

MINUTES

NEW HAVEN CLIMATE EMERGENCY TASKFORCE

REGULAR MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2023, 5:15 PM

Present: Steve Winter, Max Teirstein, Dawn Henning, Linda Reeder, Alder Carmen Rodriguez, Doug Hausladen, Melissa Kops, Latha Swamy, Alder Adam Marchand, Giovanni Zinn

The New Haven Climate Emergency Taskforce (CETF) met on Wednesday, September 27th, 2023 at 5:15 PM to on Zoom (see link at end of agenda) to discuss the following items:

1. Approval of minutes from the previous meeting
 - a. Doug Hausladen moved to approve the minutes, Melissa seconded Kops. Unanimously approved by all members present.
2. Project updates from the Office of Climate and Sustainability (OCS) staff
 - a. Buckeye Terminal: Permit Applications at 140 Forbes Ave and 280 Waterfront St.
 - i. Steve Winter provided an overview of these developments.
 - ii. Buckeye Energy Holdings LLC (“Buckeye”) owns oil tanks at 140 Forbes Ave and 280 Waterfront St. The Title V permits for these two facilities are up for renewal (as they are every 5 years), and Buckeye must complete a public participation process as a component of both permit applications.
 - iii. Waterfront: Public Informational Hearing last Tuesday (9/12).
 - iv. Forbes: Meeting to discuss Community Environmental Benefit Agreement on Tuesday, September 26th (yesterday). 3 tanks installed that weren’t permitted, so they need to apply for an expanded permit, which is subject to a community benefit agreement with the City. The City and one community representative from the affected area (near Fair Haven/Annex/I-95) will have to negotiate the benefits. Can be something that remediates local air quality or something that reduces demand for the petroleum in the tanks, or
 - v. *Melissa Kops: Will that representative come to the taskforce to discuss mitigation strategies?*
 - vi. *Steve Winter: The Environmental Advisory Council is stretched too thinly and isn’t compensated, so Max and I will likely be representative to the Climate Emergency Taskforce for this process.*
 - b. Working on agreements with solar developer Greenskies to install new solar arrays on landfill, City and school buildings
 - i. OCS staff is working with City departments and Greenskies Clean Energy to complete agreements for solar arrays on 2 school parking lot canopies (each 200kW AC), the Q House (125kW AC), 200 Wintergreen (NHPD facility) (77 kW DC), and the top of the landfill (750 kW AC).
 - ii. It’ll go to the Board of Education on Monday and the Board of Alders (City Services and Environmental Policy Committee) shortly after.
 - c. Re-launching our I Heart My Home canvassing campaign!

- i. We'll be canvassing neighborhoods (with a focus on those with high shares of 2-4 family, owner-occupied homes) a couple evenings (5-7 pm or so) per week for the next few months, please join us! Sign up here:
<https://forms.gle/sdQZAH1CzjShDfu19>
- d. City & Urban Resources Initiative (URI) awarded US Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry Grants totaling \$3 million.
 - i. City Department of Parks & Public Works awarded \$362,000 to develop an urban forest master plan and a citywide canopy assessment.
 - ii. URI awarded \$2,640,847 for stump removal, tree pit expansion, new tree pit creation, and the planting of 2500 additional trees in environmental justice communities over five years.
 - iii. Goal of increasing tree canopy, reducing urban heat island effect, and providing green jobs to 60 residents
- e. Upcoming event: What's In, What's Out Workshop on October 23rd (the Monday before our next meeting) at 6 PM in the Downtown Branch Library Community Program Room, or on Zoom by registration (Register at bit.ly/WIWOnhv and please share!)
 - i. In this hybrid virtual/in-person workshop, sustainable materials management expert Sherrill Baldwin from the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection will provide an overview of acceptable materials in CT's mixed recycling program and answer questions about recycling and trash.
- f. NHSWRA's Hometown Recycling Day THIS SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 30TH, 9-1 pm at 114 Farnham Ave (SCSU Campus). <https://www.nhswra.com/hometown-recycling-day-2023-en/>
 - i. Bring your tricky recyclables (documents, electronics, mattresses, etc.)
- g. Materials reclamation facility sites for the Cedar Hill Yards site near the line with North Haven.
 - i. CPC received a proposal to regrade the Cedar Hill Yards site with the import of +25,000 CY of fill material. The action is meant to prepare the site for a materials reclamation facility, including an incinerator. It also borders wetlands.
 - ii. On Tuesday's CPC meeting, the proposal was tabled without a definite date for a return to discussion.
 - iii. *Dawn Henning: The site plan is just for the site preparation work, not the incinerator.*
 - iv. *Steve Winter: Yes, thank you for that clarification. We can share the proposal for the facility with anyone who's interested.*
 - v. *Giovanni Zinn: Those of us who are City staff are limited in our comments on this.*
 - vi. *Steve Winter: Importantly, access for the site (traffic) will come through New Haven, which is an important source of emissions for the city to be aware of. We can keep you updated about next steps in this process.*
- h. Shellfish recycling: *"We work with the CT Bureau of Aquaculture on getting the shell back in the water for restoration projects. David Carey is the Director and oversees and permits all restoration work. They are looking to do some large-scale projects starting*

next year. We should be meeting with them in October to start planning for next year's projects."

i. Steve Winter: Shellfish recycling is in the [New Haven Register!](#)

3. Funding the Climate Justice Schools program directly through New Haven Climate Movement (NHCM) for Fiscal year 2023-2024:

