

COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABILITY & ENERGY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 17, 2021

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Comprehensive Sustainability & Energy Committee was held on August 17, 2021 at 7:00pm via Zoom. CSEC members present were Jerry Frenkil (Chair), Karen Gibson (Clerk), Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Sharon Jones, Julie Kleyn, Janet Miller, and Hany Teylouni. Also present was Matt Johnson (Select Board).

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Jerry Frenkil called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Meeting Minutes

Janet moved to approve minutes from July 20th CSEC meeting. Brad seconded. The July 20th minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Chair's Update

- CSEC received 2 applications to join the committee. Jerry and Matt Johnson have spoken with both applicants. Appointments will be made by the Select Board.
- There were 30 candidates for the position of Director of Sustainability. Brad assisted in reviewing applications. Janet has offered to sit in on the 6-7 in person interviews.
- Jerry met with Dave Wood and Pamela Cady regarding solar saturation and whether it is limiting the growth of PV in town. They responded that when solar production is high and energy consumption is low, the load drops to 1.8 megawatts on one of the two circuits. If Concord produces more current than is needed, it will return to the substation and trip it. CMLP is managing this by not allowing any new large (greater than 50 kW) PV installations on that circuit without battery storage.
- CMLP has hired a consultant for a feasibility study for the CMS project. One question to be resolved is who will manage the battery - CMLP or the providers.
- The Fenn School spoke with CMLP about installing PV. CMLP determined battery storage would be needed because the proposed array would be greater than 50kW. The project seems to be paused for the time being.

4. Update: EV Working Group

Janet reported that the EV Group has not met since CSEC's last meeting. The main topic for tomorrow's meeting will be the Sept. 13 event on Climate Friendly

Homes and Electric Vehicles. Janet also reported that she submitted a letter to the Concord Journal on electric vehicles.

5. Climate Friendly Homes and Vehicle Event

CSEC members have assisted with outreach and advertising for the Sept 13th event, and a few CSEC members plan participate in the meet and greet at the event.

6. Newton Energy Coach

Brad showed a website that Newton created for its Energy Coach program connected to their version of the Mass Energize site (newtonenergycoach.org). He asked if Concord might want to model a site on this one. CSEC discussion centered on how this site would interface with existing websites; whether Concord needs another website; the need to present consistent information; and the need for the information on sustainability projects to be easy to find. Members agreed that it would be good to consolidate information. One possible project for CSEC is to revamp the information related to EVs, solar panels, heatpumps, and coaches to make it easier to find.

7. Strategy Discussion

At the last CSEC meeting, consensus emerged on two topics of most significance and interest for CSEC to address: (1) Developing a program to increase residential energy efficiency and electrification and (2) Engaging the commercial sector. Jerry presented a summary of that discussion:

For the residential sector this could include:

- Support Concord Goes Electric internal working group
- Promote sustainable homes through education, tabling, partnering with schools, distributing the brochures CSEC created last year
- Develop a Home Energy Scorecard program

For the commercial sector, this could include:

- Ensuring businesses know about available programs, including rebates, PACE financing, weatherization and energy audits
- Engaging with Concord Business Partnership
- Establish a commercial recognition program
- Research, design, and develop a pilot program for energy performance disclosure for existing buildings.

CSEC members brainstormed what actions CSEC could do for these focal points. Sharon noted that home energy and commercial scorecards already exist through EPA–CSEC could adopt one rather than recreating. On the commercial side, it would need to be a bifurcated approach since most businesses don't own their buildings. Brad cautioned that the term "disclosure" implies a stick and might

not be welcomed by business. On the residential side, the home energy scorecard is tied to a home energy audit, so it would need to be developed as part of a redesign of the energy audit process. He suggested that CSEC and CAAB could divide this project with CAAB researching and designing commercial disclosures and CSEC engaging the companies to ensure they know about opportunities available to them.

Brad pointed out that working on the business side means developing relationships, understanding what businesses are doing, what buildings are out there, and what the opportunities are—a few CSEC members could take this on initially. Jerry suggested that CSEC begin by engaging with the Concord Business Partnership. Janet suggested contacting the West Concord Advisory Council. Matt pointed out that one challenge is the lack of awareness about electrification that developers have. He supports the commercial recognition program idea, and said this could be done under the Cooler Concord brand, which CSEC should retain, revitalize and capitalize upon.

Jerry summarized that if CSEC set a goal of revitalizing the Cooler Concord brand and defining the items under it, this could include:

- Business recognition program
- Integrating data to make it easier to find
- Promote the sustainable home

The site would need updating and maintenance. It could be promoted, e.g. through schools and organizations, community engagement, writing editorials for the Concord Journal, the Cooler Concord newsletter, promoting the coaching program.

Hany noted one challenge in engaging business will be that there are a few very large commercial entities and then many smaller in Concord. Julie suggested that as a first step CSEC should begin meeting with Concord Business Partnership to gather information, and to make sure that businesses know about currently available programs.

Jerry will pull together a strawman proposal for next steps for the next meeting:

- Revitalize the Cooler Concord website / initiatives / newsletter
- Promoting Your Sustainable Home Now
- Exploratory efforts around residential energy efficiency and electrification and engaging the commercial sector
- Reschedule fair for May 2022
- Begin exploring a few entrees to commercial sector.

CSEC members should review Cooler Concord website with an eye to what works well, and how to improve prior to next meeting.

8:27pm Brad left the meeting.

8. Liaison Assignments & Responsibilities

At the last meeting, CSEC members discussed what the primary role of liaisons is. Jerry summarized:

- Communication to and from CSEC
- Attend and observe other groups' activities; raise awareness within CSEC of those activities
- Coordinate, where appropriate, activities between CSEC and other committees
- Provide a brief verbal report to CSEC during each monthly meeting
- Make sure sustainability is considered by other groups in Town

9. Dates and times for subsequent meetings

Jerry will circulate a Doodle Poll for the next meeting, with the aim of finding a regular time going forward.

10. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

11. Adjourn

Janet moved to adjourn. Julie seconded. The committee adjourned at 9:00pm