



Climate Action Committee (CAC)

Meeting Minutes

May 22, 2023

7:00PM

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a public meeting of the Climate Action Committee (CAC) was held on May 22, 2023 at 7:00 pm in person and via Zoom (hybrid).

Members present: Courtney Eaton (Acting Chair), Cheryl Baggen, Gavin Colbert, Jerry Frenkil, Karen Gibson, Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Paul Kirshen, Janet Miller, Ben Slayden

Staff present: Eric Simms

Members of the Public: Jennifer Parker (247 Laws Brook Road, Apt 315), Phil Thayer (36 Mill Run Lane), John Bolduc, Grace G.

1. Courtney called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.
2. Meetings and Minutes
 - March 22 and April 25 meeting minutes - Brad recommended correcting the spelling of Jerry Frenkil's name. Jerry moved adoption of the March and April minutes as corrected. Janet seconded. Both sets of minutes were unanimously approved.
 - Regular meeting date – The committee members tentatively agreed to meet on the first Tues of the month going forward.
3. Chairs update: Courtney
 - The 250th celebration of Concord's battle is coming up and the Trust for Public Land will look at carbon impact of planting 250 trees. The 2017 tree inventory needs updating and sites need to be identified (in the Climate Action Plan). There may be an opportunity for CAC to get involved or support.
 - CMLP solar task force is in the formation process.
4. Directors Update: Eric
 - Fossil Fuel Free Building Demonstration Program – the next step will be to submit an application before end of summer. There might be opportunities for CAC to weigh in on the application.
 - Eric is participating with the Planning Committee to ensure sustainability is incorporated into site rules, regulations, and planning;

- participating in interviews for a contractor for a comprehensive transportation plan;
- working with the Light Plant to get a handle on electric infrastructure around town;
- working with schools to apply for electric school bus funding.
- Middle School students are doing civil actions projects; a few reached out to Eric to talk about sustainability. There might be an opportunity for CAC members to engage with schools, sharing expertise with students or creating internships.
- A question was raised about whether climate change could be inserted into the tree, transportation, and planning studies; and whether CAC could have some input into the scope of work.

5. Committee Elections

- Courtney entertained nominations for the new CAC Chair. Jerry nominated Brad. Brad accepted the nomination. Janet seconded. Brad was nominated unanimously for the term May 2023-April 2024.
- Courtney raised the possibility of electing a Vice Chair. There were no volunteers or nominations.
- The clerk will remain a rolling responsibility.
- Courtney asked for nominations for a Solar Task Force representative. Gavin, Jerry, and Ben all expressed interest. Gavin will be the primary representative; Jerry and Ben secondary.

6. Review of draft CAC Actions List / Formation of Sub-Committees

- Courtney led the Committee through the Climate Action Plan and the action items for CSEC, CAAB, CMLP, Sustainability Division:
- Increase electrification and improved energy efficiency in residential buildings
 - CAAB priority was a Home Energy Scorecard which is still under development and could be taken up by CAC. Lexington, Newton, Cambridge, Chelsea will have benchmarking rules.
 - CSEC efforts included education and events like heatpump events; interviews with residents who have electrified their homes, which could also be expanded upon by CAC.
 - CMLP enlisted heat pump coaches to work with residents.
- Improve energy performance of commercial buildings
 - Fossil Fuel Free Demo Program
 - Eric, CMLP, National Grid, others are planning a workshop for commercial property owners – Concord Business Partnership and 300 Baker Ave – who are interested in commercial energy efficiency efforts; putting something together for early Fall.
 - Jan Aceti is working on and outreach program for commercial entities related to heat pumps.

- Mike McDonald is interested in outreach to the commercial business sector. He met with Concord Business Partnership to introduce them to Town sustainability efforts; established contacts; a few targeted efforts, e.g. Mike and Eric met with Newbury Court around replacing boilers.
- Set progressive sustainability standard for new municipal buildings and schools
 - There may be \$100K in the FY24 budget to do energy audits on municipal buildings.
 - CAC could assess what other towns have done, e.g. Acton, Arlington to inform Concord's actions.
 - Concord Middle School has energy efficiency built in – there may be an opportunity to incorporate sustainability standards in schools, budget allowing.
- Establish policies and incentives for new development
 - Accomplishments with the Specialized Code and fossil free fuel
 - Eric anticipates working with Planning on zoning to incorporate sustainability and adaptability in site rules and regulations.
 - Envision is a good framework for site design. Could this be a project for high school students? A framework to evaluate new proposed developments; a planning tool/metric to evaluate planning proposals.
- Provide incentives for business and homeowners to invest in renewable energy
 - CAC to take a look at what Warren Leon put together in May 2022 (https://concordma.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_05182022-9716).
- Increase use of public transportation and no carbon transportation options
 - Comprehensive transportation study is underway.
 - Pilot for the shuttle is in progress.
 - Completed a fleet electrification plan.
 - Denver has been successful with rebates for e-bikes; safe bike lanes; safe routes to school. Could CAC do something here?
 - CAC could do more education/advocacy about the commuter rail.
 - Improve sidewalks
- Adoption of EVs
 - There will be a level 3 charger being put in at Rideout.
 - The EV Working Group organizes many events; there will be one Oct 1.
 - The total EV adoption in Concord is approximately 6%.
- Work with homeowners on sustainable landscaping
 - CSEC organized public events with local groups
 - Volunteer groups are developing pollinator garden demonstrations projects.
 - West Concord Library has native seed library.

- Assess the vulnerability of natural resources and conduct a threat assessment for the critical infrastructure
 - These are not under CAC's purview but should they be?
 - John has a draft recommendation to the Select Board that the Town do an assessment.
 - CAC could recommend to the Select Board that the Town do a study; an intradepartmental effort (NRC, DPW...)
 - Next month need to focus our attention/priorities on specific actions. And talk about working groups – by topic or project or both.
7. Deferred the DOER Fossil Fuel Free Building Demonstration Program until the next meeting
8. New Business
- Hanscom issue will be brought up at the next meeting. Janet will watch the Select Board video and give an update/synopsis at the next meeting.
 - Legislation H3150/S2117 will be deferred until the next meeting.
9. Social media – Gavin offered to lead a social media effort.

Meeting minutes:

Cheryl - June

Jerry - July

Janet - Aug

Public Comment

- Grace, student expressed how she attends the CAC meetings because she is interested in learning about government and energy and sustainability.
- Jennifer reported that the White Pond Advisory Committee has been charged by Select Board to draft recommendations on the preservation and maintenance of White Pond. This issue impacts CAC item - assessing the vulnerability of natural resources. They want to hear public comment.
- Phil Thayer shared a report on the EV penetration in Concord.

Brad moved to adjourn. The Committee adjourned at 9:05 pm.