

City of Keene
New Hampshire

CITIES FOR CLIMATE PROTECTION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 7, 2015 8:00 AM 2nd Floor Committee Rm, City Hall

Members Present:

Dr. Ann Shedd, Chair
 Thomas Powers, Councilor
 Jennifer Risley
 Peter Hansel
 Andrew Graham

Staff Present:

Tara Germond, Planning

Others Present:

Members Not Present:

Richard (Dick) Cornelius, Alternate

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

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

2. September 2, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Risley made a motion to approve the minutes of September 2, 2015, which was seconded by Councilor Powers, and passed by unanimous vote.

3. CCP Goals for 2015

Ms. Risley reported that she met with Planning Director Rhett Lamb and Planner Michele Chalice about the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions goal and asked them what the best strategy is – e.g. whether the CCP Committee should go to the City Council now and ask them to adopt this new goal or wait until the UN conference in Paris in December, or wait the next GHG emissions report to be completed so they have the factual information. She continued that Mr. Lamb and Ms. Chalice recommended that the CCP Committee talk about it. They did not think one was better than another; it is up to the committee.

Chair Shedd stated that one question she has, regarding the CCP Committee recommending a new emissions reduction target to the City Council, is whether they have a process in place for accomplishing the GHG Emissions Inventory update. She continued that this year ends the 1995 to 2015 span that was identified as the target. She thinks there is money in the Planning Department budget for an intern. Will that process begin in January? Ms. Risley replied yes, late January, is her understanding. Chair Shedd replied that she is concerned that it might be April by the time they identify an intern then August by the time the work is done. She asked Ms. Germond to talk with staff about how to make sure that process is done in a timely fashion.

Mr. Hansel asked for more information about what the inventory measures. Chair Shedd explained that it covers community-wide and municipal-produced GHG emissions, and the goals were to reduce the city-wide emissions by 10% by 2015 (using 1995 data as a baseline) and reduce the municipality's emissions by 20% (by 2015, using 1995 data). She continued that the interim report was not very encouraging. Mari Brunner, the former intern, left the documentation for how to tackle the next inventory update. It is broken down by sector. The municipality has made more progress than the community at large but also has not met the goal. Mr. Hansel asked if it included the school district. Chair Shedd replied that it used to be accessible from the CCP's page on the City website but she is not sure whether or not it is still there. Mr. Hansel replied that they should be able to at least get good data from the school district and the municipality. He continued that the metrics are important. Chair Shedd replied that ICLEI has the software.

Councilor Powers asked what the holdup is with the intern. Ms. Risley replied that they will not hire the intern until the next semester. Councilor Powers replied that there is no budget issue; the budget is passed. Mr. Graham spoke of the upcoming student internship fair at Antioch University New England (AUNE) and suggested the CCP Committee be there from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM, in the Community Room. Chair Shedd replied that she could probably do that but she would need information from the City about what they are asking the intern to do. Discussion continued about the details of the internship. Ms. Risley stated that she thinks Ms. Chalice is handling this; she will check. Ms. Germond replied that she will follow up with Ms. Chalice, too. She might have the internship description written up, and she might be attending the internship fair.

Councilor Powers stated that the question is whether the data is important for the goal of moving forward, and he thinks it is. Chair Shedd agreed that this data could be persuasive. Mr. Hansel asked how close they came to meeting the goal. Ms. Risley replied that emissions increased instead of decreasing, according to the interim data. Chair Shedd spoke of how Keene's population has stayed relatively flat, so the increase is not due to a population increase. She questioned whether the data from 1995 is comparable to 2015 data – was the tool that was used the same? Regardless, the trend is not going in the direction they want.

Ms. Risley stated that the CCP had sent different City committees the goals in the Climate Adaptation Plan that were aligned with what those committees were doing, but there was no follow-up after that. She continued that the CCP Committee might want to follow up now and see if the goals are on the committees' lists or part of their work, to help move these goals forward. Chair Shedd asked if she means the Agriculture Commission, the Conservation Commission, Pathways for Keene (PFK), and the Monadnock Area Sustainable Transportation (MAST). Ms. Risley replied not PFK. She continued that they have not discussed it in MAST yet, but this would be a good time to. She continued that they had not sent the goals to them because they are not a City committee. Mr. Hansel asked if there are other non-city groups that should be involved. Ms. Risley replied that a number of years ago when the CCP Committee was putting the matrix together, non-city groups were interviewed by Antioch University New England (AUNE) students. She continued that they asked these community groups what they were working on. The CCP Committee thought it would be best to focus on working with City committees, where they could have some influence, and go back to the representatives of non-

city groups. Mr. Hansel spoke of the importance of involving the community as much as possible and suggested the Chamber of Commerce.

