

Energy Future Task Force Public Meeting – Citizen’s Comments – Summarized by Amanda Siano

Meeting Date and Time: October 20, 2016 – 7:00 pm until 9:00 pm

Location: Harvey Wheeler Building, 1276 Main Street, Concord, MA

OUTLINE OF CITIZEN’S COMMENTS

1. Citizen Comment 1:

- a. Have standards been addressed for energy efficiency in new construction and tear downs?
 - Sustainable living, ie: solar panels, thermal heating
 - new construction is an easy place to start compared to retro fitting structures

2. Citizen Comment 2:

- a. How far toward the 80% reduction by 2050 goal does draft goal # 6 get us?

3. Mike McAteer: works for National Grid, but speaking as a Concord citizen

- a. TF has prepared good goals
- b. NE has top 1st, 2nd & 3rd IOU in country who have engaged in delivering these kinds of strategies for 25 years.
 - A tremendously rich body of info already exists regarding strategies, barriers and ways one can scale energy efficiency, no need to reinvent the wheel
 - It is about delivering and executing at scale what we already know
- c. Excited by idea of Director of Energy position
- d. Advantage large IOUs have is legislation that requires them to collect data for every single kilowatt hour and for every single therm that’s sold \$ 0.0025 is collected which equals roughly \$500M
- e. To go to scale in energy efficiency you need to mobilize three things:
 - Technical understanding of what can be done (energy audits)
 - Capital for incentives to drive people to make energy efficient decision and practices.
 - Director of Energy - essential to have someone oversee the operations by directing people and helping them to access those three strategies
- f. TF goals are bold and will absolutely create the kind of change Concord is looking for, but they are far out into the future
 - We know that 50% of the climate solution is in the built environment, the other 50% is in renewable energy, wind, solar, electric vehicles
 - IOUs are bringing it closer to home by looking at achieving 3% megawatt hour reductions annually and then compounding that year over year, which will allow 50% reduction by 2025-2030, which brings us back to the carbon reduction, which then brings us back to the goal of keeping the temperature at 2% centigrade and 400 parts per million
 - Recommendation that in addition to CMLP doing audits use the tactics to bring the measurement home to an annual reduction, and then think about doing that in a compound basis - that will accent equally the achievements for carbon reduction

4. Bill Lehr:

- a. Echo comments just made
- b. Think about what recommendation TF makes to ensure a funding mechanism
- c. Something like a CPC type of fund because this doesn’t only involve CMLP it’s about the whole town

- d. The second discussion point at first public meeting concerned adoption of net-zero goals - Why did TF choose the goals selected
 - are these as stronger than the net-zero goal
 - why wasn't net-zero chosen
 - e. One unique aspect of the TF charter is that it is about the whole town, CMLP is only one part of it.
 - Tactics including bike lanes, parking for electric cars, what the school does, a decision to change rules to allow solar on buildings, etc. things CMLP can't do
 - Charter is not only about municipal buildings, it's about trying to encourage the whole town
 - Looking out to the other committees, there's a mandate to them also
5. **Citizen Comment 5:**
- a. TF goals would put Concord in the lead – is leading by example enough?
 - Should the TF plan include an element to communicate what Concord is doing and to help other towns do the same thing
 - Focus seems to be inward, which is great, but can we do more
6. **Bernie Jenkins:**
- a. Many goals and ideas have been presented - Is there a timeline for achievement?
7. **Anita Barker:**
- a. Recently attended the library expansion meeting where organizers may have energy goals in mind, but not much was said about energy efficiency
 - b. Considering the amount of expansion in town it would be valuable for TF members/representative to attend meetings to highlight energy efficiency awareness
8. **Citizen 8:**
- a. Confused about scope – Are goals referring to only the municipal sector?
 - Municipal sector is about 2% or less of energy consumption, residential and commercial is a larger component of energy consumption
 - When Paris climate talks are held it's a broad scope where all information is captured
 - b. At the end of the last session a wise gentleman talked about 3 things
 - Energy efficiency
 - Renewable energy
 - Electrifying everything
 - c. Referring to Michael McAteer's comment that we aim for a 3% reduction in our electricity use - perhaps our goal might be to aim for a 3% increase in electricity use if it moves people away from burning oil and natural gas
 - Sectors need to be clarified to ensure it makes sense to consider a goal of driving things to the grid when thinking about power sources
9. **Bob Andrews:**
- a. Goal #7 relating to sectors stands out as vague and ambiguous
 - b. Reassured by Elise's comments concerning the extent to which these sectors will be explored through the process.
 - c. Remains concerned with how much effort will be focused on other sectors because energy and CMLP are central to much of what TF is thinking and talking about
 - d. Agriculture was mentioned as a sector, but it's not exactly an energy sector
 - Agriculture is a relevant sector when you talk about carbon emissions
 - There are a number of things relative to reducing carbon in the atmosphere that are not about electricity/not burning fossil fuels

