

Minutes of Pepperell Climate Change Council (CCC) meeting

25 February 2021

In attendance

CCC members: Ken Hartlage (KH), Jessica Veysey Powell (JeV), Susan Edwards (SE), James Scarsdale (JS), Renee D'Argento (RD), Jason Veysey (JaV), Robert Cataldo (RC), Beth Faxon (BF)

Other participants: Anthony Beattie (AB), Mark Mathews (MM)

Proceedings

- KH started the meeting at 19:01.
- The minutes from the last CCC meeting were approved. Motion made by JeV, seconded by SE. The motion passed with all members present voting aye: 7-0 (BF joined the meeting after this vote).
- KH asked JeV to monitor the GoToMeeting chat for questions.
- KH described the agenda for the meeting:
 - o To review and prioritize remaining projects/initiatives that CCC may address in 2021, including other Master Plan (MP) recommendations and CCC initiated topics.
 - o To discuss next steps to start implementing priority projects/initiatives.
- CCC proceeded to discuss and prioritize projects/initiatives, assigning CCC point people to each where possible. The results of this exercise were recorded in an Excel spreadsheet (CCC Workstreams 25 Feb 2021.xlsx; the workstreams spreadsheet).
- Highlights of the discussion included the following:
 - o MP recommendation 7.16.1 on heat island reduction strategies could involve education/guidance to builders and property owners or zoning changes.
 - o Conservation Commission is already working on aspects of MP recommendation 7.16.8 on a rivers and streams management plan.
 - o RC observed that for many MP recommendations, CCC seems not to be the primary implementing agency but instead could play a supporting role. KH and other CCC members agreed. MM remarked that coordination among town agencies is important.
 - o AB noted that MP recommendation 7.16.8 is linked to the MVP grant process the town is working on. The MVP program may provide funding to implement this recommendation.
 - o CCC may be able to prepare a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory for Pepperell using data and modeling developed for the state's Clean Energy and Climate Plan.
 - o Protecting Pepperell's natural heritage and biodiversity is particularly important because ecosystems are increasingly stressed by climate change.
 - o MP recommendation 5.14 includes early adoption of the new stretch code that the state is developing in 2021 under the Clean Energy and Climate Plan.

- o Programs to increase waste reduction and recycling should emphasize consumer education. AB remarked that reducing wasted water is also critical.
- o Each major CCC project on energy (efficiency, clean energy production, etc.) should include a public education component.
- o RC proposed a consumer education fair or trade show (“clean energy day”) in which clean energy and energy efficiency providers would come to town to present their solutions.
- o RD suggested that CCC evaluate GHG emission reduction opportunities across town operations – e.g., wastewater treatment, vehicle fleet. KH responded that many such opportunities are already covered by the MP. Wastewater treatment appears to be a gap in the MP, however.
- o CCC will try to downscale to Pepperell state analyses of forest and farm carbon sequestration capacity. JeV has reached out to the state on this issue. AB noted that Tony Russel at North Middlesex High School “is interested in sending out students to measure and map carbon content in our farm lands.”
- o Many MP recommendations seek to encourage non-motorized transportation and reduce vehicle miles traveled. KH suggested that CCC can add value to these by trying to estimate their GHG impacts. Data from the state and NMCOG may be helpful here (e.g., NMCOG data on the number of residents working in town).
- o JS emphasized the importance of helping residents understand the big picture with respect to GHG emissions and mitigation measures in town – for example, what their personal emissions are and how they can be reduced. RC recommended educating citizens about cost savings that can be realized through GHG emission reduction activities (e.g., efficiency).
- o CCC is interested in public/private funding mechanisms for energy efficiency and clean energy supply. For example, a public trust fund for efficiency or community solar projects.
- o EV and electric bicycle charging stations could be used to encourage visits to local businesses. If town-owned, they could serve as a revenue source for the town.
- KH proposed establishing CCC working groups for the following areas:
 - o Energy production (JaV, RC, SE, KH)
 - o Energy procurement (RD, JaV, SE)
 - o Energy efficiency (JS, RD, BF)
 - o Education and outreach (RD, KH, SE)
 - o Ecosystems and biodiversity (KH, JeV)

These groups would be tasked with addressing MP recommendations and other topics in these areas, including forming a plan of action and reporting back to CCC. There was consensus that this was a good idea.

- The next CCC meeting will be on March 18, 2021.
- MM noted that a MP progress reporting structure is being devised; CCC can use this to track progress.
- JS and other CCC members expressed appreciation for KH’s hard work to date.
- JS offered to take the minutes at the next CCC meeting.

- JaV moved to close the meeting. JS seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. (Vote: 8-0).
- The meeting ended at 20:44.