Chair Shedd stated that they did not complete their discussion about when to recommend new targets to the City Council, but it sounds like Councilor Powers likes the idea of waiting until the next inventory is complete. Councilor Powers replied that they are in the middle now because they do not have good data. Chair Shedd asked if the City Council will be busy with budget conversations through April or May. Councilor Powers replied yes, but the City Council can still discuss this, whenever the CCP Committee wants to crank it into the system.

Chair Shedd asked Ms. Germond to ask Ms. Chalice how long she expects it to take for the intern to collect the data and produce the document. She continued that if the intern is an AUNE student, it would be great to set a deadline for some date in May, and present to the City Council in June. That way they can present the updated data and the committee's updated recommendation in one sitting.

4. Revised GHG Goal/Goal Alignment Document

Chair Shedd stated that Ms. Risley did some good work with this, looking at City, State, Federal, and international targets. Ms. Risley replied that this is what they were just talking about – what to do with that document and when to present it. She continued that they need to talk with the City Planners and figure out what to do - she thinks they said the committee will have to write a letter or proposal and say “this is what we recommend” and present it. They can continue working on this up until June. It is all related. Chair Shedd noted that the various tiers of recommendations, for what level of reductions they should be aiming for, are in the agenda packet. She continued that the Paris conference in December will be talking about 2050. The committee had talked about setting interim targets because for many people, talking about a date 30 years in the future is not very helpful. They will have to talk about how to break it down.

5. Climate Adaptation Plan Subcommittee Summary

Chair Shedd stated that Ms. Risley did some work around transportation and local economy, including policy-level work. Ms. Risley replied that she looked into the car-sharing topic and shared her findings with MAST, and they felt that it was enough information to move forward with, although there are still questions about feasibility. She will meet with JB Mack, of the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) to talk about nuts and bolts. Regarding the policy work, she collected a bunch of possible policies, and assessed them with Mr. Lamb and Ms. Chalice – e.g. what is low-hanging fruit, what is already being done, what the City would be excited about, and so on and so forth.

Chair Shedd asked if they will be able to whittle that list down in the next two months to what the CCP Committee could be taking to the City Council. Ms. Risley replied that she was thinking the community groups would be taking these on, not the CCP Committee, considering their limited capacity. She will be happy to give updates.

Chair Shedd stated that the other part of the year's plan dealt with buildings and energy and the notion of creating a summit and pulling together various stakeholders. She continued that the Code Department is on board. She has not gotten a response from Eversource Energy. She got

some information from Southwest Community Services (SCS), the local coordinator for home weatherization. Their scope is pretty modest; about 6,000 households per year for fuel assistance but only 30 homes per year for energy efficiency upgrades. It is about \$3,500 per home and it is for low-income households. It would be helpful to get more information from them, about what road blocks there might be other than the budget. There is still room to move forward with this. She hopes the summit will happen sometime, but it will not happen in 2015.

Mr. Hansel stated that PSNH (now Eversource Energy) used to have a program to help finance energy audits for anyone who owned a building. He continued that it was contracted out to a party that would do the audit and give a proposal, and PSNH would provide funds to help accomplish the retrofits. It seemed like a good program and he does not know if it is still happening. If so, it would be good to get information from Eversource. Councilor Powers replied that Eversource did a presentation for the CCP Committee a few years ago. Ms. Risley suggested they connect with another local energy commission to see if they would be interested in collaborating on a summit. She continued that they need another subcommittee member, too. Ms. Germond suggested Monadnock Energy Resource Initiative as a resource. Chair Shedd asked if that is more focused on the Peterborough area. Ms. Germond replied no, it is for the region. She continued that she would be happy to share the contacts she has.

6. Logic Model

Mr. Graham explained that a Logic Model is a way of visually representing the mission of an organization and putting down on paper all of the things that go into an organization's function and mission, and the ways in which it intends to accomplish its goals. He continued that it is a working document that can be re-done as time goes on. It is helpful for organizations that sponsor programs or are involved in outreach activities to evaluate themselves. Through his program evaluation class he is learning about ways groups can evaluate whether they are doing what they said they would do and whether they are utilizing their resources, where they are going in the short and long term, etc. He would be interested in putting together a Logic Model for the CCP Committee. It can be done at an organizational level or for specific programs. He would want to look at things like archived minutes, other historical documents of this committee, and brainstorm and/or get input in some fashion about where this committee is going. It seems like there is a lot of good programming going on. He would be happy to put down on paper how it all fits together and draw a flow chart of sorts, if the committee wants.

