

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, Asa Hopkins,
Jonathan Kantar, Jon Klein, Ira Krepchin, James Purdy (Vice Chair),
Puja Vohra, Ann Berwick (*ex-officio*)

Advisory Members:

Cory Alperstein, Daniel Cotter, Edward Craddock, Brant Davis,
Christopher Dunham, Claudine Ellyn, Philip Hanser, William Havemeyer,
Nicholas O'Connor

Telephone 617-796-1019
c/o Office of the Sustainability Director
Newton City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 7:00 PM
Library Meeting Room 'B'

AGENDA

1. An update by Dan Ruben of GN: the forthcoming Carbon Free Boston report, to be realized on January 29; and the four principles for giving support to developer's projects, which are produced by Green Newton's Buildings Standards Committee.....Dan Ruben (30 min)
2. Brief update on the progress with Climate Action Plan, and a timeline.... Halina Brown (10 min)
3. Coordinating the work of the Energy Commission and MAPC on Climate Action Planning in Newton.....Jennifer Steel and Halina Brown (30 min)
4. NCCE testimony to support the Phase 3 Solar program Jim Purdy (15 min)

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, Asa Hopkins
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

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

Minutes of the Meeting of January 23, 2019

Present: Halina Brown, Stephen Grody, Michael Gevelber, Jim Purdy, Jon Kantar (JK) Ira Krepchin; Fred Brustman, Ed Craddock, Jane Hanser, Kathy Pillsbury, Dan Ruben, Jennifer Steel

The Commission members all agreed with Halina's suggestion that we should do something to recognize Eric Olson for his years of distinguished service on the Commission; she will take the lead.

The minutes for November 2018 were approved.

1. Discussion of how the CAP-related work we are doing and that done by MAPC will be coordinated and then translated into one set of policies and actions at the City level

HB and JP are providing liaison to MAPC, which is preparing a five year CAP under contract to the City. Jennifer Steel is the City's project manager.

HB: The MAPC 5-year plan and NCCE's 30-year plan need to harmonize, and we need to explain how the two plans relate.

MG: Even if they can't be harmonized it's still OK.

HB: MAPC has produced drafts on guiding assumptions scope and goals; an introduction; and chapters on existing buildings and new buildings. Chapters are forthcoming on transportation (due this week), clean energy (next week), resources and waste, and roles that the City should play, e.g., advocacy.) The plan will also include criteria for evaluation of progress and who implements each action.

There will be a March 21 public workshop for feedback on the first public draft.

JS: We need to decide how we package this. Should it include vignettes? For example, a future day in the life of a Newton parent and how they relate to the CAP and climate change.

SG: you could shoot a video illustrating this vignette.

JP: Who produces the vignettes? HB: this can feed into the NCCE plan.

JS: City intends to increase effort on the zoning design to incorporate the CAPs.

JK: I talked to James Freas some time ago about getting the necessary input from the CAPs into the current zoning redesign and explain the opportunities.

JS : now's the time to revisit that conversation. Sasha Shyduroff of the Planning Department is heading up the zoning review.

HB will take leadership on NCCE coordination with zoning.

HB: We are making a growing list of ordinances/zoning provisions that could be incorporated into the zoning ordinance.

JP: We talked about this briefly with MAPC at one of the meetings.

JS: There will be a presentation on the MAPC CAP to the Zoning and Planning Committee on 1/28.

JK: the ad hoc committee of volunteers ("vCAP") produced an outline of early action items in spring 2018. It may be tough for MAPC to be place-specific with their limited knowledge of Newton, e.g., need to define borders between areas at village centers and neighboring areas. MAPC will include examples from other municipalities.

HB: We could provide a list of CAP recs that need to be reflected in zoning.

JS: The City will provide MAPC with a list of the chapters and subchapters of the new zoning.

MG: Will NCCE have a chance at the March 21 meeting to present our ideas and recommendations? SG: It's not about merging the content of the two plans, but rather a chance to present our work at the same meeting

JS: the workshop is to provide MAPC with feedback on the plan they are preparing.

SG doesn't see how valid feedback can be gathered at a workshop.

JK: the data shows that we need 600 electrifications per year to meet our 2050 goal for greenhouse gas reduction. We need to start the curve now, to keep from pushing too many off to the future.

SG: MAPC needs to express Jon's idea in their report

HB: We need further conversation about the 3/21 meeting.

JP: We need to explain on 3/21 how the plans relate – 5 year and 30year. NCCE's plan could be summarized in a page of bullets.

2. Information on Green Newton's Green Building Standards Committee

Dan Ruben is Chairman of the Green Newton Board of Directors. He provided information on GN's Green Building Standards Committee. The committee has been meeting since December to develop a set of principles that Green Newton will use to advocate for better buildings and to decide on which development projects to support.