- Restoring natural ecosystems is a very important consideration to a reduction of carbon in the atmosphere, carbon can be taken out of the atmosphere vs. only reducing what we are putting into it
- Hope for this recommendation to receive consideration

10. **Bouzha Cookman:** member of the Community Preservation Committee

- a. Thank you for putting a tremendous amount of work into this, it's exciting to see progress thus far
- b. It's not only about energy, it's also about reducing our carbon footprint
 - There may be areas where it's hard for the TF to chart the course
- c. When thinking about how we could reduce Concord's carbon footprint as fast as we can, including all the work done by the TF on the light plant piece, might that open up some ways of thinking about this
 - Has TF considered looking at through that lens?
- d. Looking at the carbon reduction side and the sequestration side are other issues the TF might want to be thinking about/making recommendations on such as open space
- e. Applications submitted to the Community Preservation Committee are examples of "the sooner Concord makes strong recommendations or incentives around the built environment the better"
 - Applications concerning open space point to concerns about new projects in town
 - Application to retro fit a heating system to return to gas
 - If CPC is supposed to fund that - no real guidance yet – these are tough questions
 - Decision and guidance in TF thinking is what is needed
- f. Different ways to think about things, first look at the carbon reduction side in addition to what TF is doing with CMLP, which is also carbon reduction, second initiate programs really quickly and move to green electricity
 - For example getting everyone in town off of fossil fuels to heat their homes
- g. Net Metering in relation to CMLP
 - If everybody in town, who was able to, had solar panels on their roofs and the light plant provided or leased panels then created a business model where the net metering is rate because CMLP is actually getting some kind of revenue from solar on rooftops
 - change the whole business model for operations and still be sustainable and strong in town
 - I'd ask the TF to think about some of this, and maybe you have, perhaps the concepts are imbedded in the goals, but it's one of the big barriers in terms of getting back into the grid from solar resources

11. **Sue Richardson:**

- a. Reminder to everyone to write or email comments to TF
- b. What's Missing: The way I understand what our situation is globally is that some point we are going to face the disruption beyond what we ever imagined. Right now we don't we don't want to be uncomfortable. But I feel like one thing I want to see is a philosophical direction to the next group. I'm not saying you must disrupt things for the sake of being disruptive. Let's manage how the disruption works. One day it's going to get really disruptive. I understand the dilemma. I want something here that says we might have to "break some things"; that how we interact as citizens might have to change. I understand you can't mandate things. Let's look at what "throwing it out the window" might provide.

12. **Lori Gill-Pazaris:**

- a. In 2007 John Sterman of MIT Systems Thinking Group was invited to town. Jay Forester was the developer of the systems. He showed a remarkable demonstration about cycles in nature and in the environment. For example the effects of climate change and levels of carbon in the atmosphere. We

only have a short time to period to control those cycles otherwise the effect is like lighting a candle - you start a fire and it's hard to stop.

