

City of Cambridge  
Climate Protection Action Committee

Meeting Notes - March 13, 2014

Attendance: Quinton Zondervan (chair), Milton Bevington (secretary), Rosalie Anders, Ted Live, Barry Hilts, Susy Jones, , Keren Schlomy, Jan Dillon, Rosalie Anders, Marguerite Reynolds, Melissa Chan, David Rabkin, Scott Wood, Tom Page, Bill Zamparelli, Lauren Miller, Tom Page;  
staff: Bronwyn Cooke, Susanne Rasmussen, Randi Mail

Introduction of new members

- Susanne introduced Melissa Chan and Rosalie Anders as two of the three new CPAC members.

Approval of the Minutes of January 9, 2014 February 13, 2014 meeting (Tabled, due to lack of quorum.).

- Minutes are approved.

Report of the Environmental & Transportation Planning Director

Speaker: Susanne Rasmussen

- Cambridge Street Upper School curriculum now includes lessons on Climate Change.
- Kendall Square Eco District – City of Cambridge issuing proposal for consultant to lead the project for two years.
- DOER received another SunShot grant from Federal Government. City of Cambridge is sub-recipient, want to continue working on solar permitting. The City wishes to explore where there have been issues and how they can be rectified.
  - Ted – HEET runs a solar challenge program. Prior to the program, only 41 solar rooftop installations. Since HEET began, another 50 have come onboard. HEET has just begun developing a new program called Race To Solar – aiming to put solar on 40 nonprofit midsize buildings in Cambridge and Boston.
    - Susanne – the City is working with HEET. The Mayor will send a letter to help with marketing. It's a collaboration with Rise Engineering and Sunbug.
- Building Energy Disclosure Ordinance – John is leading sector-based meetings to ensure stakeholders have a chance to issue comments and concerns. The idea is to introduce to the Council before Summer recess.
- NSTAR is ready to enter into agreement with the City to conduct a multi-family pilot that would change incentives in an effort to overcome some of the barriers that have led to low energy efficiency adoption rates.
  - MIT & Harvard have been helpful in moving this along.
  - Because of the pilot, the City intends to apply for a \$5m Georgetown award. This competition is focused on how much residential and commercial energy use can be reduced over a 2-year period.
  - Jan – Is there any restriction on use of the Georgetown prize?
    - Susanne – yes, there are restrictions. The idea is that the money would be used for more EE.
- Stretch code – the state is soliciting input on how to improve for updates.

- Net Zero Task Force held second meeting.
  - They have brought on board a consultant team, led by Integral (from CA, consultant was formerly city planner in Vancouver). Other consultants include Peragrin Energy, Barbara Bachelon (SPI).
  - They are currently determining what programming will look like and what the 4 working groups will focus on, as well as how these working groups will be staffed.
  - They decided to use 2030 as a test case (i.e. what would it mean to try to get to net zero by 2030). Copenhagen says they will be net zero by 2025.

#### Presentation: Waste Reduction in Cambridge

Speaker: Randi Mail, Recycling Director

Objective: Learn about and discuss the organics collection pilot, extended producer responsibility and the potential for a paint product stewardship program in MA, and the proposed plastic bag ban. Also learn what the Recycling Advisory Committee's working goals are and where CPAC members may want to get involved or identify gaps.

#### Organics Pilot

- Will begin curbside organic collection on April 7th, over 500 households recruited. BioBag is providing 1 years' worth of bags to participants. Expecting ~2 tons/week from pilot households (~100 tons/year)
- Preparing for green bin delivery at end of March, determining what data to collect
- City (DPW) will do pickup on Mondays (in a specific area in North Cambridge)
- Pilot will begin by working with Rocky Hill Farm. Rocky Hill has 2 in vessel composting machines that turn the material in 3 days. Rocky Hill will sell finished compost. Residents can also pick up compost at Cambridge Recycling Department. Project is funded by DPE.
- Salem and Newton may begin similar programs. Somerville and Boston are interested in results from Cambridge.
- Quinton – is the thinking that the City would permanently take this on?
  - It's a large commitment for the City to do collection themselves but we would like to bring this in-house.
- David – what percentage of waste stream is compostable?
  - At state level, the rule of thumb is ~20%. However, a recent waste audit conducted in Cambridge on Monday showed nearly 50%.
- There are a few food scrap drop-off locations currently available in Cambridge.
  - Whole Foods on Prospect
  - Howard Street
  - North Cambridge – St. Peters Field parking lot
- Milton – What do the finances look like?
  - City is paying \$55 tip fee (\$20 savings vs. trash side)
    - DEP grant is reimbursing these fees as well as stipend, paying for green bins, and print materials
  - Not hiring additional staff
  - Project budget was \$67,000. \$3,000 was for part-time staff person to perform feasibility study.