The four principles are:

1. Minimize building operating energy, using the PassiveHouse standard.
2. Minimize embodied carbon in the building materials used.
3. Buildings must be all electric, with no connection to the gas grid.
4. Minimize the carbon footprint for transportation to and from the buildings.

We have met with Mark Development about their Riverside project and with Northland about the Marshall's Plaza project.

Dan contrasted the scale of GN's effort with Boston's CAP: big budget, big staff, many consultants, many funders. Boston will roll out its plan on January 28 at the Museum of Science. Boston's key recommendations are:

- deep energy retrofits of older buildings
- electrification of everything
- green the electrical grid

JK: Deep energy retrofits have been tried, but costs are high, e.g., a new envelope surrounding the existing building.

The utilities are stakeholders in Boston's plan.

The least important measure in Boston's plan is PV on roofs.

Other Boston recommendations include:

- smart buildings,
- transportation mode shift out of single occupancy vehicles, congestion or VMT fees.
- waste plan zero energy

EC – the rubber hits the road on implementation, so it will be interesting to see how Boston accomplishes that.

JH – does the City use green concrete for sidewalks, etc.?

DR – there is a Passivhouse office building in Auburndale (Auburndale Builders' small office building.)

MG: the same principles are being used by the organization called Architecture 2030.

MG: how are these four principles going to be used at the City level?

SG: where can we read about this? Just send the url to everyone.

<https://www.greennewton.org/advocacy/10655-2/>

3. Progress Update on NCCE's Climate Action Plan

MG presented an energy model for vehicles and home heating, which is the basis for projecting energy and GHGs in the two biggest sectors of Newton's carbon footprint.

Transition to EVs is the biggest leverage point for reducing Newton's carbon footprint because people in Newton trade in their car for a new one every 9 years and the cost of a new EV falls in the range of ICE cars and is trending down. And EVs are so energy efficient that they don't strain the local grid.

Heat pumps work well, but currently it costs on the order of \$25K to convert a house to air source heat pump: this is substantially more than the cost of replacing a conventional furnace or boiler. The operating cost is also higher, given the current prices of electricity and natural gas. State APS (alternative portfolio standard) incentives apply to heat pump installation, but need to be increased to make up for this cost differential.

Electrical demand would increase substantially (a factor of approximately 3 times current demand) under these scenarios for EV and especially conversion to heat pumps, but the utility seems to be unconcerned, probably because they don't believe that transition on this scale will actually occur.

SG: If the utilities don't believe the change will be very big, they may be more willing to provide a price incentive to increase marginal consumption.

EC pointed out that heat pumps also provide air conditioning, so apples to apples comparison needs to consider the capital cost of A/C.

SG: the challenge in these societal changes is the first few percent.

How much will utilities put in to drive these conversions up? SG: maybe the utilities could be negotiated into offering substantial incentives if they underestimate the number that will actually occur. MG, but look at their incentives to encourage EVs, which are limited to supporting some public charging stations. This is not a significant incentive, and the incentives needed for heat pump conversion need to be bigger.

Cadmus has excellent studies on electric building heating that find that air source heat pumps work well in the winter in our climate zone (but need to keep the condensers clear of snow.)

HB: The Newton assessors see about 800 housing units changing hands per year. About 100 are teardowns involving new construction. So, say there are 650 net changes in ownership of existing units. If the cost of conversion to heat pump is \$25K, and the housing unit costs \$800K to \$1 million, then the marginal cost of heat pump conversion is only 2.5 to 3 percent of the purchase price. This is an opportunity to make these conversions happen.

So, we should set a goal to convert x% of existing homes that change hands every year, and we should consider how to provide incentives to make that investment at the time of sale. This would roughly match the number of heating system conversions and weatherizations that Jon Klein's model says are needed to meet the goal for 2050.

4. Activity on incentives for electric vehicles.

Not discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Purdy

Newton Citizens Commission on Energy

City of Newton

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



Mayor

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

Advisory Members:

Cory Alperstein, Edward Craddock, Brant Davis,
Claudine Ellyn, Philip Hanser,

Telephone 617-796-1019
c/o Office of the Sustainability Director
Newton City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Wednesday, February 27, 2019, 7:00 PM
City Hall Room 211

AGENDA

1. Presentation of draft Climate Action Plan sections and schedule to complete it.
(all)
2. Report on Feb 14 meeting with Eversource (Puja)



Newton Citizens Commission on Energy City of Newton, Massachusetts

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

Halina S. Brown, Chair

Michael Gevelber
Stephen Grody
Asa Hopkins
Jonathan Kantar
Jonathan Klein
Ira Krepchin
James Purdy, Vice Chair
Puja Vohra
Ann Berwick (ex-officio)

Advisory Members:
Cory Alperstein
Edward Craddock
Brant Davis
Philip Hanser

Minutes of the Meeting of February 27, 2019

Present: Halina Brown, Stephen Grody, Michael Gevelber, Jon Kantar (JK) Ira Krepchin, Jim Purdy, Puja Vohra; Cory Alperstein, Ed Craddock, Deb Crossley, Dan Ruben

The minutes for January 23 2019 were approved.