- b. Even if we stop and get to 0 emissions today we will not stop effects already happening so how does Concord address this issue?
- c. Bob Andrews made a good point about nature. Nature has sequestered carbon for many years. Can we restore everything this way? It's difficult to restore natural systems and make it work. We have to get rid of the use of chemicals. They kill natural systems basically sequestering carbon in the ground. We have to change the way we look at water. Storm water in the ocean does no good. White's Pond has had a major algae outbreak because of rainwater washing into pond. Energy, carbon and nutrition cycles have been disrupted. The water cycle has been picking up all these contaminants along the way which is very expensive to clean up afterwards. By filtering water thru the ground we have a good chance of purifying the water.
- d. Concord has had other effective campaigns and we can do the same.
 - A very effective campaign sponsored by the water department for water conservation existed for years.
- e. We don't have to mandate what people do, we are an intelligent town with people who will take the right steps and actions to make it happen

13. **Brad Hubbard-Nelson:**

- a. This exercise was not about what the town could control, but setting goals for the whole town for all the energies.
 - It is quite powerful if we set goal for greenhouse gas reduction by 2030 , or every year as a %
 - We don't need to figure out everything that everybody in town is going to do in order to meet that goal. But by establishing the goal as we go every year we are going to find out if we are on track or not. If we are not on track, citizens are going to say a change is needed
 - Whatever the ideas are we don't need to figure out the tactics now. You already have set the goals.
- b. Recommendation for item #7:
 - Electricity sector is already covered in terms of a real % , a real % is needed for all other sectors or it throws the greenhouse gas emissions out of control
 - Does not think it's critical that we as a town government control all of that

14. **Aaron:**

- a. With regard to the ideas of goals and aspiration: What has been outlined is an engineer's approach. One picks where you want to get and get there. The political approach is to deposit what we might be able to sell and negotiate and compromise. We are somewhere in the middle. I think this is great work for the light plant. #7 is huge so in the sense of timelines, some sectors are going fast, some are slower. That means that things that go fast will be less effective at getting to our over all goals. If Concord reaches the GWSA on time that doesn't mean Worcester will. And that doesn't mean that other towns that don't have the wherewithal to make change quickly will be able to and that means that we will be in a threat. Urge to go for engineering goals and ramp those up too. If we want to lead we have to acknowledge that by being a leader in reaching our goals it will not solve the problems for the state country or globe. We have lost battle for 2 degrees. It's going to happen very slowly. We could be disrupted at any time. It's not an orderly process. We have to go as fast as we can. Practically speaking, make multiple goals and take into account that some sectors, towns and countries aren't going to get there.

15. **Susan Frye:**

- a. Suggestion to build in some way to recognize people, businesses, players in the community that are doing a good job to encourage positive peer pressure and give incentives

16. Citizen 16:

- a. Strong recommendation for goal #'s 7 & 8 to be more specific
- b. A specific written goal of a % reduction or net-zero for everyone in town that is more than simply an aspiration
 - Currently individual departments/boards don't push residential and commercial sectors any further and don't want to put forth bylaws for net-zero because it seems extreme
 - specific written goals are easier to enforce
- c. Select an aspirational starting goal that's not so far out that it will frighten people, but that far enough out that after we compromise we will still end up with something worth achieving

17. Trisha Howard: resident of 14 years

- a. Challenge TF to look at item #3, do we want to match the best, or do we want to exceed it?
 - Consider matching the goals of top 3 IOUs in the country
 - Concord has had a history of being out front in leading, making changes and not being afraid to make sacrifices necessary to make this a better world.
- b. Her 13 year old daughter is very concerned about what's being done in the world. She doesn't think about clothes or what her friends are thinking about. She has a hard time sleeping because she thinks the adults in the world aren't doing enough. She was afraid to come here to hear some of things that people are saying about things that might happen in her future and her children's future.