- Jan – Can you speak to the trash sort in relation to the pilot?
  - A big component of the project is collecting data. One measurement of interest is lbs/household/week.
  - Staff person will ride with truck on Mondays to track how often households are setting out, how full bins are, contaminants, total weight, etc.
  - The City will survey participants about things that affect waste generation (e.g. household size, etc.)
- Milton – How do you ensure performance?
  - We have a contract with the farm. They are required to compost the material via the contract and by DEP.
- Milton – has anyone studied what scaled-up demand looks like?
  - Not too sure. State does master planning for waste each year. DEP has good track record for organizing subcommittees of stakeholders whenever there is a waste ban, including an organics task force.
- Bill – how did you arrive at the North Cambridge model?
  - Wanted a mix of housing stock and a big enough net to achieve target numbers; mix of demographics; there were operational considerations (preferred Monday pick-up vs. Friday).
- Bill – Do you think this might expand?
  - Yes, the City is taking waste reduction efforts seriously and has adopted reduction targets from the state?
- Margaruite – what other MA cities have composting programs?
  - Hamilton and Ipswich in MA.
  - San Fran, Seattle, Portland, Denver, Boulder, NYC , and others outside of MA.
  - Cambridge will be largest city in MA to do this. Rhodes Jepson – writer, interested in the project.

#### Plastic Bags Ban

- The draft ordinance that was filed is different from what was submitted and doesn't include CPAC recommendation. There may be an opportunity to revisit CPAC recommendation with the ordinance that is approaching.
- Recycling Advisory Committee brainstormed about considerations for outreach/implementation plan. Not sure which department will take the lead if ban is passed. Revisiting past research from other communities that have passed bag bans.
- David - Are there other cities we're using as reference points?
  - Nancy Shlacter did lots of research on this. Many CA communities, Seattle, and about 10 other communities. She looked at aspects of similar ordinances (details of what's included/what's not, fees, etc.) to ensure the intent of the ordinance is upheld. There may be stronger language that could be useful in the ordinance.

#### EPR – Extended Producer Responsibility

- MA doesn't have any EPR laws. The first one will likely be on paint.
- Paint Care – nonprofit organization formed by the paint industry. They have drafted model legislation that has been passed in a handful of states. States that have adopted it have included a point of sale fee on a can of paint. Those fees go into fund that pays for responsible collection and recycling of that paint.

- Barnstable County applied for a grant from DEP to work with the Products Institute to do education around MA on what this legislation would look like
- This could save Cambridge tens of thousands of dollars and around \$12m across MA.
- It's currently working well in CA, OR, and other states.
- Milton – Is this a climate issue?
  - This program would result in less incineration. Increased recycling of paint would reduce upstream impacts of paint, reducing production.
  - Paint is the way in for this kind of legislation in MA.
- Milton – we may want to address CFL EPR idea as a committee.
  - For a take-back program, we want to ensure there's a state program in place to ensure success.
- Quinton - What about Cambridge becoming a zero waste city?
  - We have goals of reducing waste over time. City of Cambridge goal: 80% by 2050 is "almost a zero waste goal." Most communities say "90%" is good enough.
- Milton – there is a group in Boston - SCOARI.org – that is a research & education group lots of ideas on the subject of food waste.
- City of Cambridge just became a member of the Sustainable Packaging Coalition
  - This group consists mostly of industry.
  - Will be attending conference next week.
  - We have access to reports and activity committees looking at a range of topics.
  - This offers the City an opportunity to have a voice in the upstream production of products and gives us access to a higher level of information than we had before.
  - 42% of GHGs are emitted producing and consuming goods.
- Ted – Is SPC composed of producers or packaging companies
  - Both. Kellogs, PepsiCo, Dow, Starbucks, REI, as well as materials science companies, recyclers, and others.

Working goals for Recycling Advisory Committee:

- 1) Supporting multifamily property managers
  - 2) More aggressive zero waste goals
  - 3) Provide input on plastic bag ban
  - 4) Improving outreach for recycling
  - 5) Push for EPR laws and continue dialogue w/ CPAC
  - 6) Strengthen goals for reuse and repair cafes
  - 7) Improve business recycling, possibly update ordinance, and garner some involvement of commercial organics ban
- Rosalie – Is Pay-as-you-throw part of the discussion at this point? They have this in Worcester.
    - We don't see it as a good opportunity for the city currently. It would be difficult to implement for multi-families, as well as challenging to enforce.
    - The focus has been to make recycling as easy as possible and to continue to offer more services like organics.
    - Ted – Arlington says you have to set out a recycling container next to trash container or they don't pick up your trash.

