

Meeting Minutes
Town of Concord
Climate Action Advisory Board
Wednesday, January 16, 2019



Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Climate Action Advisory Board (CAAB) was held on Wednesday, January 16, 2018 at 7:00 pm at the Harvey Wheeler Center. CAAB members present were Brian Foulds, Fran Cummings, Jake Swenson, Michael McAteer, Nick Pappas, Pam Hill, Ruthy Bennett, and Warren Leon. Also present were:

Kate Hanley, Director of Sustainability,
Alice Kaufman, Select Board Liaison,
Gary Kleiman, Planning Board Chair,
Melissa Simoncini, Senior Environmental and Regulatory Coordinator, Public Works,
Kim Lundgren, KLA (consultant)

1. Welcome visitors (Chair)

Chair Nick Pappas welcomed visitors to the meeting.

2. Approval Of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the November 28, 2018 meeting were approved by a voice vote.

3. Overview of Agenda and Materials

- Kate reviewed Agenda and other materials emailed and handed out
- In connection with sheet of definitions, Chair Nick urged members to review recent long-range plan
- List of new building strategies not exhaustive, outline possible way to structure meetings (further discussion below)
- Nick suggested adding an item for calling out nature-based solutions
- CAP outline: discussion of moving or “clustering” sections - eg, community engagement different from other topics
- Community members may submit feedback to the committee via CAABChair@concordma.gov or via the website (<https://concordma.gov/2136/Climate-Action-Advisory-Board>). The Chair monitors this email channel.

4. Director’s Update

- [Final Report completed on MVP planning grant project](#)
- Kate applied for a mini-grant from MAPC for sustainable landscaping; other grant opportunities/applications coming soon
- Approved for Summer Fellow – will work on commercial sector emission reductions
- CSEC meeting last week - will help with National Grid Community Initiative grant and starting sustainable landscaping initiative
- Communications: see links in online Director’s Update; Concord Sustainability videos are at <https://concordma.gov/2108/Sustainability>

5. Update on Emissions Inventory (Kim Lundgren, KLA)

- Previously, inventory showed increase over time - now show 5% decrease

- Change is due to a new “custom emission factor” for electricity based on new data from CMLP on Jan. 4; Laura Scott helped our team; previously CMLP was higher than regional grid; now, treat as grid since contracts could be supplied by other sources
- Brian and Fran asked why not use ISO-NE emission data, which is specific to New England and higher (over 700 compared to 563 from eGrid)
 - Kim replied “protocol suggests eGrid in most cases” but indicated flexibility to revisit
- Discussion of vehicle emissions:
 - VMT - MAPC data is based on vehicles registered by Concord owners; discussion of garage location and owner’s/lessor’s town(s)
 - Brian asked why not updated since 2014 - MAPC getting different data from RMV
 - EVs are noted separately
 - Commercial vehicles are included
 - Discussion of how hybrids are treated in the data; some hybrid owners check both gas & electric but only 1 value is entered into the data
- Discussion of emissions from waste:
 - Assessor database 8% increase in commercial SF - since limited data on commercial waste, applied that % to commercial tonnage of waste
 - Nick: town collects waste from only 67% of households; difficult to use info going forward when poor data on base year
- Other discussion topics/questions:
 - Are we considering emissions embedded in building materials? – No, not per inventory. Kim commented that we “could do extra analysis” on that, as also with soil issues.
 - Number of commercial buildings went down and total SF went up
 - Residential: 17% decrease in number of homes heated in fuel oil, heated by electricity UP 37%, heated by gas up 20%
 - Oil-heated homes have been replaced by larger gas homes

6. Discussion of Draft “Wedge” Analysis

- Nick discussed selection of the 5 wedges, noted that they are not the only or necessarily the best potential strategies
- Kim on 5 wedges:
 - CAFE - why included? always going to be outside factors - role for advocacy at state and federal levels - best way to reduce in-town GHG from vehicles is to improve CAFE standards nationally
 - EVs
 - Heat pumps
 - Energy efficient homes
 - Zero-carbon electricity - largest-potential option for Concord.
- Kim: This analysis is not meant to be perfect science - meant to illustrate potential - three scenarios: L/M/H. More specific strategies can be identified and quantified later in CAP.
- Warren: BAU shows increase emissions, but now see decrease from 2008 - 2016.
 - Kim: it would be a “big assumption: to assume baseline GHG dropping - we tend to be conservative
- Buildings - questions about definitions of L/M and H - why different years in table of impacts
 - 2030 is a “more actionable year” than 2050, so it’s good to report wedge impacts as of 2030 as well