18. Citizen 18:

- a. Suggestion to challenge citizens by creating a competition of one neighborhood against another
- b. We have to participate too because it will be up to us to plan for our children's future
- c. This is not only for schools and big business
- d. Citizens have to be willing to change behaviors and step up - we are responsible for our own behavior and what we do makes a difference

19. Lori Gill-Pazaris:

- a. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAGIC) has a climate group that includes 13 communities that are working together
 - Maybe Concord could add strength to the effort
 - The group will be announcing tentative plans soon and would be good to know what is included and how Concord can play a role
 - There is strength in towns and communities working together

20. Gilda Gussin: CSEC member

- a. Concord should start looking for funding opportunities to determine a good business model with CMLP
 - Without money there will be no staff for implementation
 - This cannot be done with volunteers
 - There are lots of great models to be found in IOUs, other towns, other places in country

21. Jim Terry:

- a. Concerned about the level of participation from the citizens and community engagement
 - 50 people (approx.) present tonight, but there are at least 15,000 citizens in Concord
 - A small percentage of citizens participation will not achieve goals, a large percent of community support is needed

22. Bill Lehr:

- a. Jill Appel is leading efforts for the sustainability fair in Concord in February 2017. CSEC is looking for volunteers.
- b. Currently there is not much control over other sectors but suggestions could be proposed in TF charter, for example:
 - Every committee could be asked to describe what they are contributing to the sustainability goal, this would encourage ideas for change
 - Consider the built environment and what needs to change
 - Conduct a study, provide estimate of cost, timeline, indicate expertise needed to accomplish study
- c. The group that follows EFTF should not have to come up with suggestions, rather TF should provide guidance as to what it should be

23. Eric Weinhart: West Concord resident, interested in sustainability, designer in building construction industry

- a. Much of what we associate with sustainability is the reduction of carbon mitigation. There are many adaptations known as resilience design.
 - Resilience design may be a line item for future charts
 - In addition to the issue of resiliency there's a notion of planning
 - Problems are regional in scope, so regional planning becomes more and more important in our future.
- b. Building codes are evolving quickly and are ambitious - there is good reason to aspire to build above code now
 - Concord can do this because we are a stretch code community
 - People can feel good about living in an above code building or working in one
 - There's growing realization that such properties are worth much more

24. Jill Appel:

- a. CSEC is planning a Cooler Concord event on February 4, 2017 from 10-4 at the high school
- b. Event is geared to engage those that have not been brought into the conversation such as parents with young children

25. Charlie Parker:

- a. Goal #1 lists 80% reduction by 2050 - that should be the goal for Concord.
 - That means by 2050 we will be using only 20% of today's volume of fossil fuels
 - This goal will not be solved by external sources, it's something citizens have to do
- b. Established goals apply to Concord as a whole, not sectors
- c. With regard to overarching goal, Concord should strive to be one of the best communities in US, not best compared to IOUs
 - Best in terms of having top application of best practices
- d. In terms of comparing Concord to peers, 5-10 communities that stand out should be the focus
 - Palo Alto
 - Austin TX
- e. Item #6 - by 2030 100% of CMLP electricity should be from non-emitting resources:
 - That means that CMLP is going to produce capacity that will supply 100% of our electricity from non-emitting resources
 - This isn't buying power this is creating power
 - Supply could be either built out in Concord or by direct investment outside of Concord.
- f. Jill Appel made a great point that we want to probably "grow" electricity that we use in town because that's our chance to take green power and apply it to things that are creating CO2. Should we have a lot

of electric vehicles employed we'll need to build supply and then migrate demand from what is currently relied on today - fossil fuels to green power.

- g. The right way to think of it is we should build out every bit of renewable energy in Concord that we possibly can in a way that doesn't destroy the environment.
 - Parking lots first
 - Many ways to accomplish this without destroying the natural environment
- h. We have to be creating power in Concord or elsewhere otherwise all that's being done is bidding on someone else's work

26. **Janet Rothrock:**

- a. Urge TF to be bold and specific, set high standards, and set an example
 - Highly unlikely that anyone will look back will say you were too bold
 - Some estimates are that sea level will rise considerably and children born now will face a different future
 - Climate change is an existential threat and it's not a problem to be bold

27. **Gordon Brockway:** member of Light Plant Board, but not speaking for them.

