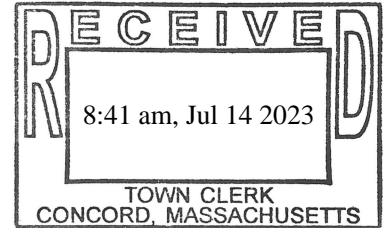


Climate Action Committee (CAC)

Meeting Minutes

June 13, 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 June 13, 2023 at 7:00 pm in person and via Zoom (hybrid).

Members present: Cheryl Baggen, Gavin Colbert, Jerry Frenkil, Karen Gibson, Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Paul Kirshen, Janet Miller, Jake Swenson

Members of the Public present: Jeff Eiden, Bob Shatten

1. Chair Brad-Hubbard Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

2. Meeting and Minutes

Cheryl moved that the draft minutes of the 5/22/23 CAC meeting be approved. Janet seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Chair's update

Brad described CAC's responsibilities so that we can align our efforts with the committee's charge. He suggested several possible working groups, acknowledging that this is probably too large a list to tackle. Nonetheless, the list will naturally be trimmed down once members indicate which efforts they would like to work on. The list includes the following:

- Municipal building electrification
 - develop plan for commercial building electrification including school buildings (this may require funding for a consultant).
- Municipal solar
 - represent CAC on solar task force.
- Commercial solar
 - parallel effort to municipal solar. Determine commercial solar potential and sites, and what barriers need to be addressed. Compare incentives with other towns and propose changes.
- Residential engagement
 - engaging residents for sustainable action through Cooler Concord website, newsletters, social media, event planning.
- Transportation
 - support the EV working group and serve as liaison to the Town Transportation Committee.
- Resilience / Vulnerability
 - See through vulnerability assessment and climate adaptation projections.

- Progress / Metrics / Reporting:
 - Update emissions inventory for 2022 and communicate to community through Sustainable Concord website.
- Policy (starting in fall of 2023):
 - investigate and propose town legislation for Annual Town Meeting.
- Communications (chair / clerk)
 - Communication of CAC work to the community.

4. Director's update

- Cambridge recently announced that they will be working with BlocPower on building decarbonization. Radiant Labs is another company working in this area.
- Eric is working on an application for a fossil fuel free building demonstration, working with town counsel and DOER
 - A potential issue is that Town Article 40 mentioned only new buildings (does not include major renovations) but DOER project mentions only renovations.
- Eric is working with Concord schools to incorporate local examples in their efforts to teach environmental science (currently used examples are mostly global impacts and global focus)
- Storm water processing plans are progressing (as called out in the Climate Action plan)
- Lots of different planning efforts are now underway. Paul pointed out that those planning efforts should include specific actions to take sustainability into account.

5. Discussion of proposed CAC Working Groups and Projects

- Brad wants each working group to establish SMART goals
 - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time bound
- Several possible working groups were specifically discussed
 - Municipal Electrification
 - Eric mentioned that there may be some money in the budget for municipal buildings & electrification
 - Brad mentioned that Acton has a thorough plan for electrifying their buildings
 - Municipal entities consume about 4% of Town total emissions.
 - The Town taking a lead in this area should serve as a good example for residents.
 - Jerry indicated interest in working on this with Eric.
 - Municipal solar
 - Gavin is CAC's representative on the Municipal Solar Task Force. It is due to start meeting in late July
 - Deadline for electric school bus application is early August. It might be good to include the idea of Town Solar with related storage
 - Cheryl noted that CMLP appears to be understaffed which limits their output and wondered how can we help them.
 - Commercial solar
 - Ben indicated interest in working on this.
 - Residential engagement
 - Brad's favorite topic

- Potential for collaborating with different groups
- Transportation
 - Janet is currently a member of CMLP's EV working group.
- Resiliency and Vulnerability
 - Work previously done last year by Paul with Jon Bolduc
 - Recommendation is for the town to do a town wide vulnerability assessment
- Progress metrics reporting
 - Maybe do a new GHG inventory
 - GHG contributions from agriculture were not included last time
 - Brad showed CMLP data on rebates, etc. indicating overall progress, but at a slower than desired pace.
- Communications
 - Brad might take this on, maybe targeting 1 article / month to publish in The Bridge.
 - Gavin suggested that this committee have FB, Instagram, Twitter presence.
 - Gavin showed a mock-up with a logo. Paul suggested a stronger image than the peaceful Walden scene.
 - Gavin to float some specific ideas at the next meeting.

6. Vulnerability Assessment

- Paul Kirshen & John Bolton drafted a recommendation for the Select Board looking at the impacts of climate change, such as extreme temperatures and extreme precipitation on built and natural systems.
- Jake and Brad thought it was very well written.
- Several questions arose regarding what to do with the report
 - How would the recommended actions be funded?
 - Who in town (which division) would own it?
- Eric pointed out that there would be value in having other groups endorse this assessment
- Brad wants to get the endorsement from CPW, Transportation, Public Health, and possibly other town departments.
- Paul commented that CMLP should be involved, as the distribution network will be affected big time.
- Paul moved that the CAC draft a letter to the Select Board supporting the recommendations and requesting that the Town carry out a vulnerability assessment for climate change. Cheryl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Eric to reach out to other town departments to get their support.

7. Hanscom Field and Proposed Expansion

- Brad reviewed the Hanscom Field proposal. It is described as the largest single development in Hanscom's history
 - Jet hangar square feet increases by 2.3X
 - Jet hangar count increases by 4X
 - 37 acres (70 football fields) of new impervious surfaces is added
- Developer is a private entity, engaged by MassPort
- Current carbon emission figures

- 752,000 tons of CO2e emitted these days from Hanscom
- 192,000 tons of CO2e in 2019 emitted in Concord overall
- Janet: our committee should speak out that we think this is a bad idea
- Eric: the Select Board discussed hiring a special council to review the environmental plan
- Brad will prepare a letter to the Select Board that we can review next month

8. Public comments

- Bob Shatten
 - Hanscom is out of compliance with noise.
 - Is anyone on the committee following the IRA opportunities?
 - In the Obama era, “shovel ready” projects got a lot of traction.
- Jeff Eiden
 - Are committees open to having public participation?

9. The meeting adjourned at 9:14 pm.