Asa Hopkins has been sworn in as a member by the City Clerk.

There is consensus on starting NCCE meetings at 7 rather than 7:30.

SG asked: can meeting attendance be via telephone/Skype? Yes.

1. Presentation of draft Climate Action Plan sections and schedule to complete it. (all)

The MAPC plan is in complete draft – the public meeting on it will be on March 21. Coordination between the MAPC’s five-year plan and NCCE’s 30 year plan not a major issue in Deb Crossley’s opinion. The coordination needs discussion but not at this meeting.

[All references to the plan in these minutes are to the NCCE’s plan.]

MG presented the EV section of the plan. He is concerned about the high percentage of SUVs and other large vehicles in Newton. We need a working group to promote EV adoption, e.g., “EV Answer Corp”

DR - Green Energy Consumers Alliance is getting dealer discounts up to \$7k per vehicle, in addition to state rebates and federal tax credits.

Eversource is interested in smart EV charging to help manage demand.

AH – the issue of requiring charging in apartment buildings is intended to provide enough charging stations in the future when demand is greater. Priority parking is an important incentive in itself, apart from charging

HB – The EV growth curve is exponential.

CA – momentum for EVs is building. We need to be conscious of how to anticipate and shape the trend.

JK – Is excise tax differential for EVs possible? JP – that would need to be done at the state level; cities and towns don’t currently have that option.

JP – Newton needs to promote transit ridership.

AH – energy efficient land use (compact, able to be served by transit and walking) is also needed.

HB – is NIM being used by the city to make decisions?

DR - could traffic signals be made smarter to reduce idling?

EC – The solar canopies need to be built with conduit to serve charging stations for the parking slots and expanded as necessary in the future; otherwise it will be expensive to do.

JK – Can estimate how many existing houses are “teardown ready”, i.e., likely to be replaced with new larger houses over the next 30 years?

AH – Wellesley has a large house review requirement that discourages some large houses.

JP – We need to market these energy improvements to the consumer/resident.

AH – why not use MassSave, which has a lot of capacity to provide incentives and advertise to consumers.

PV – We have started discussion with NGrid and Eversource. We need to jointly develop an MOU with them that defines what we need from them on energy efficiency. They have the flexibility to dedicate some of their resources to what we are doing. They did a pilot project on deep energy retrofits several years ago, but the payback period wasn’t sufficiently attractive, which was an impediment.

JK – We need city staff dedicated to providing information to residents – “an energy concierge.” Mass Save and Mass CEC are getting better at providing information to the public.

HB – Is it true that that heat pumps are 2-3 times more efficient than a furnace or boiler? MG – Yes, a recent study in MA and VT showed the average efficiency is COP3.

AH – we need to address site energy as well as addressing grid losses from generating plants that use gas combustion. But it’s the site energy consumption that we have some ability to improve.

DR – The plan should be explicit about the need to persuade residents that climate change is threatening them and their children – get the mayor to do it. Teach it in the schools and get children to teach their parents. SG disagrees: education and encouragement is not enough. Requiring Passive House standard has to be linked to special permit conditions or other incentive. E.g., Wellesley has a large house review ordinance that applies to houses >3000 sf; Newton could do this, and the review process could be shortened if the applicant provides energy efficiency, electric HVAC, etc.

AH – The plan needs to call out the “three most important things to do.”

DC – We need to address implementation priorities and needed resources.

SG – Should we start with the big things or the easy things? DC – this needs its own discussion.

JP – Should there be an implementation chapter? HB – Or we could address implementation in each chapter.

AH – Use applause/shame to motivate behavior.

NEEP (Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships) is a regional energy efficiency effort in the northeast US; it provides technical assistance to municipalities through a contract with US DOE.

EC – Talk with Pete Smith about chamber of commerce efforts.

DC: can use special permits to require higher energy efficiency in non-residential construction. Need to define and explain the metrics.

PV – there are already lots of national standards we can use and coordinate with the International Energy Code cycle.

DC – We need to define what expertise the city needs to do these regulatory things.

SG – Or perhaps the NCCE should write guidance and give it to the city to implement.

HB – I plan to ask the city to answer this question.

DC – We need the CAP to be a strategic plan, like the successful plan for the City’s water and sewer.