- a. CMLP has a proud tradition of providing super high reliable power and paying close attention to cost.
 - CMLP leadership has both in mind when making decisions and choices
- b. Some ideas discussed tonight could increase rates
- c. Agrees with Jill regarding a simple path toward reducing the carbon footprint in town.
 - Transition to green sources of power and then move uses of energy that are carbon intensive to electric sources
 - From CMLP perspective that could be great because it creates more revenue which would be useful for amortizing the cost of salaries and maybe it could pay for the manager positing being discussed
 - Transition to green power could also have impacts that could raise costs
 - Concord has finite capacity for electricity coming into town
 - Concord would have to build out the capacity for electricity coming into town by increasing the size of the network
- d. It may be asking too much for an organization that has worked so effectively towards two goals to suddenly take on some additional goals regarding climate change that could conflict with the goals. There is an opportunity for us as stockholders/owners of our own municipal power plant. There's an opportunity that Concord has that rate payers at an IOU don't.
- e. Express the will of the majority of the town to embrace goals, even at the expense of paying more. For example:
 - The light plant has had a policy regarding net metering that is informed by a concern about ratepayer's subsidized ownership of solar panels by others. At the same time we all agreed to and are excited about installing solar at the land fill. We agreed to pay that investor a certain amount, and that entity is being paid enough to make a profit. Why is it okay to engage with a business, but not with other residents? What does "fair" mean here? If someone in the neighborhood has a roof that big enough for more solar cells we should install them. We are running out of space in town. There are more options available than we have been aware of.

28. **Brian Chatlosh:** longtime resident, been in power sector for over 30 years, dealt with these issues in CA and other markets

- a. Electricity is the low hanging fruit because there is a lot of carbon concentration in one sector - 35% of carbon comes from electricity.

- Electricity should be a high priority because there's a lot of good you can do right away and it's a high concentration
- b. There are also other sectors like transportation, water, agriculture, sequestration, construction
 - All very different sectors with different expertise and different solutions
 - Issues should be separated and form half a dozen task forces to work on them

29. Citizen 29:

- a. Many good ideas expressed. Appreciates comments about energy and electricity being such important issues
- b. Community engagement: I go to all kinds of things and see the same people there and it was brought up that this woman's daughter did not want to come tonight because of her fear. A woman in our group said to me I don't know if I don't believe in climate change. And yet she's very involved in what we're doing. We need to recognize that events are happening such as we could not water this year. What what does this have to do with energy? But they are all related. If one is broken, they are all broken and to fix just one will not give us the long term solutions we need. I understand the committees and departments have so much work they are up to their ears. There have to be other mechanisms. Some other groups that don't work as part of the town are working on issues like this. They have audiences with the town to discuss these issues. So let's say we understand-- not because this one woman who is steadfast in efforts doesn't believe in climate change, but she believes it was a hot summer, we couldn't water outdoors, and Whites Pond has algae. What we need to do is connect the dots for people. Energy is not understandable but when you start talking about other things that are very complex, I do believe we can engage the community if we speak a language that doesn't scare them off but engages in participating in solutions for the future.

30. Bill Lehr:

- a. A word of caution, when Concord was considering a new water treatment plant (in Acton) they had originally planned to install solar. However, because the developer was adjacent to the project, and built to the property line, there was much resistance from the community. As a result solar was not an option and natural gas is going in instead.
 - Examine ideas that have not worked to provide a better understanding of what's at stake and face hard decisions
 - Referring to Concord's property at Nagog Pond in Acton

31. Citizen 31:

- a. Paper copies of the survey were requested for those who do not have electronic access.