

City of Cambridge

CLIMATE PROTECTION ACTION COMMITTEE

Minutes

January 10, 2019

City Hall Annex

Attendees: Tom Chase (acting Chair; Secretary), Fred Hewitt, David Rabkin, Bill Zamparelli, Paula Phipps, Ted Live, Rachel Jacobson, Keren Schlomy, Emily Pesquera, Julie Wormser, Susy Jones, Jerrad Pierce, Trisha Montalbo; *staff:* Bronwyn Cooke, John Bolduc

Guests:

Approval of Minutes

- Paula Phipps – amendment to October minutes
 - Biodiversity for a Livable Future Conference on Climate Biodiversity and Survival at Harvard on November 17th and 18th
 - New program called Youth Education and Activism, mentored program to allow students to do climate related and regenerative work, what works for young people to make them feel like there's something they can do
- October, November, and December minutes passed as amended

ETP Director Report

- Municipal Aggregation announcement, new two-year contract with Direct Energy, supports local solar project in lieu of REC purchase
- Resilience Zoning Task Force starting up, grew out of Brown Petition, voted down by City Council but Mayor committed to task force
 - First meeting likely on January 23rd or 24th
 - Tom Chase, Lauren Miller CPAC members on task force, in addition to petitioners, other experts, developers
 - Concern that this will delay ongoing resilience process, but stakeholder participation advantages
- Bus lane update – no official updates at the moment, no negative public opinion to date, question as to who will maintain bus lanes such as Mt. Auburn-Watertown line
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Debrief on Meeting with City Manager – Continuing Discussion

- CPAC could research and recommend alternative municipal climate financing mechanisms
- CPAC can play a larger role in communicating the good work of the City on climate
- Improving metrics and integrating more into budget process would be desirable
- Julie Wormser comment – annual meeting should include a to-do list for City Manager, items CPAC wants City Manager to be prioritizing, what do we want to see happening that we aren't
- Other potential vehicles:

- Climate Action Plan recommendations CPAC response
- Net Zero Action Plan progress report and CPAC response
 - Especially where plan goals no longer apply or where goals aren't being met, where do we need help from City Manager and what should we ask for from the City
 - CPAC could use more information on where City staff are getting stuck, what is process for identifying those items in advance of the annual City Manager meeting? How can we streamline communication of resource or other needs staff and CPAC recognize, communicate system issues that need to be solved?
- How can CPAC play a larger role in helping to implement Climate Action Plan?
- Net Zero Action Plan report due in February, combining Climate Action Plans with this report would be advantageous for streamlining this communication
- CPAC could become more timely in making recommendations, such as in the Budget process in Spring
- David Rabkin – is there something this committee should be working on related to Tree Canopy Study?
 - e.g. comments on potential moratorium on cutting down trees prior to new zoning regulations
 - need to protect tree canopy and rights of individual property owners
 - What role can CPAC play?
 - Paula Phipps – supports involvement especially as relates to the importance of tree canopy and root structure in mitigating heat island effect and stormwater management
 - Complications include results of study showing that old age, disease, private property removal, and no net gain in public way trees all contribute to decline in tree canopy, development is not the only culprit
 - There is an Urban Forest Masterplan Task Force, currently halfway through their work, looking at urban forest as a system
- Rachel Jacobson – can CPAC identify its power and leverage to keep pushing on climate and not allowing Cambridge's excellence in comparison with other cities impair us from doing what's needed
 - Transformational change perspective
 - Just transition, economic and social inclusion, not leaving anyone behind
 - e.g. in Boston, as waterfront is protected from flooding, TIFF to pay for seawall only works for large development, not in communities with smaller investments or to avoid gentrification
- What is CPAC doing and not doing?
 - Equity is discussed often but not often taken up by committee
 - Rachel Jacobson – start with housing and economic inequality
 - Jerrad Pierce – standards for rental units to ensure high quality low energy housing for renters at all incomes
 - Bronwyn Cooke - Strategic plan activity includes identifying best practices for defining equity in sustainability planning, how to determine whether actions are being taken equitably, part of FY2020 plan is to identify how to do City work equitably

- Julie Wormser - Need to take advantage of opportunities to export Cambridge knowledge to greater impact regionally, not unrelated from equity
 - Participate in Metro Mayors
 - Currently exporting to those who are already interested
 - American Society of Adaptation Professionals mechanisms – use Cambridge as a leader in this and other networks?
- Additional topics for future discussion:
 - Additional role CPAC can play in promoting urban regeneration and urban heat island reduction
 - Evaluation of what we are and what we can be measuring or can be measuring better, measuring is important to visualize needs before actions can be formulated

Net Zero Transportation Emissions

- In Suzanne Rasmussen's absence, Bronwyn Cooke set up the conversation on a Net Zero Transportation Action Plan
 - (best, most accurate, real data used – MAPC Mass Vehicle Census), transportation emissions proportion by type graph presented
 - Climate Action Plan transportation emissions modeling outline
 - Described use for and difference between inventory and CAP forecast methodologies
 - Key drivers are around mode shift not trip reduction, largely based on mode for commute to work
 - Climate Action Plan transportation chapter
 - Net zero transportation accounts for what can be measured, so it largely tracks commutes to work, but not movement of people or goods through or within City for other purposes
 - Waste tracking could potentially be used as a proxy for emissions related to goods and services
 - How many actions depend on collaboration with other municipalities? Key part of addressing some portions of plan
 - City has begun to consider how actions within this and other plans impact equity, e.g. impact of congestion pricing on low and moderate income residents
 - Future of Mobility Study RFP draft
 - City can be a leader in mechanisms, such as registration for ride share companies, to track rides in City bounds

Member Reports

Rachel Jacobson

- Committee members interested in working with other cities through ASAP or otherwise, should contact Sarah

Notes by Tom Chase