budget for schools is limited by the FinCom suggested growth rate so any additional sustainability expenses need to be matched by educational program cuts. Ruthy Bennet argued that Article 30 offers both: a real impact to our GHG as well as providing an educational benefit.

Pam Hill expressed concern about how to achieve the best outcome for Article 30. If CAAB were to sponsor the Article, would that achieve a positive outcome, over and above an individual citizen sponsoring it? She recommended that the Board sponsor this Article. Brian Foulds said that he was willing to do that but felt it might be confusing to the audience as the warrant was already printed. Warren Leon recommended that the Board table the decision on that until we see the Financial Analysis of the Article.

Article 31. Municipal Fleet Electrification Report, which seeks to develop a plan to further the purchase of electric vehicles for municipal use for the Town. Pam Hill asked whether Article 31 could be accomplished with resources that the Town already has at its disposal - possibly through an APP (Administrative Policies and Procedures). Brian Foulds indicated that he had asked that question of Town officials and had not gotten a satisfactory answer. He further noted that the purpose of the Plan / Report was to identify the roles and responsibilities of who needs to perform what actions to get the municipal fleet electrified. Currently, there is a lot of confusion about who might lead this effort as well as budgetary obligations towards this. Pam Hill moved that we seek clarity from the Select Board whether this Plan could be done through 'normal' Town operation.

Michael McAteer ended the conversation by noting that, for both the Articles related to fleet electrification, he would like to see the Town have a more cohesive plan with near-term milestones rather than just a haphazard spending or grant funding requests.

7. Public comments

Gary Kleiman indicated that one area that he would like to see more in the Climate Action Plan that KLA is developing is discussion around the funding mechanisms for each of these actions (grants, free cash, financing).

Alice Kaufman thanked the CAAB for their support of Article 40.

Ned Perry noted that he had been involved for a long time with review of the library project, which originally included a plan for solar on the roof. Going through the process, solar was ultimately not included and not even considered in the actual implementation. He felt that the CAAB should do what they could to get sustainable concepts and actual implementation of sustainable elements added to the CMS Building Project. He also applauded Brian Fould's effort to get Articles 30 and 31 on the warrant for Town Meeting. Ned has talked with citizens who feel that Article 31 should be done within the Town processes rather than debated within Town Meeting. Brian noted that he had talked with both the Town Manager and Mike Lawson that they encouraged Brian to go through the Town Meeting process.

Laura Davis shared her comments on the Climate Action Plan. She felt in general the Plan was too high level and not specific enough. She feels that the Board has focused too much on the process of putting this Plan together and consequently wasted their time and energy during this process. She feels that the CAAB has so much expertise that should be included in this Planning process and those ideas need to be put into the Plan.

A motion was made to adjourn until our next meeting on March 18th.