- If we did weekly pick-up of food scraps, could consider reducing frequency of trash collection.
- Susanne – how can CPAC continue to be involved in the plastic bag ban conversation?
  - Quinton – we could resend the recommendation
  - Committee could make public statement/testimony at hearing to make it public record. The hearing won't be in March so now is a good time
- David – it would be helpful to know what of our recommendation has been dropped.
  - Quinton – it's mainly the fee. We are having that conversation again currently.
  - Randi – the ban as written wouldn't allow any plastic bags; the fee would be on paper bags. Recycling committee wants to see a rebate for reusables.
  - Jan – is there wording you would propose to us rather than going back to original?
    - Randi - Yes, there is a draft ordinance that was submitted. Another issues is that we didn't identify who would collect fees (recommends retailer). There have been cases of some retailers moving to thicker plastic bags in an effort to be classified as "reusable".
  - Next step – look at existing CPAC recommendation.
    - Quinton and Keren to revisit this and meet in the next 2 weeks. The hearing could take place in early April. They will connect with John.
    - Milton – would be in favor of another discussion regarding whether to submit what we did before or to change.

#### Climate Change Goals & Objectives/CPAC Work Plan

Objective: Revisit the climate change goals and objectives document, scan related initiatives such as the Net Zero Task Force, and review the committee's work plan going forward to identify priorities and where the committee should focus its efforts over the remainder of the year.

- Tom – Does anyone remember why goals A & B, baseline is 2008 but is 2010 in other ones.
  - Bronwyn – 2008 was first date of reliable data
- Tom – why not set municipal reduction goal for 2014 instead of 2015
  - Susanne – Too little is understood about what could actually be achieved. The City wants to set goals based on facts rather than guesses/aspirations.
- Quinton – can we consider annual reduction goals rather than just longer term?
  - Susanne – yes. Capital budget is on a rolling 5-yr. cycle, would imagine that that would not be that difficult.
  - Susanne will follow up on this. DPW proposing increase in building renovation expenditures. On Net Zero Task Force, there is interest in subdividing longer term goals (e.g. 5 yr, 10 yr, etc.).
- Quinton – conversation within climate change community is changing its focus to be on the "carbon budget"
- Milton – sees these as goals, which are longer term. The way you track progress is by looking at investment in reducing emissions. Shorter term goals should be in dollars aimed at reducing emissions. This is a more reliable way to measure progress in the shorter term.

- Quinton – ok, then we need to translate future emissions reductions into near-term investment. We should consider specifying this in the document.
  - Bronwyn – some of this is included in the more detailed version as actions but not included in this high-level goals/objectives page.
- David – the first climate change plan in Cambridge had goals that were translated into CO2 reduction expectations. In our plan, to what extent are the dots identified and connected? Do we need to get more specific?
  - Bronwyn – this is what we’re trying to accomplish with DPW. It is less clear on the community side.
- Susanne – This document was supposed to set vision. There are players that have to come up with the actions. This discussion is a quick scan over the document and whether there are any major problems.
  - Lauren – This looks good. The workplan moving forward should focus on actions to be taken.
  - Milton – I am comfortable with this. Can’t find anything to argue with. It is not redundant with the work of the Task Force.
- Susanne – committees have been appointed. Will push for this to move to council in the next month.
- Quinton – are there any areas we want/need to work on this year?
  - Keren – It might be helpful to see action items to determine where the Committee should focus
  - Quinton – Goal J doesn’t have any objectives. Should we address?
  - Milton – We should ask individual committee members to privately rank these goals to determine what the committee’s priorities are
  - Quinton – another way to organize this work is to have subgroups
  - Susanne – nobody is focusing on urban heat island, climate change preparedness plan, etc. CPAC should focus where no one else currently is.
    - Tom – we still need to address some of those areas that may be a focus of other groups
- Bronwyn offers to generate surveymonkey survey to poll the group.
  - Milton – include question: Would you be willing to serve on a subcommittee on this topic?
- Quinton – part of our job is determining if these are the right goals. Net Zero Task Force could use help on action items as well. This information available on City website.
  - Susanne – the 4 Net Zero Task Force working groups:
    - 1) Incentives & Financing tools
    - 2) Planning/regulation
    - 3) Energy supply
    - 4) Education & Engagement
  - CPAC working groups will need to be self-sufficient and not be dependent on staffing of EDP office. We should ensure there are clear goals/deliverables for working groups.

*Notes by Scott Wood*