Ms. Risley replied that all of the programs the CCP Committee used to have, they put on the shelf, because they did not have the capacity. She suggested Mr. Graham create a Logic Model based on the Planning Department's work in sustainability, not just focused on the CCP Committee. Councilor Powers asked how a Logic Model differs from a strategic plan. Mr. Graham replied that they are similar; it is just a different way of representing it. Mr. Hansel stated that the Logic Model gives accountability to goal accomplishment. Ms. Risley stated that there are programs happening in the city, like EP3, that she does not understand how they relate to the CCP Committee and how the committee could be involved – maybe it is good to take a step back to see the bigger picture. Mr. Graham suggested that it would help to look at the outputs the committee wants. For example, did they meet past goals? If not, why not? It is the start of an evaluative project.

Mr. Hansel replied that creating a Logic Model for the committee is an ambitious project. He continued that it would be great to help new members get oriented to the committee. Councilor Powers stated that this is an excellent tool that combines the elements of a strategic plan to a working document. Strategic plans often get put on a shelf, whereas this would help move goals forward. He would caution them to take small bites and then expand. The committee only has a certain amount of control over the results of the goals. Chair Shedd agreed that they have limited resources. She continued that the Planning Department has been consistently understaffed for years, and this committee is comprised of volunteers who meet one hour per month. This possibility ties in nicely with going back to the action and adaptation grid. Many of the targets in there have passed by two to five years. If this helps them to update the grid, that would be great.

Mr. Graham replied yes, he could look at those things and seek feedback on whether those goals are still relevant, or should be updated. He continued that they could take a hard look at capacity and think about other things they could pull in. Someone mentioned low-hanging fruit. That is an apt thing to look at. As a new member he wants to feel as though his effort is of use. This might be a great framework in the future.

Chair Shedd stated that her issue with low-hanging fruit is that what is most available is not always the most important. She continued that the City does some great things but their actions may be a drop in the bucket for reducing GHG emissions city-wide. Yes, they focus on what they have control over, but how do they expand out to the bigger picture? Councilor Powers replied that it is very important for the City to set the example. He continued that they need reminders for what could be done. They could make changes a little at a time. For example, have motion sensors for lights, make sure the timers for outdoor lights work, persistently talk with Eversource about making sure the streetlights are working, etc. Taking on the low-hanging fruit does make a difference. Chair Shedd replied yes, as long as they have ripples. Mr. Hansel added, and are part of a long-term effort.

Ms. Risley stated that it is great that Mr. Graham is involved with both the CCP Committee and the AUNE Climate Center. Mr. Graham replied that it is not surprise to him that everything is understaffed and underfunded, yet they persevere together and it is great to think about what can be accomplished. Knowing they are constrained by resources, taking on low-hanging fruit might be most feasible, and maybe not most important, but better than doing nothing.

Chair Shedd thanked Mr. Graham for his intriguing offer of creating the logic model. She asked him to bring an example of a Logic Model for the next meeting. Mr. Graham replied that he can send an example electronically, prior to the November meeting. He continued that he can start gathering relevant information to help the CCP Committee put this together. Ms. Risley replied that she can get him the materials. Councilor Powers replied that most of it is online. Ms. Risley added that she can give him the historical information, too.

Mr. Graham replied that it would be helpful to know the web of how this committee interacts with the City. Councilor Powers replied that mostly it is through the Planning Department. He continued that much of what the committee does relates to issues that come to the Planning and Code Departments, and then there is the action between the other members and various committees they are on. Chair Shedd added that the committee is clearly defined as advisory to

Cities for Climate Protection Committee meeting minutes,
October 7, 2015

the City Council. They are concerned with policy, and any communications they want to have with policy makers are channeled through the City Council.

7. NH Net-Metering Cap, John Kondos

Chair Shedd stated that she asked this to be on the agenda hoping Mr. Kondos would be here to address it. Mr. Hansel replied that he is on vacation.

Chair Shedd stated that the NH legislature established a cap on how much disseminated energy production they saw that the NH grid was tolerating. She continued that they set it at about 1% of NH's energy production. Up until now there have been various incentives to install solar in NH. The Federal incentives will go away at the end of 2016. This year's State incentives were depleted by the middle of the year because the renewable energy fund had less income this year. The State is approaching the net metering cap of 50 megawatts. It was portioned out depending on how much of the grid each of the four electric companies distributed. The NH Electric Co op met its portion of the cap but found ways to allow more solar installations in their catchment area. They raised their cap independently, a process that she does not entirely understand. The limitation now for projects in this area, like the Community Solar project at the Co op, may bump up against the cap, and the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) may say, 'if you put that on, we will be over the 50 megawatts.' There have been efforts to raise the cap. The State legislature did not approve it this year. It will come back to the legislature again after January.

Chair Shedd made a motion for the Cities for Climate Protection Committee to ask the City Council to write a letter to the New Hampshire legislature, Governor, and the Public Utilities Commission, asking for an increase to the net metering cap. Ms. Risley seconded the motion.

