

ADOPTED

City of Keene
New Hampshire

CITIES FOR CLIMATE PROTECTION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 6, 2016

8:00 AM

2nd Floor Conference Rm

Members Present:

Dr. Ann Shedd, Chair
Terry Clark, Councilor
Megan Straughen
Mari Brunner
Larry Dachowski, Alternate (arrived at
8:06 AM)
Dick Cornelius, Alternate

Staff Present:

Michele Chalice, Planning

Members Not Present:

Peter Hansel, Vice Chair
Gary Lamoureux, Councilor
Andrew Graham

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Shedd called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM and roll call was conducted.

2) Approval of Minutes – June 2016

Chair Shedd noted corrections to the minutes:

- Page 3, in the middle, when Mr. Hansel is speaking - change “metering” to “net metering.”
- Page 5 – “2.3 million percent” is incorrect. Correction is pending.
- Page 8, multiple places: “MA website” should be “MAST website.”
- Page 8 – “inner city” should be “inter-city.”

Councilor Clark made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, which was seconded by Ms. Straughen. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

3) Approval of Energy Efficiency Subcommittee Meeting Minutes – April 2016

Councilor Clark made a motion to approve the April minutes of the Energy Efficiency Subcommittee, which was seconded by Ms. Straughen. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Larry Dachowski arrived at 8:06 AM.

4) Presentation of Monadnock Community Solar Initiative – John Kondos

John Kondos presented an update on the Monadnock Community Solar Initiative. He stated that the system started generating electricity on the roof of the Monadnock Food Co op on May 25. He continued that on July 23 there will be a celebration of this project being operational, and there are handouts about it that Ms. Straughen created. There will also be an informational session for groups who might want to do similar projects. They published a New Hampshire Community Supported Solar guide to help others, which is relevant to groups more than individuals. They tried to develop a recognition that solar is a good investment. They spent two years slogging through the legal maze to make this project at the Co op happen, so the guide will help other groups pursue projects a lot easier.

Mr. Kondos continued that there are still restrictions at the State and Federal level, which they hope to improve, and welcome support with. For instance, they wanted 50 to 100 people to own a stake in the system, but the number was restricted to 10 because of changes to NH legislation. Nine people own the Co op's solar system and will sell it to the Co op in less than 10 years and make a modest profit, but these nine people felt frustrated and it was difficult to get them to buy in. Now, up to 25 people are allowed to own a stake. He and others will meet with the NH Bureau of Securities Regulations to see if they can make progress and make solar available to more people.

Councilor Clark asked why it is restricted to 25. Mr. Kondos replied that it is designed to protect small investors, which is well-intentioned, but they want to create something without enormous bureaucracy and believe they can provide layers of protections for investors. They want to allow everyone to have access.

Ms. Brunner asked if there is a slide presentation. Mr. Kondos replied no, although they have a video, which they will soon update with some drone footage of four relatively large commercial solar systems in Keene. He explained the locations of each and brief discussion ensued. Ms. Straughen asked if they can see the footage. Mr. Kondos replied that he is not able to offer the video of the footage to others, but he can try and put the CCP in touch with the person who did the footage.

Mr. Dachowski asked what the website is. Mr. Kondos replied greenmonadnock.org.

Ms. Brunner asked Mr. Kondos if he has a good idea of what changes at the State or local level could help the process go more smoothly for others. Mr. Kondos replied that State and Federal changes would help. They have had correspondence with NH Bureau of Securities Regulations. They think VT law is currently too narrow and could be broader and better. It focuses only on group net metering, which is often one owner of multiple

sites, as opposed to neighbors joining together. They are talking with Senator Jean Shaheen's office and Representative Ann Kuster's office.

Chair Shedd asked if there are specific requests of the State that the CCP could ask the City Council to support. Mr. Kondos replied that from the investment perspective the State rules have a lot of jurisdiction. He continued that they would like an exception from some of the restrictive rules around only 25 small, credited or sophisticated investors being able to participate. They want others to be able to invest, and believe it can be done, with protections for the investors.

Ms. Chalice stated that she is looking for interesting tidbits/vignettes to insert into the final report of the Greenhouse Gas Inventory Update. She asked if Mr. Kondos could provide the CCP with a summary paragraph with whatever information he wants the City Council to know about the installation, capacity, and anticipated greenhouse gas reduction as a result of the Co op's solar project.

Ms. Chalice asked Mr. Kondos to email her regarding those two changes (allowing more than 25 investors , and exceptions for small investors) he and others are advocating for at the State level. She continued that she can create a draft letter that the CCP can modify and they can submit it to the City Council.

