

**Newton Citizens Commission on Energy**  
City of Newton

<http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/building/projects/energycomm/default.asp>



**Ruthanne Fuller**  
Mayor

Halina Brown (Chair), Stephen Grody, Michael Gevelber,  
Jonathan Kantar, Jon Klein, Ira Krepchin, James Purdy (Vice Chair), Puja Vohra,  
Ann Berwick (*ex-officio*)

Advisory Members:

Cory Alperstein, Fred Brustman, Edward Craddock, Brant Davis,  
Philip Hanser, Asa Hopkins

Newton City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Resolution adopted on January 21, 2019

**“Recognizing the importance of the City’s program for adding significant solar power generation capacity and the success of Phases 1 and 2, the Newton Citizens Commission on Energy strongly supports all Phase 3 projects as presented to the City Council Committee of the Whole on January 16, 2019, with any modifications deemed necessary during contract negotiations with the two vendors, Ameresco and Macquarie”.**

**Background:**

Mayor Fuller has made a commitment to adopting in 2019 a Climate Action Plan for Newton, with a goal of reducing GHG emissions in our city. This requires many actions on many fronts, including solar installations, efficiency measures in buildings, mobilizing the residents to purchase electric automobiles and home heating systems, purchasing clean electricity through aggregation, and others. These are the types of initiatives that, while essential to the state and national efforts to protect climate, are most effectively done *at a city level*.

Radical change happens mostly through an aggregate of small incremental changes aimed toward a shared goal, and solar Phase 3 project is among those. It would be irresponsible for Newton not to do its part, however small a contribution it may appear to make to global GHG reductions.

Some citizens oppose the Phase 3 project on various grounds, such as changing aesthetics of the City; distrust of new technologies or government; or because of perceived conflict between installation of green technologies and protecting trees and green open spaces. While we must acknowledge and respect these individual reactions, we must also keep in mind the larger principles at stake here: of being a responsible member of the human community; and recognizing that all change, however small, entails balancing mutually desirable yet competing objectives.

The City has already made significant changes in the Phase 3 plan in order to accommodate various objections from citizens. The Newton Citizens Commission on Energy strongly supports the modified plan. We urge the City Council to adopt it as soon as possible.