

## GLOUCESTER CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION

### Meeting Notes - May 16, 2013

**Present:**

**Members:** Candace Wheeler, Sam Cleaves, Linda Stout-Saunders, Linda Brayton **Staff:** John Rockwell **Invited guests:** Helen Aki and Ani Krishnan, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) Clean Energy Division.

**Meeting Notes approvals:** Notes for meetings of 9/24/12, 11/26/12 and 1/17/13 were unanimously approved. A vote on notes taken for the 2/5/13 meeting has been continued. Notes for the meetings of 3/21/13 and 4/18/13 were not voted on because there was no quorum at either meeting and therefore not enough members available to vote on them. No votes were taken at these meeting but notes taken will be filed at the City Clerk's Office.

The meeting was called to order by Candace Wheeler at 7:05 p.m.

**MAPC/ LEAP presentation:** Sam Cleaves introduced our guests from MAPC and gave a brief overview of MAPC's Local Energy Action Plan (LEAP) program and why he felt it would be helpful for the Commission to learn more about this program. Specifically he sees LEAP as 1) a potential way for the CEC to increase communication and public outreach to City officials, Boards, departments, etc. and 2) a way to broaden the CEC's scope in the community. In sum, it could be a helpful way to reinvigorate our organizing principles and goals now that we are well on the way to meeting our Green Community goals. He circulated copies of CEC's 6/15/11 Strategic Plan for review and reference.

Helen Aki explained that LEAP helps municipalities develop an "organizing theme." Local government can serve as a point of entry and draw together many different stakeholders. MAPC provides technical assistance to communities to help create and implement a local energy action plan by working with both municipal and community stakeholders. The finished plan includes an inventory of municipal and community-wide energy use and expenditures and past energy activities, goals and actions, and strategies. MAPC received funding to do pilot studies and several communities, at varying stages of "going green" have participated. Medford and Stoughton are good examples of communities with LEAP plans. These plans and other information can be seen at [www.mapc.org/leap](http://www.mapc.org/leap). Helen said that DOER is looking at how to broaden the work being carried out under the Green Communities initiative.

Candace described the work that the CEC has carried out to date; e.g. meeting the GC requirements for initial eligibility, working to clarify Gloucester's energy use baseline and progress on the goal of a 20% reduction (at 10% we are about halfway there); reviewing projects; assisting with the development of three wind turbines, participation in MAPC RFQ for ESCO selection, etc. She stated that we have reached a certain ambiguity as to CEC's priorities

and next steps, and we are sorting through a number of possibilities; e.g. streetlight acquisition, Solarize program, community energy aggregation, etc.

Ani said that through the LEAP program a profile and an overarching plan would be created, and those who would be tasked with implementing the plan would be identified.

Helen explained that the funding for the initial pilot program is not likely to be renewed, and that MAPC is now planning to charge for its services. Depending on the amount of detail desired, the cost of the plan might range from \$10K - \$15 which, she stated, is significantly lower than what private consultants would charge. Sam stated that we should be able to raise some money from private sources. Linda S. mentioned that an ESCO could have filled this planning role. However, now it has been decided to use our current GC dollars for NGrid and Siemens energy improvements, and an ESCO is on hold for the time being. Helen offered to meet with DPW representatives and Siemens' project expeditor.

Establishing a Revolving Fund from energy savings and/or dedicating a percentage of funds from municipal energy aggregation for clean energy projects were also mentioned as ways to establish an income stream. Members agreed that we should discuss the possibility of a future separate revolving fund account with the mayor.

In addition to the areas of interest named above, Sam mentioned that where energy efficiency and savings has been CEC's main focus, he would now like to see us broaden our message and connect with other groups that are working on environmental issues. He said that he is particularly interested in dealing with greenhouse gas reduction and the potential effects of climate change by going beyond disaster planning and mitigation and developing adaptation strategies and community resilience, etc. He mentioned that Lanesville has already done some of this sort of planning. He also expressed an interest in the work that Steve Winslow in Community Development and others are doing with a bicycle ordinance, food sustainability, etc. Linda B. commented that sea level rise seems particularly relevant to her since Gloucester is surrounded by water. She also stressed her desire to focus in on accomplishing at least one or two specific projects.

Candace made a motion to request that MAPC prepare a proposal specifically for Gloucester re: participation in the LEAP program. Sam seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Helen and Ani agreed to draw up a proposal for the next CEC meeting. Members will review this proposal at the meeting and over the summer with the expectation that in the fall we will make a decision as to whether or not to support and recommend Gloucester's participation in LEAP.

#### **Other agenda items:**

Stretch Code – Setting up a meeting with the Building Inspector and/or staff from the Building Department will be on the June 20 agenda. (This meeting was moved to June 27).

Community Energy Aggregation – Candace shared her draft of a memo to the mayor describing Community Energy Aggregation. The memo gives an overview of the subject, describes presentations and webinars attended by CEC members, pros and cons of aggregation, etc. “Given that the City is already saving significantly on electricity for municipal buildings and operations through the 25-year wind turbine power-purchase contract, the City’s accounts could not be included in an aggregation contract, so City government fiscal savings are not a reason to pursue aggregation. Financial savings from aggregation for residential and commercial customers would be modest (estimated at 7% by Global Montello. However, there are at least two potential advantages. First, Gloucester would have a way to purchase more energy from renewable sources. Second, it would be possible to designate a small percentage for a Revolving Fund dedicated to green energy projects. The CEC voted to approve the memo and also allow Candace executive discretion to make small changes if they seem warranted. Candace noted that although Global Montello was the first to approach the City there are many other companies now offering these services.

CEC letter supporting transportation funding as a way to reduce greenhouse gases – A request was received from a Conservation Law Foundation staff member asking that CEC write a letter in our local newspaper expressing support for full funding of the States’ transportation bill due to the importance of supporting public transportation in reducing greenhouse gases. A specific format for this letter was also requested. Upon discussion, members concluded that we could not support the legislation in its entirety without knowing a lot more about it and that it would not be possible to address only the greenhouse gas issue aspect. So far the legislation has not been successful in any case.

Green Communities report and expenditures – John R. said that the Annual Report is expected to be completed within the week for the mayor’s signature, and it will then be sent to DOER. CEC will receive copies. He also explained the procurement process for the series of municipal efficiency projects to be paid for through repurposed Green Communities funds.

Student interns – There has been no response so far to CEC’s query letter.

*Memo to DPW from Candace (4/16/13)* - No reply has been received re: meeting, etc. (However, DPW has provided information on the projects to John Rockwell, for use in Green Communities energy savings tracking).

Use of small grant –The remainder of the education and outreach grant, originally received and partially disbursed by two of CEC’s predecessors, is not available to use for MAPC’s LEAP program. We will have an update on the use of that small grant at the June meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Brayton