Chair Shedd stated that Mr. Kondos mentioned that there are other groups in the area interested in using this model. Mr. Kondos replied that this two-year project had two people who did the heavy lifting plus help from the Co op. They got close to burn-out. They are not ready to do this for another group, but the guide is very helpful. They have templates for the legal documents, for a reasonable fee. They got a small grant to support up to three groups. This would be great for churches, farms, etc. Local investors currently have to be accredited, such as landlords. He encourages anyone who has friends that are large landlords or have lots of taxable income to let them know about these opportunities.

Ms. Straughen stated that Mr. Kondos has offered to hold a session before or after the July 23 celebration event for elected officials to learn about how policy could be changed. She encouraged people who have connections to elected officials to reach out to Mr. Kondos and let him know whether they could come at 11:15 AM or 2:00 PM. Mr. Kondos replied that they invited NH legislators and he has heard from two so far. Chair Shedd asked if they are inviting candidates. Mr. Kondos replied that they invited existing Cheshire County elected officials but everyone is welcome.

Chair Shedd asked if there were issues or obstacles identified specific to Keene, which the CCP could help with. Mr. Kondos replied those are "soft costs." He continued that a fair number of hours were put into dealing with the Historic District Commission, and time is money. The City's permitting process is vigorous and there can be bureaucratic hurdles, but the process is reasonably efficient for well-established contractors. There is an opportunity to look at how to streamline the permit process.

Councilor Clark replied that the City Council is holding a City Council goals session this weekend and that will be a topic. He continued that Mr. Kondos could send him suggestions and he could present those ideas for streamlining the process. Mr. Kondos replied that he knows they need to protect the consumer. He continued that one way would be for vetted contractors who have proven that they know what they are doing to not have to spend so much time in the permitting process.

5) Review of 2016 Solar Installation Report from Eversource, NH Distributed Generation

Chair Shedd reported that Ms. Chalice was in contact with Eversource and found out that the online, operational solar is generating just under 500 kilowatts, and another 587 kilowatts have been approved for construction. This information from Eversource's Senior Engineer is clearer and more up to date than the information they received from the PUC. Discussion ensued. Mr. Kondos spoke about how the solar industry is growing rapidly.

6) Discussion of the "Solar 101 – A Presentation for Residential Property Owners," Lakes Region Community College Presentation

Ms. Chalice stated that this presentation was from the Office of Energy Planning (OEP). She continued that at the conference she went to there was a shortened presentation of this long presentation. Mr. Kondos stated that there is a presentation for municipal officials, and he has the handouts from Andy Duncan.

Ms. Chalice stated that the question is whether the CCP wants to do something with this presentation, which is 101-level for the general public. It is long but could be shortened. They have access to the presentation and the CCP could get permission to hold something in town, if they are interested. Chair Shedd replied that the Communications Working Group mentioned the possibility of having several public events a year. She is not sure if something like this is what they had in mind. Ms. Brunner replied that she is a member of that working group and they were still in the beginning stages of thinking about what events to have. She continued that they were thinking maybe three events per year, structured more like forums, with local or State-level speakers, on topics such as weatherization, transportation, the GHG Inventory, or others. Solar could potentially be a topic.

Councilor Clark replied yes, that would be wonderful; it is a question of how they would get the word out to people. He continued that he is not sure if the IT Department would email people. Ms. Chalice replied that the Planning and Public Works Department have Facebook pages, and anyone with a Facebook page can share the City's information about events. She can also write a press release, and maybe get on the Mayor's cable program. They have ways to get the word out. Councilor Clark asked how many people are on the contact list from the City. Ms. Chalice replied that she does not know and will find out. Discussion continued about reaching out to people. Chair Shedd suggested they put flyers up, too, for people who are not on social media.

Mr. Dachowski stated that they have to think beyond advertising - someone has to organize the presentation. Would the City do that? Ms. Chalice replied that the City could be in support if the committee passes a motion on this. Then she can assist with flyers, a press release, etc. Chair Shedd stated that organizing the presentation is up to the CCP. Ms. Brunner replied that given the CCP's limited capacity, the Communications Working Group thinks it is best to pick topics that are already pretty out there in the community so they could partner with organizations that already know about the topics. The CCP would be sponsoring presentations rather than creating and giving them. She thinks with solar there might be enough information already to work with someone who already does the work. Discussion continued. Chair Shedd asked who gave the presentation at Ms. Chalice's conference. Ms. Chalice replied that it was a private consultant and she will get his name, or she could email the planners in the regional distribution list to see if anyone else is interested, or she could try to get email addresses from local contractors.

Chair Shedd replied that they need to first decide if the committee wants to delve into this and pursue it further. Ms. Brunner stated that she is the only person from the Communications Working Group present today, and since that would be the group taking it on, it might not make sense to decide today. Chair Shedd replied that they can talk about it at the next meeting. Discussion ensued and the group decided to add "Community Presentations" as an agenda item.

