

Commission for Energy Use and Climate Change

Meeting Minutes

July 12, 2017

Tufts Administration Building, 167 Holland St., Somerville, MA

Attendees:

Bueno, Ramon –Commissioner
Moore, Stephen – Commissioner
Rooney-Varga, Juliette – Commissioner
Wood, Julie – Commissioner
Hannah Payne – Sustainability Coordinator
Galeano, Francisco
Berkman, Seth
Berkman, Syd
Flynn, Dan
Newhouse, Jocelyn

Review and adopt the minutes from the June 14, 2017 meeting

- Stephen will forward for approval at the August meeting.

Climate Change Plan (Somerville Climate Forward)

- June 26 kick-off meeting presentation included:
 - Process for development of the climate change plan
 - GHG inventory and pathways to carbon neutrality results
 - Vulnerability assessment results
 - Questions for audience: what does a carbon neutral and resilient Somerville look like?
- Over 100 people came to the June 26 kick-off meeting.
- Energetic and engaged audience, people were pushing for more and faster climate action
- Mayor's comments framed the issue and placed importance on taking action.
- Alderman White and Alderman Rossetti were both present.
- Diverse ages represented, including many young people. The sense is that we mostly reached people who are engaged with this issue already. Many good technical questions that indicated a sophisticated audience.
- Must be an equitable process, so we need to reach beyond the community that is already engaged.
- Notes and minutes will be available online by the end of the month.
- Working groups:
 - 75 people signed up for working groups
 - Information about working groups was sent out to City staff
 - First meetings will be in August through early September
 - Aiming for groups that are 8-10 people in each working group (not counting City staff or Commissioners)
 - Working Groups will be led by City staff.

- Asking Commissioners to participate in one working group, which will involve three meetings per working group over the course of the project.
- Additional Somerville Climate Forward meetings scheduled to take a deeper dive into GHG accounting (August 16) and climate change vulnerability (August 21). Meeting information is on SustainaVille.
- There is also an online survey on the SustainaVille website. Would be helpful for us to share that list, especially with people beyond climate active audiences.
- Additional outreach to ‘non-climate’ people:
 - Hannah will be at SomerStreets events
 - Oliver and Hannah are talking to SomerViva team to set up meetings in Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole.
- Currently identifying strategies for Somerville Climate Forward; prioritizing and analyzing strategies are next steps.
 - Consulting team will meet with CEUCC, and CEUCC will be brought up to date on progress in September (first choice) or August (unclear that many Commissioners will be available)
- In general, Aldermen are supportive of this work.
 - Alderman Ballantyne – introduced a statement to formally state that the BOA support Paris climate accord
 - Many of them would like more information on Somerville Climate Forward as it progresses.
- ResiStat meetings (happen twice/year in each Ward) or meetings that Aldermen hold with their constituents might be an opportunity to share this info beyond climate active audiences
 - Hannah asked for Commissioners to participate in one ResiStat meeting this fall
 - ResiStat meetings would offer high level overview of CEUCC and climate change plan
- Stephen – has pitched the idea of Aldermen holding meetings that combine the issues of equitable and sustainable housing. He’s gotten positive feedback from two candidates for Ward 4, and some response from others.
- Houses of worship could be good places to go to bring information to.
- Long term educational plan with youth – educational value in reports that are being generated.
 - Sustainability Office has made inroads into schools; held a meeting with K-8 curriculum coordinator. Seventh graders do sustainability projects – presented at two schools this year and spoke with high school science teachers.
- Extra-curricular student groups
 - HS Green Club – not very active
 - Tufts – might be a good place to go
- Education and outreach working group will be critical for defining outreach opportunities.
- What type of programming works in different houses of worship? PTA meetings? Other opportunities?
 - Many houses of worship have a social justice/equity component
 - Need to tailor message to different communities
 - Interfaith higher network in Somerville?
 - Network is growing in Somerville around sanctuary city status
 - Survey could be shared with that group
 - Hannah could go to a meeting that convened many faith leaders

- Sustainable Business Network – could be another target stakeholder group
- Use every person in every working group what other groups in Somerville that they are involved in – ask them to go to that meeting and speak to others there, have a quick ask to add to that (opt up in CCA? Sign on to an email list)
- Four tasks
 - Vision and goal setting (City leading; wrapping that up now)
 - Engagement (City leading)
 - Strategy/solutions development (consultant leading)
 - Research over next couple of months
 - Documentation (consultant leading)

Somerville Community Choice Electricity program

- Update on the numbers:
 - 29,659 accounts on standard +5% option
 - 93 accounts with standard MA RPS
 - 206 sign up for 100% renewable – this is about average compared to other communities
 - 2241 opt-outs
- What level of outreach should City do?
- CCA in renewables includes: Wind, solar that is locally produced from ‘new’ projects
- Mass Energy Consumers Alliance should have more info
 - They set up the program for communities across the state
 - They should be able to answer many basic questions
 - They have outreach material ready to do this
- Solarize Somerville has ended; so now there is no single company that the City works with on solar; City has no buildings that are suitable for community solar
 - City helps people understand permitting process
 - Info on how you can get solar if you have a condo etc.
- Create a sign for businesses? Or ask Sustainable Business Network if they would want a City-sanctioned sign or their own logo?
- City can’t get granular information on which accounts are opting up or out
- Should the City be advocating for people to opt up?
 - Advantage that City has:
 - Solarize and heat pump programs were for homeowners
 - This could reach renters (who don’t open mail from the City)
- Have Scout Somerville do a piece about the process that led up to this?
- You can opt out at any time. But once you opt out, you can’t opt back in for 3 years

Tracking State Legislation

- Joshua sent around a pdf with info about pending legislation on energy and climate in MA.

Any and all business before the Commission

- Update on heat pump program will be provided at the next meeting.