JK – We need to move immediately to capture this moment while the two big developments at Riverside and Needham Street are about to happen. Several of us met with Mark Development about incorporating the green building principles at Riverside.

HB - It’s 9:30, and we need to decide on our next steps.

CA - On the process side we need to have conversations with people in the planning department.

HB – Yes, we need to be able to get city employees to focus on this plan. We should get people to help out on other chapters.

MG – We need more time to discuss the next steps. Shall we meet on implementation next week?

SG – We should set ourselves a deadline of having “mayor ready” chapters by next week.

2. Report on Feb 14 meeting with Eversource (Puja)

Not discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Purdy



Newton Citizens Commission on Energy City of Newton, Massachusetts

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

Hallna S. Brown, Chair

Michael Gevelber

Stephen Grody

Asa Hopkins

Jonathan Klein

Jonathan Kantar

Ira Krepchin

James Purdy, Vice Chair

Puja Vohra

Ann Berwick (ex-officio)

Advisory Members:

Cory Alperstein

Edward Craddock

Brant Davis

Philip Hanser

AGENDA

Wednesday, March 27, 2019, 7:00 PM

City Hall Room 211

1. Dissemination and implementation plan for the Citizens Climate Action Plan



Newton Citizens Commission on Energy City of Newton, Massachusetts

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

Halina S. Brown, Chair

Michael Gevelber
Stephen Grody
Asa Hopkins
Jonathan Kantar
Jonathan Klein
Ira Krepchin
James Purdy, Vice Chair
Puja Vohra
Ann Berwick (ex-officio)

Advisory Members:
Cory Alperstein
Edward Craddock
Brant Davis
Philip Hanser

Minutes of the Meeting of March 27, 2019

Present: Halina Brown, Michael Gevelber, Stephen Grody, Jon Kantar (JK), Jon Y Klein (JYK), Ira Krepchin, Jim Purdy; Cory Alperstein, Marcia Cooper (MC), Ed Craddock, Ellie Goldberg (EG), Elaine Landis, Dan Ruben

The minutes for February 23 2019 were approved.

Agenda Items:

1. Are we ready to formally adopt the current version of CCAP?

Issues that need correction were discussed:

JYK - Passive House does not imply heat pump, both are needed.

JK - Passive House is about energy budget, not specific to building type. German Passive House is being used at the Winthrop Square Millennium development in Boston.

JYK – The recommendations need to be separable – e.g., the Green Property Tax Program REEP initiative needs explanation and the plan should include alternate ways to do the same thing, but explain why we think this is the best way to accomplish the goal. JK – but we should explain why we think the REEP initiative is particularly good, e.g., relatively low impacts on most people in Newton. JYK and point out that it is a market based mechanism.

SG – But add the nuance that the challenge is not necessarily the financial incentive, but what it is aimed to accomplish in terms of economic velocity.

MG- No fossil fuel in new buildings is good, but by when? It will be controversial to say it should be done by tomorrow, but also not too far in the future. HB – but why not start requiring it for new buildings starting tomorrow? MG - because we need city council to support this requirement. JYK - but there is a 5-year phase-in in the model we used. SG – or use wording to provide some wiggle room in how soon it must take effect.

JK – But don't provide too much wiggle room – there are two very large developments in process right now. MG – need to determine the phase-in through negotiation with the people who would be writing the new regulation.

HB - Special permit immediately, or right later

JK- For new construction Passive House and heat pump are easy to accomplish, requiring these should be a 1-year period from now. James Freas said he thought it could be included in the new zoning that is in process..

A straw vote of members was in favor of a 1-year phase-in, with half of the members for it, but MG, JYK, and SG are against 1-year phase-in.

HB – there are only about 100 new houses built per year, so a three-year phase-in has essentially the same result.

MG – All of this is important and each top priority action stands on its own.

JYK - But need the underlying financial structure to work.

JP – Adopting the plan is not the same as agreeing to implement every recommendation.

JK – Regarding underlying principles, we need to make 100% renewable a basic principle. Also, the 9 recommendations should be listed in order of their GHG efficacy.

MG – Suggest we identify the five recommendations that we most want, and keep pushing on the others later.

CA – but we shouldn't abandon recommendations that we've already identified as important.

The members decided to include the 9 top recommendations in priority order, listing the top five as recommended by MG at the top of the list.

Deb Crossley is working on language for the special permit section of the zoning relative to energy and GHG.

2. Getting on the radar screen in Newton and beyond: the City Council, executive branch, activists, general public, internet, other MA communities, etc.

3. How to have CCAP formally adopted by the City.

HB – This plan needs to go on the web, but we shouldn't rely on people finding the Energy Commission page under Public Buildings. The City's home page would be best.

JK - Shall we meet with some key people first and get their support, e.g., Ann Berwick and Deb Crossley? HB met with Susan Albright who heads ZAP; we have already got Crossley agreement to present to PFC. And we should meet with Greg Schwarz who heads Land Use.

JYK – We should use the strategy that succeeded for power choice – the Coalition for Climate Action and driving other community groups to push it. JK – and get these groups to come to meetings and push the Council to adopt it.

CA – And there is an endorsement process that needs to happen, which needs work to make it happen.

JP – HB should frame the “ask” we want from City Council.

CA – At the meeting on the MAPC plan, the mayor tried to prepare people for getting less than they want.

HB - We also need to clarify the difference between the two plans.

MC – We should explain how CCAP differs from the MAPC/City plan.

EG - MAPC uses vague language “explore”, etc., which is not accountable. The CCAP is all about accountability. This is essential.

MC - The CCAP document is too long to stand on its own – need to use a presentation to convey it. CA – but there needs to be a formal submission to the City. The CCAP gets to the necessary outcome and explains how to get there. We have to do this!

MG – This is the point that the other organizations need to push for.

SG – There is really one point: need to buy in to the IPCC goal. When that is accepted, here is how you get there.

JYK – In summary: there is an IPCC goal and the CCAP is the answer to how to get there. The MAPC plan doesn't do this.

DR – Should mention what other cities are doing, which helps to give it more legitimacy.

JYK – is there another plan that shows how to get to the goal? JP – The official Boston plan (“Carbon Free Boston”) does much the same thing as ours. DR – it hasn't been adopted by Boston City Council yet.

HB – We should disseminate the CCAP to other communities. JP – MCAN serves this function and can help with dissemination.

SG – We should also talk to our state legislators, e.g. Kay Kahn, and get their help.

MC – There will always be hold-outs on the Council, but that doesn't prevent the Council as a whole from adopting it.

The presentation of the CCAP was discussed – how long should it be?

MC – Also, enlist students.

CA - 350MA has organized people by City Ward, and we are getting ready to hold a meeting of the coalition.

Mothers Out Front has a steering committee; we should ask them to endorse, and similarly for the Coalition and other groups.

SG – For the Council committees, assume 3 minutes per slide, a total of 20 minutes of presentation, plus 10 minutes of Q&A.

SG – Also NewTV.

JP - Get the City to print hard copies for the Council Committees.

SG – Some slight modifications to the document; prepare a final draft in two days from today. Then get it put on the Newton website.

JK – Also set up meetings with Deb and others who can help.

HB – Looking ahead, we need to push for implementation: set up subgroups for each topic.

HB – What about the appropriation process to fund key recommendations?

EG – These things get docketed and voted on by council. don't need to go through the overall budget process. Mayor has discretion if a suitable category is in the city budget. CA – We can't afford to wait a year for the budgeting process to run its course.

JYK – We decided at the library to put the cost issue down the road, after we have sold the plan.

EG – Need to prepare job descriptions for the staff positions needed to implement the plan. Legal is also going to be involved.

JP – The CCAP will ultimately be a docketed resolution for City Council action.

JYK - We should consult some people on how to do this – e.g., former councilor, perhaps Brook Lipsett.

JK - Consult with Ann Berwick and Deb Crossley on how to get it adopted, how it has the most impact.
HB will consult both of them.

MG – How should we explain the difference in the two plans? JP – just be diplomatic, explain how the CCAP informs the implementation of the MAPC plan

JYK - Let’s consult some people on how to do this – former councilor, Brook Lipsett

JK - Consult with Ann on how to get it adopted, how it will have the most impact

MG – The MAPC plan is the official plan of the City at this point. How explain the difference in the two plans? CA – the MAPC plan is going to be submitted to the City Council.

HB – Susan Albright was surprised to hear that the MAPC didn’t have numerical goals.

JP – Just be diplomatic, explain how the CCAP informs the implementation of the MAPC plan.

JK – Claire Rundelli can help with getting the CCAP onto the City website.

There was discussion about how to get the NCCE materials up onto the web page. JP said he would get this done.

SG – We need to decide what should we discuss with the utilities. A meeting with Eversource is coming up. Puja is picking up this thread. SG will pursue this with her.

HB – We should keep Puja and Asa on task to proceed with the Green Ribbon Commission.

EC – And work to promote the residential electrification.

SG – are EV and home electrification separate initiatives? Yes. Need to organize ourselves to work with both NGrid and Eversource, and they have internal specialization for various sectors. May be able to get them to support a City energy concierge. Meeting with Eversource on April 11 from 10 to 4.

Discussion of agenda items 4 and 5 was deferred.

