

## **Commission for Energy Use and Climate Change**

### **Meeting Minutes**

October 11, 2017

Tufts Administration Building, 167 Holland St., Somerville, MA

#### **Attendees:**

Bueno, Ramon –Commissioner

Hodge, Joshua – Commissioner

Johnston, Eliza – Commissioner

Melton, Michelle – Commissioner

Moore, Stephen – Commissioner

Rooney-Varga, Juliette – Commissioner

Wood, Julie – Commissioner

Sellers-Garcia, Oliver – (member ex-officio) Director of Office of Sustainability and Environment

Monte Allen

Jocelyn Newhouse

Stanton Cady

Paola Massoli

Leigh Meunier

Larry Yu

Dana Clawson

Saritha Ramakrishna

Michael Walsh

Yoyi Chen

#### Review and adopt the minutes from the September 13, 2017 meetings

- Approved

#### Somerville Climate Forward – discussion with consulting team

- Consultants are working on first draft of recommended solutions; second round of working group meetings are scheduled.

- 

#### Tracking state legislation

- Highlights of 9/19 State House Joint Hearing:
  - Paola and Ramon attended; it was very busy, difficult for the public to get into.
  - Paola: Everyone seemed to be interested in increasing the RPS (no one spoke out against it per se); lots of arguments for, including business cases presented for accelerated RPS targets; there appears to be comparatively limited support for the carbon tax proposals.
  - We don't expect significant developments until January.
  - Michelle: at what point should the city get involved? What is the CEUCC's purpose with respect to state legislation tracking?

- Oliver: we should pare down the list of bills in January once we have results from State House voting.
- Juliette: should we be advocating for bills we support (e.g. the carbon pricing bills)?

### Puerto Rico hurricane recovery – climate resilience and aid opportunities

- Ramon: the recent experience in Puerto Rico provides us with insights into resilience re: climate impact, e.g. role of micro grids, adaptation projects.
  - One positive is to use the experience as a reflection point/sanity check for the climate action plan.
  - Elizabeth: RE community resilience (e.g. social networks saving lives) – there are lessons here for Somerville.

### Updates from City of Somerville

#### *Internal carbon pricing*

- Saritha Ramakrishna has begun as an intern to work on internal carbon pricing; she has read all relevant background materials (relevant meeting minutes, Ramon's brief, etc.).
  - She's doing a research/lit review on other municipal carbon pricing programs. Will be here through December 2017.
  - Saritha's background (1<sup>st</sup> year MIT Masters at DUSP); was previously at Industrial Economics in Cambridge.
  - Elizabeth: provided additional background E.g. Curtatone's "would my mother understand it"; need internal and external price signal to drive decarbonization-related decision-making.
  - Joshua: why are few other municipalities are doing this (while it is common for corporations to have internal carbon pricing programs)?
  - Ramon: summarized Microsoft and Yale internal carbon pricing examples.
  - Deliverable: a memo research/lit review and proposed next steps
  - Michelle: explore conflict between short-term/operational decision-making and long term goals.
  - Elizabeth: focus should be on developing a decision-making tool not creating a revenue generating instrument; try to provide tangible, practical examples for Somerville.
  - Potential to collaborate with MIT Sustainability on a similar initiative
  - Joshua: get a sense for how decisions are made within City (from Oliver, Hannah, etc.) to inform recommendations.

#### *Somerville CCE*

- Numbers as of mid-September: program enrollment rate over 91% (default + 100% renewable); 9% (opt-out for brown).
  - Oliver: it will be interesting to see how the rate changes in October and November.
    - By November we should see automatic enrollments from Sept. 1 move-in.
  - We have low number who have opted up to 100% renewable (just over 200 accounts, <1%).
  - Putting CCE bill calculator on our website (will include program's overall CO2 reductions to date (ticker of GHG savings)); includes overview of related REC projects.

### *HeatSmart/CoolSmart*

- We've had a few more events. Almost at 15 contracts (up from 1 contract last month).
  - Contract-signing rate considered average by program installers (we have two installers).
- Michelle: what is projected uptake through December (program goal was 100)? Program ends end of Dec 2017.
- Elizabeth: is our installer capable of quick installations (i.e. when the weather gets cold)?

### *GHG inventory*

- Oliver: we just renewed the contract with AECOM; we'll finish up the two pager sheets soon.
  - AECOM will look at whether the recent community GHG emissions level drops can be attributed to weather or grid changes.
  - Look at assessor's data to see if it's sufficiently updated to get better heating oil data for 2014 – 2016.

### *Union Square*

- Oliver: talking with Union Square developers re: district energy; benefits, etc.
- Using District Energy Feasibility model to determine energy savings (at Pace University), being run on US2's development plan.
  - Many departments reviewing the coordinated development plan; Office of Sustainability will be heavily involved, including development of sustainability-related questionnaire (to be distributed to developers).

### *Net-zero buildings assessment*

- Working with Capital Projects Department; created preliminary scope of work, submitted to multiple consultants.
  - Objective is creation of a "tool kit" for the City for designing and implementing building projects with a net zero standard.
  - Project is more expensive than expected; needs refinement before submitting to Aldermen for potential funding request.
  - It will be a couple of months before an RFP is released.

### *Campus plan*

- There is an RFP out right now; closes on Oct 31<sup>st</sup> for a campus plan for Central Hill.
  - Focuses on landscape, transportation, historic monuments and energy.
  - RFP has objective of an eventual net zero campus.
  - Currently the high school is still the centerpiece; how to make it credibly net zero? Plan includes city hall and the library.
  - Oliver: one question is in how much detail does the campus plan need to go into wrt net zero planning in light of the net zero buildings assessment project also being underway?
  - Elizabeth: what is the transportation plan? Oliver: parking only.

### *Zoning update*

- Planning Department has put together fact sheets on zoning overhaul; there is a sustainability-specific fact sheet (e.g. proposed vegetation metric).
  - Oliver: made the point that zoning is not necessarily best vehicle for achieving sustainability goals (i.e. big emissions reduction goals), because we can't preempt the building code through zoning.

### Any and all business before the Commission

- Oliver: in 2 weeks, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> - Danish Energy Minister coming to meet with folks from Boston, Cambridge and Somerville. CEUCC commissioners encouraged to attend.
- Rescheduling December meeting (to December 6<sup>th</sup>).