Mr. Hansel stated that John Kondos, he, and others are part of a group trying to establish a community solar project in Keene. He continued that the first one is out to bid, and they are negotiating with a contractor, for the solar project on the roof of the Co op. They will bump up against the cap. They are not sure if it can go forward. The funding part is not the issue; it is the cap. Mr. Kondos feels confident that if the project is approved they will be part of the rebate for next year. For the cap, they have no clue. There are large projects that have submitted projects to the PUC to get underneath the cap. If those projects do not go forward, then other projects can fit in. They do not know how to make a plan based on this lack of assurance about what will happen. Other states are having the same kind of problem and most of them have extended their caps, and NH should do the same, otherwise it is the end of solar in NH. On an optimistic note, in the last couple months there have been a lot of national solar companies now focusing on NH. They must know something. They would not be coming here if they knew the cap was going to stop. Mr. Hansel gave examples of these national companies and their projects. He continued that there are many people who want to see the cap raised.

Ms. Risley stated that there are bills now. Mr. Hansel replied that they voted against having an emergency session for this and now have to wait until January. Chair Shedd reported that she heard on National Public Radio that there was a bipartisan effort to meet a compromise that would increase the cap but decrease the reimbursement.

Discussion continued. Chair Shedd stated that it sounds like the State is willing to discuss raising the cap but it may come at some cost. She asked if this committee should make the recommendation to City Council. Mr. Hansel stated that he should recuse himself. He continued that he is an investor in a project Mr. Kondos is involved with. Ms. Risley stated that she works part-time at the Co op. Chair Shedd replied that she is a member owner at the Co op. Councilor Powers stated that they are not voting on Mr. Kondos' project – they are only voting to ask the City Council to support an increase in the net metering cap. Everyone can vote.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Chair Shedd asked Ms. Germond to relay this information to Ms. Chalice. Ms. Germond asked what their time frame is. Chair Shedd replied that they would generate the letter, give it to the City Clerk to distribute to the City Council, and get it on the agenda for the next City Council meeting if possible, or the one in two weeks. She continued that the City Council will hear it and refer the matter to the Planning, Licenses, and Development (PLD) Committee. The PLD Committee will discuss it and make a recommendation that they send back to the City Council, and they will vote on whether to approve it. It could be 4 to 6 weeks. But if a new bill does not come to the legislature until January and the possibility for an emergency session was already shot down, the timing is okay. Councilor Powers replied that this could get done in a three-week cycle and they should not delay it.

8. AUNE Climate Center

Mr. Graham reported that the AUNE Climate Center is closing in on the final agenda for the conference [in Baltimore]. He continued that registration goes live November 1 and there are travel grants available for municipal employees. There is also a search for exhibitors, if there is anyone connected to a firm that might want to have a table. He is looking at a project to do a historical analysis of the human impacts of flooding in Keene; specifically, people's accounts of it, to provide material for community engagement around the Beaver Brook process.

9. Other Climate Group Updates

Chair Shedd stated that she asked this to be put on as a standing agenda item. She continued that next Wednesday, NextGen Climate is putting together a local action expressing support for the UN conference in Paris. She included in the packet information from Citizens Climate Lobby, which is putting together a conference in Manchester or Nashua on November 7. She does not have more details. She asked if anyone knows of other climate groups.

Ms. Risley reported that the Hannah Grimes Center is having their annual event at Alyson's Orchard about the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) and how everyone plays a part in that. They will focus on the six themes of the visioning process. This is an opportunity. She is hoping other community members, organizations, and businesses that can play a part in making this happen will come. It will be Wednesday, October 28, from 5:00 to 8:00 PM. It is geared towards business owners and entrepreneurs but is for everyone. There will be a facilitated discussion about ideas about implementation.

10. Member Recruitment – Number of Members

Cities for Climate Protection Committee meeting minutes,
October 7, 2015

Chair Shedd that she spoke with Mari Brunner, who is planning on requesting appointment to the committee. She continued that she will be a valuable addition and already knows a lot about the committee. Ms. Risley is rotating off in December and there will be another vacancy to fill. She spoke with Chris Brehme at Keene State College (KSC). He might be interested but not at this time. She asked if anyone else has recommendations.

Ms. Risley asked if Mr. Hansel is a full member instead of an alternate. Mr. Hansel replied that according to last month's minutes, yes, but he is not sure. Ms. Germond replied that she will check with Helen Mattson in the Mayor's Office to see where this stands.

11. Next meeting – Wednesday, November 4, 2015

12. Adjournment

Chair Shedd adjourned the meeting at 9:02 AM.

Respectfully submitted by
Britta Reida, Minute-taker