4. Organizing ourselves:

- Subgroups around specific topics? For example, CCAP recommendations (we have 9 priority recommendations and 9 NCCE members); types of challenges (political, financial, technical, managerial, interfacing with Green Newton, NCCA, the utilities, etc.)
- Other organizing principles?

5. Leaders for specific implementation steps: green ribbon commission, energy concierge, financial incentives, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Purdy



Newton Citizens Commission on Energy City of Newton, Massachusetts

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

Halina S. Brown, Chair

Michael Gevelber
Stephen Grody
Asa Hopkins
Jonathan Klein
Jonathan Kantar
Ira Krepchin
James Purdy, Vice Chair
Puja Vohra
Ann Berwick (ex-officio)

Advisory Members:
Cory Alperstein
Edward Craddock
Brant Davis
Philip Hanser

AGENDA

Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 7:00 PM

City Hall Room 211

Strategy for the implementation stage of CCAP: parallel pathways of activity.

1. Green Property Tax Program REEP
2. Partnership with the Utilities and a possible MOU: priorities emerging from the brainstorming sessions with NGrid and Eversource; description of Energy Concierge/Technical Assistance Services
3. Mobilizing the City Council: presentations to 3 key committees; articulating actionable specific policy proposals
4. Interactions with the Sustainability co-Directors and the Mayor: funding; priority actions; a Working Group similar to the one for Aggregation?
5. Mobilizing the Coalition for Climate Change
6. Publicity for the CCAP
7. Edits suggested by Peter Barrer



Newton Citizens Commission on Energy City of Newton, Massachusetts

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

Halina S. Brown, Chair

Michael Gevelber

Stephen Grody

Asa Hopkins

Jonathan Kantar

Jonathan Klein

Ira Krepchin

James Purdy, Vice Chair

Puja Vohra

Ann Berwick (ex-officio)

Advisory Members:

Cory Alperstein

Edward Craddock

Brant Davis

Philip Hanser

Minutes of the Meeting of April 24, 2019

Present: Halina Brown, Michael Gevelber, Stephen Grody, Asa Hopkins, Jon Kantar (JK), Ira Krepchin, Jim Purdy, Puja Vohra; Cory Alperstein, Jane Hanser, Demie Stathoplos

The minutes for March 27, 2019 were approved.

Agenda Items:

Strategy for the implementation stage of CCAP: parallel pathways of activity.

Green Property Tax Program REEP

Partnership with the Utilities and a possible MOU: priorities emerging from the brainstorming sessions with NGrid and Eversource; description of Energy Concierge/Technical Assistance Services

Mobilizing the City Council: presentations to 3 key committees; articulating actionable specific policy proposals

Interactions with the Sustainability co-Directors and the Mayor: funding; priority actions; a Working Group similar to the one for Aggregation?

Mobilizing the Coalition for Climate Change

Publicity for the CCAP

Edits suggested by Peter Barrer

Jim reported that Public Buildings is updating the NCCE page, posting monthly agendas, minutes, and audio files for 2018 and 2019 to date; they are about to post the April 2019 Draft 1.0 of the Citizens Climate Action Plan.

Halina reported that Jennifer Steel (Planning Department project manager for the MAPC Climate Action Plan) has not reached a decision on whether the CCAP and the 5-year CAP will be posted together on the Planning Department documents page.

The City Council Public Facilities Committee and the Zoning and Planning Committee are planning to meet jointly in May, date to be determined, to receive a presentation of the CCAP by Halina. Councilor Albright prefers to review both plans together but the Planning Department has not decided its preference about this. The Mayor plans to meet with Councilor Albright and Crossley and Planning staff on how to go forward.

Halina has met with five councilors to present the CCAP findings and conclusions: Albright, Crossley, Leary, Norton, and Schwartz as well as former councilor Johnson. She plans to meet soon with Councilors Auchincloss, Downs, Greenburg, Grossman, and Kelley.

Jon Kantar suggested that we agree on our top three recommendations to move the CCAP forward, edit and polish the Executive Summary, and communicate the strategy. Asa added that we need to consider which Council committees will be instrumental in implementing the plan; we also need to take our short list of actions and identify which City Government actor needs to take the action. For example, forming the Green Ribbon commission is an action for the Mayor, while special permit conditions need legislative action by the City Council. Jane recommended structuring the CCAP actions into low-hanging fruit, more expensive administrative actions, and items that need City Council approval; she provided the example of improving the Comm Ave carriage road.

