

City of Keene
New Hampshire

CITIES FOR CLIMATE PROTECTION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 6, 8:00 AM

2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall

Members Present:

Dr. Ann Shedd, Chair
Peter Hansel, Vice Chair
Mari Brunner, Member
Terry Clark, Member
Chris Brehme, Member
Dick Cornelius, Alternate
Tom Webler, Guest
Jessica Baum, Guest
Colleen O'Brien, Guest

Staff Present:

Michele Chalice, Planner

Members Not Present:

Gary Lamoureux, Councilor
Larry Dachowski, Alternate
Rhett Lamb, Director of Planning

1. Call To Order and Roll Call

Chair Shedd called meeting to order at 8:07 am and conducted roll call.

2. Approval of August 2, 2017 minutes

Ms. Chalice stated that Mr. Lamb was supposed to attend today but will not. Chair Shedd said August minutes will not go onto the website until after the October meeting and therefore they will approve them at the next meeting.

Chair Shedd stated that one of the links at the bottom of the agenda is to the Local Energy Solutions conference website in Concord. She said registration is \$35 until October 1 and then \$45 after that and scholarships are available. She encouraged members to attend conference.

Chair Shedd shared that there is a series of New Hampshire business energy efficiency seminars happening around the state this fall and early winter. She said the closest

seminar is in Claremont; however, she contacted the organizers and asked if Keene could be included in the spring series and they agreed. She said she would send around the topics of interest to members.

Chair Shedd said she received a postcard from the Keene's Heritage Commission about a series of free workshops they are doing during the year. She said that in March they are doing a "Restore your Old House: Do's and Don'ts Workshop on Restoration and Energy Preservation" and she said it would be a good idea to help the Commission promote that event. Ms. Chalice said she would put that item on next month's agenda.

Chair Shedd stated that the Monadnock Progressive Alliance's (MPA) Climate Action Team had Sierra Club organizer, Alison Samuel, speak about the "Ready for 100" campaign with their group twice. She expressed her excitement about the potential of setting a city or regional goal to be one hundred percent renewable. She said Sierra Club's goal is to be one hundred percent renewable for electricity by 2035, and for electricity, heat and transportation by 2050. Chair Shedd said the campaign had done a lot of promotion and education in the upper valley, and in May, the Hanover town meeting voted unanimously to adopt one hundred percent renewable by 2030, and one hundred percent renewable for electricity, heat and transportation by 2050. She said she has encouraged the MPA Climate Action team to go for similar goals in Keene and that at some point they will ask for an endorsement from CCP as they build towards a resolution to bring to City Council. She encouraged members to look up the campaign and said she will provide a link at next month's agenda. Ms. O'Brien stated that MPA Climate Action team meets Thursdays at 6 pm in the Southwest Community Room at 49 Community Way across the plaza from the Monadnock Co-Op. She said they will focus the first hour and a half of each meeting towards the "Ready for 100" campaign and then dedicate the remainder of the meeting to the regular Climate Action agenda.

Chair Shedd asked Mr. Webler for his thoughts on the "Ready for 100" campaign. Mr. Webler replied that it is an ambitious initiative but that it is also important to consider what the outcomes are. He said he joined the policy group for the Sierra Club national team to work on policy solutions. He applauded the campaign as it gives drive and vision to the goals. Ms. Chalice added that Keene has made a lot of progress on a municipal level but needs more education on a community level and the campaign provides a space for that. Mr. Webler stated they have a table at the Student tomorrow at 3 pm?

Vice Chair Hansel asked Ms. O'Brien if the Climate Action team is using templates from other cities around the country. Ms. O'Brien responded that Ms. Samuels came prepared with a plan which included several sections as well as a survey that received twelve responses the first week. She said Ms. Samuels then incorporated the feedback into the plan and is now refining it. Chair Shedd stated that the campaign dovetails well with CCP's goals. She said CCP has not set new targets yet as they are awaiting the 2015 endpoint for the 1995-2015 greenhouse gas emissions targets that they had set. She said that other municipalities have reframed their targets as the original ones had not included other subsets of greenhouse gas emissions. She stated that exploring differences in framing of targets with Antioch would be helpful. Chair Shedd said the Climate Action

team goals also dovetail with the directive recommendation from City administration that CCP take ownership of an evolving renewable energy plan for Keene. She said she has encouraged the Climate Action team to continue working on the “Ready for 100” campaign and that the crafting a pathway towards renewables falls into CCP’s domain. Ms. Shedd said she has spoken with Mr. Lamb and informed him that CCP will need professional help moving forward with a plan and she hopes he will attend the meeting next month to begin that discussion.

