

## Somerville Climate Forward

### Education and Outreach Working Group Meeting #2

January 11, 2018

#### Attendees

- Ramón Bueno, Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change
- Lisa Young
- Paola Massoli
- Hannah Payne, City of Somerville
- Ben Elgart

#### Individual feedback on solutions

- Ramón- Important to do outreach to particular communities within Somerville. Particularly interested in increasing outreach to Latino and Hispanic population and using that as a springboard to conduct outreach to other communities.
  - Outreach for programs that address existing building issues is especially important— need to make sure that people can take advantage of programs.
  - Most solutions (like those to increase the tree canopy or improve health) require long-term, ongoing education campaigns (not just 3 months).
  - Engage with existing groups and non-profits to figure out ways to develop ongoing relationships. May take some initial effort to build relationships.
  - Need to increase participation on climate action—currently don't have diverse representation.
  - Need to reach out to health providers and other people that vulnerable populations rely on. Make sure providers are aware of specific health risks of heat, air quality, etc. and know what steps to take.
- Paola – Outreach to vulnerable populations. Get names and addresses of people to reach out to.
  - Who cannot get to services? Need to be aware of mobility challenges.
  - Professional education for service providers might be effective.
- Ben - Do we know who is already interested in participating in these kinds of programs and actions? How do we build on their interest to increase participation and action? Start with those who are already engaged.
  - Create resilience toolkits to facilitate outreach.
- Lisa – Outreach to vulnerable populations – liked the way the way the solution was written – we don't know the best ways to reach out to different communities. Need to work with existing organizations and use trusted messengers to get information out. City should take the lead on making first steps by asking what the best way to do outreach is and to let community members know about risks and new programs. Should ensure that there is a feedback mechanism to city

staff and policy makers. Think about whether in-person, forums, door to door, digital outreach is better.

### Group discussion

- Use ResiStat meetings to share information. Utilize local publications and radio stations and cable.
- Population in Somerville changes – need permanent efforts so you are never giving up on baseline communication and education.
- Reach out to faith leaders.
- Welcome packet for newcomers to Somerville on the programs available.
- Focus on messaging on how you can participate and what you can do. Don't scare people. If sharing info about flooding – tell them what they can do and what the City is doing to address the risk.
- Climate Coalitions with Themes: Always share information in the context of longstanding challenges we are facing, give broad terms of the challenges and then focus on specific programs one at a time. Never lose the big picture if focusing on a specific program or topic each year.
- Customer relationship management – ongoing relationship building. Good way to kick it off is by providing an immediate benefit: “don't get flooded kit”
- Different people should be receiving different messages.
- Need to get landlords more engaged and involved.
- Point of sale/ point of lease: Landlords will worry that they need to spend money.
  - Might be challenging with large property managers but could be a way to make absent landlords more engaged.
  - Might have to have an incentive if it isn't easy to get done. If it's not easy, cheap, and speedy there will be pushback.
  - Getting buy-in for this will be hard, but it is a great idea. Tenants want to know how much they will be spending on energy, so it is an understandable ask.
  - It would be good to do outreach to tenants and landlords before enacting the ordinance.
  - Look at other cities that have done the same thing.
  - Data could be shared with the city to build a database on residential energy use.
  - Is there a landlord association or group? Realtors are easier to target.
- Green workforce development: Seems like a really good idea. Main issue is affordability. How can we create jobs to implement the programs outlined in Somerville Climate Forward? Engaging people through jobs changes the culture of the community and would get more people involved in climate action.
  - Workforce development should be focused on job training and job creation. Volunteer programs and youth engagement are also important but should be separate.

- Build on existing plans and synergy: Youth involvement programs – internships or volunteer opportunities. The city isn't necessarily creating the jobs but is facilitating the connections between youth and groups. Draw on existing assets like Greentown Labs: once a year have a public activity where city youth and residents come and learn about career opportunities.
- Follow urban agriculture ambassador model: education on how to grow veggies and raise animals in the city. Create a similar program for climate action.

### **Continuing working group engagement**

- Some people will want to be ambassadors for the whole plan, some will want to just be ambassadors to specific parts of the plan. Education and Outreach group can help shape how volunteers can be directed.
- Should have a way of formally training people on messaging and solutions. Need to make sure the message is consistent. Could be as simple as creating a one page summary of the plan or summaries by theme.
- City should build database of working group members and what groups and organizations they are connected to in the community.