

MINUTES OF CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING
September 9, 2021, 5 PM
Approved at meeting of March 10, 2022

This meeting was conducted remotely through ZOOM. All votes conducted by Roll Call

Members Present: Linda Brayton, Debra Darby, John Moskal, Candace Wheeler

Staff: Gregg Cademartori and Gemma Wilkens, Community Development Department

Guests: Michelle Rowden of MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs; MAPC staff-person Van Du; also attending were Dick Prouty and Valerie Nelson from TownGreen2025, who were scheduled to make a presentation but could not do so when CEC lost its quorum.

General Discussion

Ms. Wheeler proposed that approval of any outstanding Minutes be delayed until the next CEC meeting.

Ms. Wheeler also explained that while a quorum of 4 members were present to start the meeting, CEC member John Moskal, an EPA employee, will have to recuse himself whenever the EPA technical assistance grant to the TownGreen2025 organization is discussed (Item 3 on our agenda). Unless another CEC member joined the meeting by then, CEC would no longer have a quorum to do business, and would have to adjourn.

Staff Report: Mr. Cademartori introduced the first two agenda items, both pertaining to the newly funded Gloucester Climate Action and Resilience Plan (**CARP**).

1) Coordination of CARP Process with Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program:

The CARP plan process was funded by a grant from the MVP program, which is overseen by the Mass. Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA). Michelle Rowden of EOEEA explained that she is the contact person for Gloucester's MVP grant, and can provide access to State data on climate risks, and access to additional MVP action grants to implement the projects and actions identified in the CARP planning process. The CARP plan is an outgrowth of the work done in Gloucester's 2018 MVP study and workshop on building community resilience in the face of climate change. The 2018 process highlighted the importance of using climate data for proactive solutions, and of integrating environmental justice into all our planning and implementation strategies. The strategies/projects outlined in the CARP "roadmap" will be eligible for additional MVP grant rounds open every spring to fund these strategies/projects.

The CARP grant funded the assistance of a climate/environment consultant, and Gloucester chose to work with MAPC. MAPC's project advisor, Julie Curti, and Van Du, project manager, were introduced. CARP will leverage all the groundwork Gloucester has already completed on climate adaptation and mitigation, as shown on Gregg Cademartori's slide, including Green Community designation, energy efficiency retrofits of municipal buildings and schools; procurement of some electric municipal vehicles and charging stations; the provision of renewable electricity for all municipal buildings through the wind turbine project commissioned in 2012; LED streetlights; and the Community Electricity Aggregation Program launched in 2019, which increases the renewable share of electricity provided to Gloucester residents by our utility, National Grid.

It was also noted that MAPC's "Net Zero Playbook" would be useful in the CARP planning process. This "Playbook" focuses on several goal areas for which actions should be designed: Net zero buildings; zero emissions transportation; clean energy supply, climate-smart permitting and zoning; and frameworks for action integrated with equity.

Van Du provided an overview of the CARP process, which will start in September, 2021, and finish in June 2022. First will be an inventory of current green-house gas (GHG) emissions, using MAPC's Inventory Tool Kit. Next comes the development of an equitable community outreach plan, assembling stakeholders that will encompass groups often missed in environmental planning (low-income residents, minorities, elderly, economically vulnerable business such as fishing). This will include a publicized community survey available on-line. Then, CARP will generate a set of community goals, and a list of municipal and community action strategies for meeting those goals, sorted by priority, with as much community/stakeholder input as possible. Goal/action ideas might include reduction of GHG by energy efficiency projects like net zero buildings, and greater use of renewable and battery energy; carbon sequestration by forest, farmland and watershed protection; enhanced climate resiliency through protecting and augmenting flood control infrastructure projects, and conservation of the natural resource areas that help to control flooding (wetlands, beaches); and public health and safety measures to enhance emergency management.

Van Du referred to a slide that showed the "different spheres of influence" in which the City will be working. We have the greatest level of influence on actions in the **City's direct control**, such as zoning and permitting regulations, improvement of municipal buildings and vehicles, and public-private partnerships to build renewable energy sources for municipal government or general public use. The second sphere of influence is actions that the **City can influence**, such as State legislation and policy, and affordable housing. The third sphere is **actions that fall outside of the City's direct control AND influence**, such as technological innovation, or national/global economic and political conditions. Our community conversation should be done with awareness of which "sphere of influence" our proposed strategies and actions fall within, and how that affects our prioritization.

Van Du also explained a slide on "Equity Assessment", showing how to encourage awareness of the different ways that both climate problems and proposed solutions can affect the different interest-groups in our community. Who has historically been impacted by community problems and challenges? Who will be most impacted by the types of climate change we expect? How will the benefits and costs of proposed climate-based solutions be distributed? How can we counterbalance the unwanted side-effects of a policy that has strong climate benefits for the general public?

2) Discussion/Presentation by TownGreen representatives Dick Prouty and Val Nelson on the two linked climate action projects they are undertaking.

As explained at the start of the meeting, CEC member John Moskal, who is an EPA employee, recused himself and left the meeting at this point, in order to comply with EPA's conflict of interest rules.

Upon Mr. Moskal's departure, there were only 3 CEC members remaining to participate in the meeting, while the CEC quorum is a minimum of 4 members. Gregg Cademartori advised that the meeting could not continue without a quorum. Candace Wheeler apologized to the TownGreen representatives that we could not proceed on their topic at this time, and offered to put them on the next CEC agenda, (Oct. 14, 2021), with careful checking of quorum compliance.

Therefore it was moved, seconded and voted by roll call vote to adjourn the meeting, as follows: Linda Brayton, aye; Debra Darby, aye; Candace Wheeler, aye.

Next CEC Meeting is planned for October 14, 2021, at 5 PM via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Candace Wheeler, Chairman, CEC