It was agreed that a high priority action is to provide staffing for an Energy Concierge (i.e., technical assistance to citizens). Jim argued for getting a half-time position added to the City staffing budget as a first step that could probably be accomplished in the current budget cycle (which is well underway.) Asa suggested that this staffing issue needs to be resolved by the coming July. Cory noted that the City's Sustainability Director position was divided between Ann Berwick and Bill Ferguson, for whom the half-time allocation is being devoted to project engineering in the Public Buildings Department, so it may be possible to get that half-FTE slot in the template to provide Energy Concierge staffing. Stephen proposed outsourcing the Energy Concierge work with some financial incentive for the vendor to get more accomplished.

Halina proposed that getting the CCAP recommendations into the City's permitting process is another high priority. Jon suggested that a high priority is to incorporate Passive House and electric heating/cooling as Special Permit criteria; he said that many developers are close to doing this so it should be possible to formalize these conditions.

Puja proposed that setting up the Green Ribbon Commission and executing MOUs with the utilities are high priority items that go together. Jon suggested that this could also include action to support EV charging facilities through the Eversource Make Ready program; the Sustainability Director should be the lead staff on coordinating with the utilities.

Halina and others proposed EV promotion as one of the highest priority items. Michael suggested that this needs to go beyond what Eversource would do under a MOU; we should propose an ongoing series of actions toward this goal. Asa said that the utility could support a Task Force on EV promotion, and Cory suggested that the Planning Department could play a role in this.

Asa suggested deferring the formation of the Green Ribbon Commission until the fall to provide more time to prepare. Stephen said that we should also speak with Councilors to work with us to get to yes with the Legal Department; Cory suggested getting a sympathetic Councilor to sponsor a resolution to set up the REEP program.

Halina, Asa, and Jon Klein will meet with the Mayor on May 1 to discuss the CCAP and the range of issues.

Puja discussed next steps with the utilities and will send out a summary to NCCE members. Separate MOUs will be needed for Eversource and NGrid. They will be non-binding agreements to work together on a range of issues. She thinks that promotion of Passive House construction is one activity that the utilities can help with. Jon suggested that a procedure should be developed to guide utility involvement with new development projects. Other items include utility involvement in promoting retrofits, and co-branding for a Main Street campaign aimed at small businesses. They will certainly be on-board for the Green Ribbon commission. There is a role there for retro-commissioning buildings. Puja recommended

developing a template for the MOUs and getting it to the utilities, and there was general agreement that she should prepare a draft.

Jon suggested that the utilities might provide some funding to support staffing of Energy Concierge and other work. Stephen suggested that the NCCE can seek and receive grants from outside sources to support the work.

Asa proposed that we draft a letter to the City with our four top priorities for action. There was general agreement that we should do this. Cory added that the NCCE should be involved in outreach to the community through letter writing, participating in meetings of the advocacy organizations in Newton, etc.

Halina noted that we still need to resolve the relationship of the two CAP documents. Jim said we should press to get them posted side-by-side on the Planning Department's Climate Change documents page.

Demie Stathopolos asked if it is OK to share the April 5 CCAP with 350 Newton and other groups, and this was confirmed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Purdy



Newton Citizens Commission on Energy City of Newton, Massachusetts

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

Halina S. Brown, Chair

Michael Gevelber

Stephen Grody

Asa Hopkins

Jonathan Klein

Jonathan Kantar

Ira Krepchin

James Purdy, Vice Chair

Puja Vohra

Ann Berwick (ex-officio)

Advisory Members:

Cory Alperstein

Edward Craddock

Brant Davis

Philip Hanser

AGENDA

Wednesday, May 22, 2019, 7:00 PM

Library Trustees' Room, 2nd Floor

1. Progress on implementation of the CCAP.
2. MOU with utilities.



Newton Citizens Commission on Energy City of Newton, Massachusetts

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

Halina S. Brown, Chair

Michael Gevelber

Stephen Grody

Asa Hopkins

Jonathan Kantar

Jonathan Klein

Ira Krepchin

James Purdy, Vice Chair

Puja Vohra

Ann Berwick (ex-officio)

Advisory Members:

Cory Alperstein

Edward Craddock

Brant Davis

Philip Hanser

Minutes of the Meeting of May 22, 2019

Present: Halina Brown, Michael Gevelber, Stephen Grody, Asa Hopkins, Jon Kantar (JK), Ira Krepchin, Jim Purdy, Puja Vohra; Cory Alperstein, Ed Craddock, Phil Hanser

The minutes for April 24 2019 were approved.

Agenda Items:

Progress on implementation of the CCAP

1. MOU with utilities

Puja has been working with Bill Ferguson and Ann Berwick to develop a list of bullet points for key items in the City's partnership with the utilities. Phil proposed that we should take a more collaborative approach with utilities and need to create an official position for liaison with them. Puja recommended that we get the concept for the agreement set up and phase in city participation. A fund needs to be set up to hold money saved, rebates received, etc.