7) Greenhouse Gas Report Update

Ms. Chalice reported that she and Andrew Graham gave a preliminary presentation, of the Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report Update, to the City's department heads. She continued that the CCP has four slides from that. The presentation had a couple glitches. The good news is that the City met its goal of reducing municipal emissions to 20% below the 1995 levels! She and Mr. Graham got a good taste of the kind of questions that will come up when the City Council gets this information. They have been asked to give the presentation to staff again before it goes to the City Council. Mainly the questions are "why" and "how" ones, such as, if the 2008 summary showed that the levels were at just about the 1995 levels, how did the levels then drop to the point where the goal was met? She continued that municipal emissions by sector is a sensitive topic for staff, and the presentation needs to try and explain how and why the percentages are what they are. That is challenging and it is not what Mr. Graham was tasked with. One aspect is that the quality of the 2015 data is more specific than the quality of the 1995 data, and that colors how they are looking at it, but it is not Mr. Graham's charge to audit the 1995 data.

Ms. Chalice continued that she and Mr. Graham have been meeting with staff members to get a better handle on the accuracy of the data. They found and corrected one mistake. They are making sure the data is clear and accurate regarding the increase in the square footage of buildings that the City manages. They have to be able to explain the energy use - there was a small decrease in energy use between 1995 and 2015. Why and how? The answer is "efficiency," but they will need to say more than that. They need to anticipate individual questions such as, "I voted to spend more money on [insert project here]. Was that part of it?", or what the impact of the Honeywell contract was. She is

talking with each department to get a list of the efficiency measures that have been taken since 2008 to try and list those and give an idea of the effect of those investments.

Councilor Clark asked if the electric bills from 1995 are less detailed. Ms. Chalice replied yes, and they know this because prior to the Honeywell contract, these types of records were individually held by departments – the Honeywell contract forced them to try and look at them all together, which was a good thing. The method of record keeping changed as well as the level of detail. They are trying to be mindful now so that in 2025 this current data will be easier to use. That is one of the reasons gathering this solar data was important to her. Developing a good baseline now as much as possible will help with the future, when they have to go back to solidify the hows and whys.

Ms. Chalice continued that the challenge now is that the fiscal budget has come to an end, and they thought the GHG Inventory Update would be complete by now, with two interns working on it, but now there is just one intern and it is not complete. They will have to request the money as a carryover. There is a lot of discussion about whether there will be any carryovers. If not, Mr. Graham's internship is over. The City Manager has not yet made the decision about carryovers.

Chair Shedd asked if they are realistically on track to present to the City Council on August 4, given the need to do more analysis on the municipality results and to finish the basic tabulations of community results. Ms. Chalice replied that they need to present something on August 4, because the money, even if they get the carryover, will not last longer. She continued that it became clear that tabulating the 2015 data and writing a report is different than creating a report to say whether the City met its target. The decision has been made that they are creating a report to talk about the City meeting its target. Chair Shedd replied that that will be a narrower scope of presentation. Ms. Chalice replied yes, with the caveat that now that they have the data, it could be used in many ways. For example, departments could hire interns. Chair Shedd replied that the CCP could suggest the City hire a part-time Sustainability Coordinator. Ms. Brunner replied that she liked Mr. Hansel's idea of potentially sharing a Sustainability Coordinator with other organizations. Discussion ensued.

Chair Shedd asked if Ms. Brunner had other thoughts. Ms. Brunner replied that the previous GHG Inventory Update took five years, between her and another intern, so if this does not get finished now, all hope is not lost. It might be a while before it gets finished if they have to hire another intern. Chair Shedd replied that in the meantime they might be able to look at dashboards online for monitoring, so there are not so many surprises. Ms. Brunner replied that she thinks the City started using an online portfolio manager. Ms. Chalice replied that it is being talked about – the CCP could encourage the City to do that. Ms. Brunner suggested the CCP learn about it from an organization that is already using it.

Ms. Straughen stated that if the City radically increased its square footage but had energy usage drop slightly, instead of increasing, that could be good news. Ms. Chalice replied that energy consumption per square foot could be a tidbit in the report.

- 8) **Annual CCP Update Report to Planning, Licenses, and Development Committee**
- 9) **Status of Other Relevant Plans**
- 10) **CCP Goal Work Group Updates**
- 11) **C-PACE Update**
- 12) **NH Legislative Updates**
- 13) **AUNE Climate Center Updates**
- 14) **Other Climate Group Updates**
- 15) **Adjournment – Next Meeting August 3, 2016**

Chair Shedd stated that the other items on the agenda can wait until the August meeting. Ms. Chalice replied that she will not be at the August meeting and another staff member will fill in. Chair Shedd stated that the August meeting is the day before the presentation to City Council, which CCP members are all encouraged to attend – Thursday, August 4, at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers. Ms. Brunner asked if Mr. Graham should do a run-through of the presentation at the CCP meeting on Aug. 3, if that is helpful to him.

Chair Shedd adjourned the meeting at 9:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker