



ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE (ECC)

AGENDA

Wednesday, September 4, 2024

8:00 AM

City Hall,
2nd Floor Conference Room

Members:

Zach Luse, Chair
Paul Roth, Vice Chair
Annu Joshi Bargale
Diana Duffy
Gordon Leversee
Jude Nuru
Clair Oursler
Kenneth Swymer Jr.
Councilor Bryan Lake

Lisa Maxfield
Chuck Redfern, Alternate
Rowland Russell, Alternate
Michael Winograd, Alternate
Jake Pipp, Alternate

Staff:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner
Megan Fortson, Planner

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Approval of Minutes** – August 7, 2024
3. **City of Keene Flood Mitigation Efforts** – Don Lussier, Public Works Director will provide an overview of the city's efforts to mitigate flood risk and prepare for future flood events.
4. **Work Group Report Outs**
 - a. Community Solar
 - b. Grants, Fundraising, and Partnerships
 - c. Education and Outreach
 - d. Legislative Tracking
 - e. Food Security
5. **Review of Keene Energy Plan Pillars**
6. **Monadnock Clean Energy Fair** – September 28th from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm at the Dillant-Hopkins Airport
7. **Keene Clean Energy Team Button Up Event** – September 25th from 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm at the Keene Rec Center
8. **Vision Keene Project Update** (KeeneMasterPlan.com)
9. **New Business**
10. **Next Meeting:** Wednesday, October 2, 2024, 8:00 am

Link to ECC Google Drive Folder:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1O1WIR0fADTNijRt13v3DU7k2FwxXDcGs?usp=sharing>

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

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5 ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

8:00 am

2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall

Members Present:

Zach Luse, Chair
Councilor Bryan Lake
Jude Nuru
Diana Duffy
Clair Oursler
Lisa Maxfield
Gordon Lerversee
Jake Pipp, Alternate (Voting)
Michael Winograd, Alternate (Voting)

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner
Megan Fortson, Planner

Members Not Present:

Charles Redfern, Alternate
Rowland Russell, Alternate
Kenneth Swymer
Annu Joshi Bargale
Paul Roth, Vice Chair

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9 **1) Call to Order and Roll Call**

10
11 Chair Luse called the meeting to order at 8:07 am. Following the roll call, Chair Luse invited Mr.
12 Jake Pipp and Mr. Michael Winograd to participate as regular members.

13
14 **2) Approval of Minutes- July 3, 2024**

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16 Councilor Bryan Lake moved to approve the July 3, 2024, minutes with a second from Mr. Pipp.
17 With no discussion and no opposition, the July minutes were approved unanimously.

18
19 **3) ECC Work Group Report Outs**

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21 **A) Community Solar**

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23 Mr. Jude Nuru shared that the community solar group met last month. In trying to determine the
24 next steps, they previously identified a need to review the scope of the work, determining whether

25 their money is limited to identifying a site or if there is the ability to expand to commercial
26 businesses.

27
28 Ms. Diana Duffy noted that it seemed to be as good a time as any to be reminded that they all are
29 trying to do the right thing, but suggested considering whether the right thing is aligned with what
30 the work group's task is, what the committee's mission is and what the City Council is doing. Ms.
31 Mari Brunner recently reminded her that those kinds of reminders are why the retreats are held.
32 The retreats serve as a time to get realigned and refocused as a larger committee.

33
34 Chair Luse added that he and Peter have been working on getting set up as coaches with Hannah
35 Grimes and believe the only thing left to do is to complete their biographies for the website. Upon
36 completion, they should be able to move forward and start working with the Chamber of
37 Commerce to get something in the newsletters advertising the coaching services.

38
39 Dr. Gordon Leverage asked if there would be support for residents or those interested in residential
40 development. Chair Luse responded that the residential support is typically handled by the
41 individual installers and explained that in recent years, the residential solar industry has taken a
42 life of its own and did not seem to need the same level of encouragement as other areas. Dr.
43 Leverage explained that he asked because he and his friends/neighbors have had different
44 experiences with solar energy and have very different conclusions about cost-effectiveness. While
45 there are some word-of-mouth resources, he wondered what else was available.

46
47 Chair Luse suggested anyone interested should contact multiple companies because, he believed,
48 some companies are just out to make a buck and do not have the individual's best interest in mind.
49 Dr. Leverage said he assumes that others like him are exploring solar energy, but need resources
50 to help them make informed and confident decisions.

51
52 Chair Luse explained that the Clean Energy Team used to do a solar tour, which was a great way
53 to find out which neighbors and businesses had solar. Eliminating that activity was a strategic
54 decision to help focus efforts. Mr. Nuru clarified that community solar energy does lead to
55 providing solar power for multi-family housing, notably Keene Housing, which qualifies as both
56 residential and commercial. Chair Luse added that another factor that played into eliminating the
57 solar tour was that commercial installs are generally more significant and have larger roofs and
58 higher electricity demands when they looked at the data. Efforts focused on commercial installs
59 can get a bigger bang for the buck. As rates continue to climb, Dr. Leverage said he assumes that
60 more people are thinking about how they can reduce their total energy use off the grid, and it seems
61 prime time to him to think about this as a group.

62
63 Councilor Lake asked for clarification on whether the Rose Lane site was still in the mix for solar
64 consideration, which Mr. Nuru clarified that it was. Ms. Brunner shared that for anyone with
65 questions, she believed that the Monadnock Sustainability Hub had done a solarize campaign in
66 the past for Peterborough and surrounding towns and had put together resources for residential
67 solar.

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B) Grants, Fundraising, and Partnerships

Chair Luse explained that the AmeriCorps option seemed to be a dead end, but it was not. He contacted Volunteer NH, which did not have a program in New Hampshire. The new funds are set to develop opportunities for people willing to partner with AmeriCorps and create programs, not necessarily for a city that wants one position. It would require developing a whole program to work with them to qualify. While talking with the representative, Chair Luse explained that the representative did mention that Clean Energy NH may be looking into doing something like that. It is something to remember for the future, but not a short-term solution.

The American Climate Corps was just recently signed into legislation. He believed that the first class was last month. Chair Luse has just started looking into them and explained that their website mainly focuses on finding volunteer opportunities, mostly with the Forest Service, college campus climate advocates, and climate dynamics. He plans to reach out to them and see what information he can get on possibly working with them in some capacity. He fears they are working with prominent partners, but plans to reach out anyway.

C) Education and Outreach

Chair Luse shared that the main topic discussed was the button-up workshop. Carolyn Jones has been working on scheduling the workshop the week before the Monadnock Sustainability Hub’s Clean Energy Fair. She emailed Chair Luse yesterday and confirmed that she had secured September 25th at the Rec Center from 6–8 pm. He was curious if they needed to do anything regarding the City's support since it is at the Rec Center. Ms. Brunner said it would not hurt if the ECC wanted to support it as the Energy and Climate Committee, but she did not believe it would need to be sent to the City Council. The topic was sidelined and discussed further in the agenda item later in the meeting. Chair Luse thanked Ms. Jones for her work. He shared that they met with Jack Lamont to discuss how the ECC could support the Clean Energy Fair. Once they provide the materials, the ECC will help with public relations and publicity through City social media, email newsletters, and various networks.

Chair Luse explained that he would not be in the country for the Clean Energy Fair, which is scheduled on Saturday, September 28th at the airport. He explained that they need a point person from the ECC to help organize volunteers. The Clean Energy Team will be tabling, and the plan is to have a table right next to it, providing some opportunity for overlap and to help each other out. He questioned whether that was something the group wanted and could do. Councilor Bryan Lake offered to help organize through a Google Sheets signup.

Chair Luse shared that Ms. Annu Bargale has been working on creating some brochures and marketing materials related to community power. He has yet to have a final review of them, but they look really good from what he has seen. He said having some updated materials to hand out would be nice.

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D) Legislative Tracking

There were no legislative update for this month.

E) Food Security

Mr. Rowland Russell was not present, but had previously emailed an update to Chair Luse. Chair Luse shared that the food security group has a focus group with stakeholders, people from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, and entities that may be impacted by the food waste ban (set to take effect January 1st) scheduled for Thursday, September 5th at Hannah Grimes.

4) Municipal Solar Grant Program

Chair Luse updated that the City submitted a solar grant application for a 36kw solar installation on the fleet services building next to Keene Ice at the last minute. The ECC submitted a letter of support for that application.

5) 2nd Annual Monadnock Clean Energy September 28 at the Dillant-Hopkins Airport

Chair Luse recognized Jack Lamont. Jack did not have any significant updates for the Clean Energy Fair, but said he would send a press release this week. He also shared that he has a volunteer signup sheet for anyone interested in volunteering and plans to send that to Chair Luse to distribute.

6) NH Saves Button Up Home Weatherization Workshop

Ms. Carolyn Jones requested support from the ECC for the NH Saves Button Up Home Weatherization Workshop. Ms. Lisa Maxfield motioned to support the workshop scheduled for September 25th from 6–8 pm at the Keene Rec Center. Councilor Bryan Lake seconded the motion, and with all in favor and no opposition, it was unanimously approved.

7) Vision Keene Project Update

Ms. Mari Brunner shared that there has been a lot going on with the Master Plan Update projects. The project is currently in phase one, which is the visioning portion of the project. As part of that, a community survey was conducted, and there was a think tank workshop in May. They held public visioning sessions for one week in June and then on-demand sessions throughout July, and they did another round of public sessions on Monday and Tuesday of last week. The night before the meeting, there was a steering committee meeting, which was a joint meeting of the Master Plan Steering Committee and the Planning Board. They started identifying the critical themes for the Master Plan based on the input. She is currently working on getting something scheduled with the Hundred Nights Shelter. They have received feedback that they need to engage more young people,

153 which they plan to do once school is back in session for both Keene State College and the high
154 school.

155
156 She requested that if any members are part of a group or organization they believe would be
157 interested; either she or Jesse Rounds from the City would be happy to come do a Visioning
158 Session. The goal of the sessions is to get input on what people think the preferred future of Keene
159 should be. They came up with four potential plausible futures and have started exploring them.
160 Then, they want to figure out what the community wants and how they will get there. She believes
161 they have heard from a great group of people, but she would like to gather even more input and
162 ask if members have ideas of connections. She would love to get out there and meet with more
163 folks.

164
165 Mr. Pipp asked if Ms. Brunner had reached out to Keene Young Professionals Network or Keene
166 Rotaract or groups like that made up of permanent residents rather than those in school who are
167 here solely for their schooling. Ms. Brunner shared that she attended a Keene Young Professionals
168 Network meeting. It was not an entire visioning session, but a few minutes to speak. She has yet
169 to reach out to the Rotaract Group. They had done both rotary clubs, which she believes is a very
170 different population and target. Ms. Brunner asked if Mr. Pipp had a contact for the Keene Rotaract
171 Club. Mr. Pipp suggested Yves Gakunde.

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173 **8) New Business**

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175 Chair Luse asked if there was any new business. Mr. Mike Winograd was unsure if anyone had
176 noticed that on July 26th, CNBC did a little business report on the ten worst states for climate, and
177 New Hampshire was number seven. Infrastructure was rated as an F, and the concern was flooding
178 and wetlands going away. He thought it was an interesting piece to read. The second piece was
179 that one of his neighbors mentioned that there was significant flooding several years ago, with
180 follow-up flooding multiple times. He was aware that an effort was made to put together a program
181 to ensure that does not happen again and wondered where that program stood, especially after
182 seeing the recent flooding in Vermont. He expressed concern about hail and its effect or impact on
183 solar panels. He read that some research is being done on this, but with the changing climate, he
184 believed more effort needs to be put forward to find a solution.

185
186 Chair Luse was not sure about the flooding piece. He knew a lot of work had been done on the
187 smaller brooks that came down through town. Mr. Winograd said there was a discussion in 2012,
188 but he did not see that it had gone anywhere after that. Chair Luse thanked Mr. Winograd for his
189 input.

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191 **9) Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 4, 2024, 8:00 am**

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194 **10) Adjournment**

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196 There being no further business, Chair Luse adjourned the meeting at 8:40 AM.

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198 Respectfully submitted by,
199 Amanda Trask, Minute Taker

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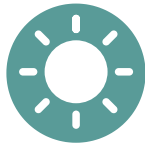
201 Reviewed and edited by,
202 Megan Fortson, Planner

Keene Sustainable Energy Plan

Vision: In 2050, the City of Keene will be a thriving and resilient community powered by affordable, clean, and renewable energy. All electricity and energy used for heating, cooling, and transportation will come from renewable energy sources.



Electricity



Thermal



Transportation



Learn More

To learn more about specific tools and strategies to help us achieve our community's energy goals, please visit KeeneEnergyPlan.com.

Contact Us

City of Keene, New Hampshire
Community Development Department
City Hall, 4th Floor
3 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431
Email:
communitydevelopment@ci.keene.nh.us
Phone: 603-352-5440



Electricity

Goal: 100 percent of electricity used in Keene will come from renewable energy sources by 2030.

How:

1. Reduce electricity use for buildings in all sectors.
2. Increase renewable energy generation and storage.
3. Procure renewable energy to meet remaining electricity demand.
4. Conduct ongoing advocacy and education.

Strategies

Access Renewable Energy Loans

Keene can partner with a local bank or credit union to help residents secure affordable finance options for renewable energy projects like home solar.

Develop a Battery Storage Program

Keene and Eversource can work together to start a program to reduce electricity demand charges by using electricity stored in batteries.

Community Power Programs

Through Community Power, Keene can make a bulk purchase of energy for residents and businesses, which can help ratepayers get lower rates while adding more renewables to the energy portfolio.

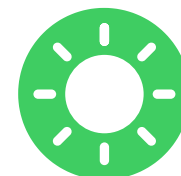
Solar-ready Guidelines

Keene can adopt solar-ready guidelines to make sure that new buildings are designed to accommodate solar now and in the future.

Community Power: Medford, MA

"We're buying the electricity in bulk for the entire city. The city basically does that for your water. Why can't they do it for your electricity?"

—Denis MacDougall, City of Medford, MA



[Listen to learn more about Community Power Programs](#)





Thermal

Goal: 100 percent of all thermal energy consumed in Keene will come from renewables by 2050.

How:

1. Reduce thermal energy use for buildings in all sectors.
2. Increase local renewable energy generation and storage.
3. Encourage fuel switching to renewable fuel sources.
4. Conduct ongoing advocacy and education.

Strategies

Expand Weatherization

By partnering with existing programs, Keene can help residents take advantage of rebates and incentives that make weatherizing your home more affordable.

Kickstart Heat Smart

Bulk discount pricing on thermal technologies can make upgrading your home heating and cooling systems more accessible and affordable.

Adopt a Benchmarking Ordinances

Measuring the energy efficiency of commercial and municipal buildings can help Keene identify which buildings can benefit from energy efficiency upgrades.

Start a Home Energy Labeling Program

Knowing the energy efficiency scores of Keene homes and apartments can help you make an informed decision when buying or renting a home.

Home Energy Labeling, City of Montpelier, VT

"If you wouldn't buy a car without knowing the gas mileage, why would you buy a house without knowing effectively what the gas mileage is of that house?"

—Anne Watson, Mayor of Montpelier, VT



[Listen to learn more about Home Energy Labeling](#)





Transportation

Goal: 100 percent of all energy used for transportation in Keene will come from renewables by 2050.

How:

1. Reduce the total vehicle miles traveled in Keene.
2. Accelerate the shift to electric vehicles and other alternative fuel vehicles.
3. Promote efficient growth patterns.
4. Conduct ongoing advocacy and education.

Strategies

Expand and Improve City Express Bus Services

Expanding service hours and the number of bus stops can increase ridership and better serve the needs of Keene residents.

Expand the Complete Streets Program

Keene streets can be accessible and safe for all users, including drivers, pedestrians, people with disabilities, bicyclists, seniors, and youth.

Create a Multi-modal Transportation Center

A multi-modal transportation center in Keene can be a central hub for bus transit, bike transit, car-sharing, electric vehicles (EV) charging, and more.

Adopt EV-Ready Guidelines

The City can adopt EV-Ready guidelines to make sure that new developments are designed to accommodate EV chargers now and in the future.

Vehicle Electrification, Keene, NH

"Some people may take the attitude that we can wait for electric vehicles to come along. This is about planning for the not distant future."

—John Kondos, Board President of the Monadnock Sustainability Hub



[Listen to learn more about Vehicles Electrification](#) 11 of 11



[Learn more at KeeneEnergyPlan.com](https://www.keeneenergyplan.com)