Ms. Brunner stated that she sees a lot of useful strategies coming from the 2004 Climate Action plan for the City of Keene and is curious why they are pushing for the renewable energy campaign instead of focusing on the original plan. Vice Chair Hansel said that the idea was primarily a public response to address the conflict between the propane plan for Production Avenue and Keene’s endorsement of the Paris Climate Agreement. He said that Counselor Jacob suggested that the committee would be the best body to evaluate what the future of Keene’s energy usage will look like due to that conflict of interest. Ms. Brunner asked why choose an Energy Plan over a Climate Action Plan as the latter would address the same set of issues. Chair Shedd stated that she has been scoping out strategies for energy plans online from other communities and that there is a broad spectrum. She said some are broad like Keene’s Climate Action plan and others are more focused on municipal energy use for buildings and transportation and energy for the community. She said that a renewable energy plan would be a subset of updating the Climate Action plan for Keene and some communities have done it as part of their comprehensive Master Plan. She said that CCP should continue conversations on how to frame it and how to tackle three significant tasks: the Weatherization campaign, developing an Energy plan and updating the Climate Action plan, which she said could take a couple of years. Vice Chair Hansel said he sees it more as a proposal and it is up to the committee to determine what is best. Ms. Chalice said the committee will go with the public will and it is an issue of balance. Ms. Brunner reiterated that she believes that they could fit this plan into the Climate Action plan process instead of creating a separate plan. Ms. Chalice said that the CCP gets to make that decision. Chair Shedd stated that this fits into the context of the City wanting to streamline the committee support structure and she recommended they hold another retreat in the near future which includes some city administration to define goals and support of each committee. She said she has seen different types of committees run in diverse ways and she encouraged members to think about holding another retreat as they have a new City Manager coming in. Vice Chair Hansel said he would like to hear Mr. Lamb’s feedback before making that decision.

3. Finalization for Button-Up Workshop: publicity, refreshments, set-up/clean-up, attendance by CCP members, partners

Chair Shedd announced that the committee has finalized the date and space for the Button Up workshop on Saturday, October 7 at the Stone Arch Senior Village on upper Court Street. She stated that CCP are not the presenters at the workshop and they are primarily responsible for the publicity, refreshments, set up and clean up. She said the workshop is sponsored by the New Hampshire Saves program administered by the utilities. She said

the workshop is geared towards homeowners and will offer tips on how to weatherize homes. She said the MPS Climate Action Team, Monadnock Sustainability Network and Southwest Community Services are now co-sponsors. Ms. Chalice said she has asked co-sponsors to help advertise the event. Ms. Brunner asked if they could advertise to communities outside of Keene and Ms. Chalice said yes. Chair Shedd said that the room capacity is not more than 50 and there is no registration required. Ms. Chalice said she would call to confirm the capacity for room. Chair Shedd said that in the past these events would not attract more than 20 people but that the climate may be different now. Chair Shedd reminded Ms. Chalice that the committee had planned to target advertising to the Maple Acres community and asked if the City could generate a mailing list. Ms. Brunner said she could help place flyers if needed. Mr. Webler mentioned advertising on Facebook as well. Ms. Chalice encouraged everyone to advertise on their own Facebook pages and said she would send out the pdf file again. Ms. Baum said she placed event details in the Badger newsletter. Ms. Brunner asked if CCP has contacts for the different neighborhood associations in Keene. Ms. Chalice said she can post on her own neighborhood Facebook page. Ms. O'Brien asked if the presenters do any of the publicity. Ms. Chalice replied that the coordinators of the workshop do not do the publicity and that is the responsibility of CCP. Ms. Brunner said she could put together a slide for Cheshire TV. Ms. Chalice said she would try placing an advertisement on SAU 29 as they might be willing to put it on their Facebook page and newsletter.