Funding the energy concierge position is still unresolved, apparently for budget reasons. Jon noted that the fund should be used to leverage future projects, so don't use it for the concierge position. Cory noted that the resolution passed unanimously by the City Council was to set up the concierge office. The concierge position would report to Bill and/or Ann. It could be Ann's new project now that Newton Power Choice is up and running.

The concierge job description should be part of the MOU because the utilities would be paying for part or all of it.

Puja is working with Bill Ferguson on the MOU, but doesn't need any more input now. There is a meeting scheduled for next week with Halina, Bill, Puja, and Mark Rooney from Eversource. We need to assess the proposed quantitative goals of the agreement.

Phil expressed some concern about maintaining independence from the utilities – we want their contribution but not their control.

Jon recommended that we should get the utilities to fund specific expenditures.

Halina posed the question of how to keep independence while getting funding from the utilities. Phil likened it to a faculty position funded by outside source.

Puja noted that the concierge position should include project management, not just technical information and outreach.

Jon cautioned against filling the position with a self-identified expert who lacks the relevant experience.

Phil suggested that we should check with other cities that have such a position before we finalize its scope of work. For example, Cambridge has two people doing outreach in their office of sustainability. Northampton created such a position with NGrid financing. Other examples are Portland and Santa Monica.

Cory stated that it needs to be about building partnerships with people in the community.

Puja will send the proposed job description to NCCE members for review.

It may be a month before we get funding numbers from the utilities

Phil said he would like to see more specific criteria to measure and evaluate progress under the MOU. Halina suggested that Phil should talk directly to Ann and the utilities about this.

2. Communication with City Council

Halina said it is remarkable that four councilors joined in presenting the resolution to establish an energy concierge.

We need to identify what CCAP issues need council action.

Phil recommended that we need to look to the Zoning and Planning committee for leadership on zoning issues, also the planning department – James Freas and Jennifer Caira.

Halina asked that while she is away for most of June, members should continue contact with individual councilors. (She will meet with Vicky Danberg next week.)

- talk to the few that she didn't talk with
- continue with Albright et al
- meet with James Freas and Planning Director Barney Heath
- Jon Kantar volunteered to meet with Councilors Rice and Gentile.

3. Presentations

We should provide a technical package on the CCAP for the Zoning and Planning Committee and the Public Facilities Committee. Explain the two climate action plans, and focus on things that need to be done, and identify upcoming work in the committees relevant to the CCAP.

Cory suggested that we invite people to the upcoming presentations on Passive House by Nick Falcoff (Auburndale Builders) on 6/12 and 6/27.

4. Coordination with Other Communities

Halina reported that Ann Berwick thinks it's a good idea to work with other communities to explore research and specialization. Phil suggested that this should include talking about how they address the various market segments in their communities, e.g., low income single household head families; new adopters, etc.

Cory suggested that MassEnergize (based in Wayland) has things to share.

Jim noted that some of the Eversource people who participated in our meeting seem to understand marketing to various segments and could be resources for us.

5. Electric Vehicles

Halina will meet with Nicole Friedman.

Cory met with GreenSpot, a company that does EV sharing and charging, and has a fleet of EVs for use in a manner similar to Zipcar.

Jim proposed that we need the ability to charge EVs for every tenant in multifamily residential development, such as Northland's Needham Street project. [Note: Northland subsequently said it is committed to providing this.]

Stephen noted that there are automated systems that could provide parking and EV charging for large developments. He also suggested that we should create Newton-specific web page on EVs.

Phil suggested that we create a database on EVs.

Cory has talked with Green Energy Consumers Alliance about EV promotion. Belmont has a volunteer program to do outreach on EVs.

6. REEP – nothing to report.

7. There is an email conversation about heat pumps – Asa Hopkins, Nick Falcoff. We need to capture this knowledge and get the concierge to provide it. Like a consumer help desk.

PH – the consumer service person who answers incoming questions is the smaller part of the concierge job; outreach is the larger portion. We should create a node with connections to sources of specialized knowledge.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Purdy



Newton Citizens Commission on Energy City of Newton, Massachusetts

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

Halina S. Brown, Chair

Michael Gevelber

Stephen Grody

Asa Hopkins

Jonathan Klein

Jonathan Kantar

Ira Krepchin

James Purdy, Vice Chair

Puja Vohra

Ann Berwick (ex-officio)

Advisory Members:

Cory Alperstein

Edward Craddock

Brant Davis

Philip Hanser

AGENDA

Wednesday, June 26, 2019, 7:00 PM

City Hall Room 205

1. Status of agreement with Eversource and National Grid. (Puja)
2. Report on Green Newton Building Standards Committee and the Northland and Riverside developments. (Jim)