7. Emission Reduction Strategies for New Buildings

- See handout [link]
- Discussion of strategy “Adopt a Net Zero Emission Standard”
 - stretch code is state law (e.g., HERS 55) & town can’t change it
 - what can town do with zoning?
 - relevant cases were discussed from MA cities & towns:
 - Arlington requirements associated with use of town funding
 - Cambridge tax abatements for energy measures and green building zoning amendment (Article 22 of the Zoning Ordinance, Sustainable Design and Development)
 - <https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/externallinks/zoningordinance/article22>
 - Boston LEED green building Article 37 zoning with inter-agency Green Building Committee
 - <http://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/article-37-green-building-guidelines>
 - Watertown - requirements for solar - new commercial construction have to have solar - town attorney said OK
 - <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/26235/2018-11-27-Zoning---Solar-Assessments>
 - These zoning requirements have mostly been applied only to commercial over a certain size
- Discussion of alternatives to requirements: “Incentivize and Educate” from handout - what would motivate a developer? - avoid risk, accelerate permitting process
- 8 different ratings – LEED, Energy Star, passivhaus, “Zero-Energy Certified”, etc.
 - LEED is adding % carbon reduction
- Gary: state BBRS updates base code every 3 years, and towns may adopt the stretch code which is about 20% better than base code - they try to balance reasonable cost increment for new construction, they don’t factor in need for GHG reductions by date
- Town could offer a 3-4 year abatement equivalent to incremental costs of efficiency improvement
- Nick: we could consider a model where town borrows money for abatements at good rate and building owner repays over time
- Brad Hubbard-Nelson: package efficiency measures so as to increase home value
- Melissa (Public Works): water stretch code, “net blue”
- Warren:
 - decide which rating system for home most useful for us
 - train developers & real estate agents
 - what can we do to influence commercial new construction - not covered by home rating systems
- Commercial buildings are renovated more often than built new
 - tenant fit-out
 - more split incentives
- Gary:
 - subdivision by-law - set mostly by state statute

- PRDs - planned residential developments also modifications - could adopt site plan review
 - sustainability criteria adopted by Town Meeting last year for site plan review
- Kate: can't use zoning to address/increase a particular requirement that's already addressed in building code, but may be able to add different requirements through zoning codes like Watertown did with solar (e.g., GHG, electrification)
- Discussion of a "net zero code" - DOER has proposed that BBRS adopt International Energy Conservation Code and include EV-readiness and more strict efficiency guidelines
- Gary: best strategy is to work with other towns to get stretch code sufficient to meet 2050 goals
- Even when set standard - missing is how to reach the goals - nested in permitting dept.
- Nick: need to know costs with and without
- Gary: zero energy code needed for retrofits or to meet
- Melissa: "simultaneous compliance" - different silos manage different permits- someone to help connect dots
- Allow developer to add more houses/smaller lots if meet environmental standards - that's a PRD ("bonus")
 - amend to include energy
 - we have been seeing applications that don't really provide desired benefits
- Nick: developers like certainty as long as they can sell units, but higher costs are key barrier

8. Recommendations for developing RFP for Climate Action Plan

- General discussion:
 - What scale/budget? There may be action grants up to \$400k; other towns have paid \$80-200k for action plans
 - Don't re-invent the wheel - what other towns, institutions and companies have done, draw on best practices
- Criteria for selecting a consultant:
 - practitioners and recognized leaders not necessarily consultants
 - expertise on buildings/structures
 - able to design plan but also implement (dirty hands), involved in implementing actions, can do actionable plan
 - able to quickly do analysis of potential climate impacts of strategies we come up with - whether powerful strategy or not
 - cost-effective and not just cutting-and-pasting previous documents
 - Concord-specific knowledge or data on what happening locally
 - experience with similar demographic - scalable to what we have here
 - strong presenters and communicators and listeners
 - demonstrated capability to be "breathtakingly transformational"
 - we need massive transformation
 - we should have courage - not focus on "softening" cost impacts
 - can't meet our goals unless become radical and think transformationally
 - really change paradigms and expectations about lifestyle - we're not "pat-yourself-on-the-back" town
 - accepting we have to really shift a lot of things around to get where we need to be
 - this committee has to articulate the benefits

- able to communicate financial perspectives: BAU costs us money, costs are now imposed by not accounting for fossil externalities - also prove everyone won't lose their retirement, address concerns about diminishing value of houses - true cost of a house - high operating costs of inefficient houses
- "Internalizing a carbon price" - would the Town adopt that?

9. Public Comments

Meeting was adjourned 9pm.

Minutes were prepared by Fran Cummings.