Chair Shedd said the presenter for the program is a certified energy auditor from Temple, NH and that a representative from the utilities will also be present to discuss funding available to utilities. Ms. Chalice asked who would pick up snacks. Chair Shedd replied that they have a \$65 budget for snacks which may not be enough if the event is highly successful. She said Ms. Straughen had arranged a \$75 food donation from the Co-Op but that perhaps they should use that donation for another event as they already have funding for the Button-Up workshop. She said the Works will sell 13 bagels for \$30 and if they cut bagels into quarter sizes they would have 52 bagels available, as well as a couple of tubs of cream cheese. She also suggested purchasing cider from the Co-Op. Ms. Chalice asked if somebody could pick up food from the Works that morning. Ms. Brunner asked if they would consider asking the Works to donate bagels instead. Ms. Chalice said maybe they should reserve a donation for another event in which they do not have enough funding. Chair Shedd asked if they would need hot beverages if they have already cider and Ms. Chalice suggested they get coffee and cream instead. Chair Shedd volunteered to pick up the food from the Works and Mr.90-Brehme said he would pick up the cider from the Co-Op. Chair Shedd said she will ask the Works if they will donate extra cups and napkins that morning. Ms. Chalice asked Chair Shedd to please find out ahead of time if the Works will make cups and napkins donation. Ms. Brunner asked committee if they would like her to send a press release to radio stations. Ms. Chalice agreed. Ms. Chalice also encouraged members picking up food to get receipts to be submitted for reimbursement. Chair Shedd said event doors will open at 9:30 am so they should set up by 9:00 am and presentation will take place from 10-11:30 am. Ms. Chalice said they also need a crew to break down after event. Vice Chair Hansel and Ms. Brunner volunteered to help break down. Chair Shedd also suggested that Ms. Chalice decide if "flyering" Maple Acres is preferable over a mailing list from the City. Ms. Braum said

she could help with “flyering” leading up to the event as she is out of town the weekend of the workshop.

Chair Shedd said she checked the “NH Saves” list of certified residential auditing firms which have met the minimum qualifications for the NH program and she said there are currently no such firms in southwest NH. She said there is one in Hancock. Chair Shedd stated that it would be helpful at some point to connect with the local contractors who perform energy work to see what it would entail for them to become certified in the program. Vice Chair Hansel asked if a contractor is not certified if that means that they could not get into the program and Chair Shedd replied that there may be some clause about that and it does not mean that there are not other qualified contractors, but that those are the contractors who have been vetted by the building professional industries membership process. Ms. Brunner asked if they would want to encourage auditors to get the credentials and Chair Shedd replied that they would need to explore that more. Vice Chair Hansel suggested that could be a question for the presenters. Chair Shedd agreed that if they are supporting local business and energy conservation that it would be preferable to have someone from Keene perform the audit instead of an auditor from another city. Ms. Chalice said she is currently contracting with J.A. Jubb and she would discuss this with Rick Duquette.

Chair Shedd stated that October is Energy Awareness month as designated by the Bush administration in 1991, and stated that perhaps writing a letter to the editor about this fact would help create awareness and also generate press coverage for the Button-Up event. Vice Chair Hansel agreed to write a letter to the editor and Ms. Chalice asked Chair Shedd to share the details about Energy Awareness month with him so that he could reference it in his letter. Chair Shedd shared that at the last MPA meeting she attended she sat next to the Rindge energy committee member, Ms. Marten and Chesterfield energy committee member, Mr. Kondos, and stated to members that it would be great to one day have a conversation with these key members.

Ms. Brunner shared that she is currently working on the greenhouse gas inventory and recalculating the community inventory data. She said she is still working on solid waste numbers but that she is close to finishing up and feels confident in the numbers in all other areas. She said the results show that transportation comprises the majority of emissions (46%) and solid waste is a much smaller piece. Ms. Brunner stated that there was a decrease in commercial and industrial sector transmissions which she found interesting because over a million square feet have been added to those sectors in the past 20 years. She said that “heating degree days” is measurement of colder weather and because 2015 was significantly warmer than 1995 this trend might have been a contributing factor to the overall decrease in energy use. Ms. Brunner stated that overall the community emissions do not appear to have gone down significantly like previously hoped. Vice Chair Hansel asked if she was preparing a presentation and Ms. Brunner replied that she is currently developing the presentation. She added that through the process she discovered a number of errors when developing the Methodology section of her presentation and these discrepancies prompted her to re-crunch the numbers. Ms. Chalice added that an Antioch graduate student with no previous relevant experience had

originally arrived at those numbers and that the technical nature of the inventory process required the experience of a professional. She highlighted the need for more specialized experience when creating these data sets. Vice Chair Hansel commented that one of the reasons the energy usage may have gone down is due to “fuel switching” to propane and Ms. Brunner agreed that this played a role, but that it does not represent a big enough factor in decrease in energy usage and that the overall decrease in “heating degree days” were probably a bigger factor accounting for observed energy decrease. Ms. Chalice stated that as a caution to the committee, the inventory process is not going as expeditiously as they had hoped in terms but the data is more thoroughly checked. Ms. Baum added that as a former graduate student who participated in a project in which she had no previous experience, that perhaps the best way to be inclusive of graduate student skills is to ensure that students have access to expert supervision. Ms. Chalice agreed but emphasized that expert experience and time needed for supervision is not easy to acquire in a small community. Ms. Brunner highlighted the importance of consistency in completing the inventory process. Ms. Chalice stated that Mr. Lamb is attending the meeting next month and because the planning department is seeking to hire a new employee, CCP can make a recommendation to Mr. Lamb that the candidate possess specialized experience and expertise in the inventory capacity. Chair Shedd stated that through her reading she discovered that other towns hire energy coordinators that are well-qualified. Ms. Chalice suggested that hiring an individual with experience in the field is imperative as hiring an energy coordinator is unlikely for Keene at this time.

4. Weatherization Campaign

a. Postponement of 9/27 event

Chair Shedd stated that since the last meeting she has engaged in helpful conversations with organizers from the Upper Valley Weatherization campaign and the Seacoast Solarization and Weatherization campaign. She said both organizations supported the idea of meeting with contractors early but that she decided that CCP was not far along in the process to have those conversations with contractors yet. She said an organizer from the Upper Valley campaign is available to attend the October meeting to inform the committee on how they built their campaign. Chair Shedd said it would be helpful to learn about existing models in other parts of NH instead of reinventing the process and recommended that CCP postpone the September event. Vice Chair Hansel agreed to the postponement as he feels that CCP is not quite ready. Mr. Brehme pointed out that one of the reasons they had decided on a September date was due to contractor schedules so postponement means that they are pushing a new date out into late spring given contractor availability. Chair Shedd agreed.

b. Upper Valley &/or Seacoast campaign insight

Chair Shedd shared that the Seacoast Weatherization campaign is quite impressive. She said they grew out of a local energy hub with representatives from a number of towns in the Seacoast area. She said they decided to do a weatherization and solarization campaign drawing heavily from Upper Valley Weatherization models and six months later they

were already signing up participants. She stated that the organization was not part of a municipality which perhaps was part of their success. Chair Shedd said she will email out the website links for both campaigns again and encouraged members to learn more about them.

5. Adjournment – Next Meeting, Wednesday, October 4, 2017

Chair Shedd adjourned meeting at 9:07AM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute-Taker

RESOURCES:

- NREL Energy Planning document: Here is a useful document from the National Renewable Energy Lab, outlining a process for cities developing strategic energy plans: https://www.nrel.gov/tech_deployment/pdfs/community_greening.pdf
- Local Energy Solutions annual conference Sat 10/28: https://www.nhsea.org/local-energysolutions_conference
NHSEA website: <http://www.nhenergy.org/energy-planning.html>
- Current CCP Mission Statement: “Created to aid in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and increase the community’s adaptive capacity to the expected impacts of a changing climate in order to protect the viability of the community and to protect public health, safety, and welfare.”
- Adding an Energy Chapter to your Town’s Master Plan: <https://www.nh.gov/oep/planning/resources/conferences/spring-2016/documents/master-planenergy-chapter-forcey.pdf>