- a. The Taskforce voted to move forward with the proposal on a provisional basis, given that Steve can confirm the City procurement process doesn't prove to be an obstacle and that the NHCM provides a detailed budget.
- b. Steve discussed funding 3 schools (rather than 4) with New Haven Climate Movement, which would put the total budget below \$10,000 and will work with procurement to draft an MOU.
- c. *Steve Winter: We'll try to get the procurement process rolling here in the next week or so.*

4. Discussion Items:

- a. Linda shared a link to a [Union of Concerned Scientists report on diesel emissions in Connecticut](#), which are especially high in New Haven given the interstate corridors. Most of these emissions come from medium and heavy duty vehicles. The [legislature authorized DEEP to adopt California's emissions standards](#) for medium and heavy duty vehicles. Professor [Douglass Brugge at UCONN](#) has studied air quality impacts of highways.
 - i. Can Engineering provide an update on potential air quality monitoring systems the City can deploy to monitoring NOx, VOCs, PM2.5, etc?
 - ii. *Steve Winter: Giovanni said we're working on air quality monitoring stations but it would be premature to provide an update on deployment. We'll try to check in with him regularly to give you an update on it as soon as we can.*
 - iii. *Giovanni Zinn: As the mayor promised, we're putting together an air quality network at a number of sites across the city to deliver real time data and historically data. The historical data requires programming a dashboard, which we're working on with ESRI now, but we'll have it up and running soon and can provide more detail about those plans at that point.*
 - iv. *Steve Winter: The state has a diesel emissions reductions grant, which is what allowed us to order the electric refuse truck and is arriving by the end of the year. In time for Christmas! So we'll try to apply for another large electric vehicle—maybe an electric tree bucket truck?*
- b. Carryover from last meeting: [HUD Green Resilient and Retrofit Program](#) (Thank you to Ginger Chapman)
 - i. Goal is to decrease energy consumption by 25% and GHG emissions by 50%. Funding available for property owners to add resilience & efficiency measures to recapitalization projects already in progress (\$140 million [Elements Awards](#)), for properties in earlier stages to be designed to highest standards of efficiency (\$400 million [Leading Edge Awards](#)), and for recapitalization investments in efficiency, carbon reduction, and resilience (\$1.47 billion [Comprehensive Awards](#)).

- ii. This is a grant available to Housing Authorities. We wanted to check in on the idea of Housing Authorities as a vehicle for limiting emissions. Our Housing Authority owns 11% of housing in the city, so it's a big actor, even bigger than the mega-landlords. Other cities have established emissions reductions goals for buildings—Boston's is fossil fuel-free by 2030, their housing authority houses 9% of residents.
- iii. *Steve Winter: We've been in touch with the Housing Authority about developing a large solar project on an affordable housing development.*
- iv. *Linda Reeder: Are there any plans to construct anything new, or all retrofits? The Housing Authority in El Paso, TX got a net zero energy ready building going through a competition.*
- v. *Steve Winter: Max & I, before our next meeting, can check in with them about what's next in their pipeline. I know they've been doing retrofit work on some of the smaller sites that they own, but those retrofits wouldn't touch things like heating systems. Not retrofits that are sufficient to meet emissions reduction goals.*
- vi. *Linda Reeder: Would it be helpful to invite someone from the Housing Authority to a meeting?*
- vii. *Steve Winter: Yeah definitely, and Max or I should sit in on one of their meetings to get more of a sense of what they're working on.*
- viii. *Steve Winter: Another thought I had is that maybe the Housing Authority could adopt a goal similar to the one the City and the Board of Ed have adopted.*
- ix. *Steve Winter: We've been sharing the Green & Resilient retrofit program and other energy efficiency programs with the Housing Authority as we see them, and exploring solar for affordable housing developments, but that's been the extent of our interaction with them.*
- x. *Melissa Kops: Are they familiar with the utility programs? There's both new construction incentives and retrofit.*
- xi. *Steve Winter: I would imagine they are, but I can certainly ask.*
- xii. *Melissa Kops: There's also the Revolving Loan Program. That happened at the end of session and is incoming, so it would be worth sending them an FYI. They would be eligible for CPACE as well—for their multifamily properties.*
- xiii. *Steve Winter: I don't know that that's necessarily the best route for them, but that's definitely a possibility. We can also check in with the Mayor's chief of staff to see how we can get a conversation started internally.*
- c. Public campaign: At our last meeting we talked about using some of the remaining CETF funding for a public climate campaign.
 - i. Latha shared links to this educational campaign illustrating benefits of building electrification and the harms of gas in buildings: <https://www.sierraclub.org/san-francisco-bay/blog/2021/08/building-electrification-heat-pump-water-heaters-illustration-vrinda> and <https://www.sarahlawrence.edu/alumni/reunion/art-exhibit/2022/vrinda-manqlik.html>
 - ii. What would a campaign look like for New Haven? Who would be involved?

1. *Steve Winter: I thought the illustrations were really cool and got me thinking about communication around heat pumps.*
2. *Steve Winter: It looks like we could pursue incentives on insulation or water heaters. Having education about heat pumps and weatherization would be valuable. It looks like a lot of people still don't know what heat pumps are. Max, you attended the NHS' Heat Pump 101 presentation at NHS. Did it seem like people knew what heat pumps were?*
3. *Max Teirstein: More or less. People were vaguely aware of heat pumps as a term, but not aware of how they work or the different kinds available.*
4. *Steve Winter: Our website has a heat pump guide, but it doesn't go into a lot of depth. <https://www.newhavenct.gov/government/departments-divisions/office-of-climate-and-sustainability/heat-pumps>*
5. *Steve Winter: I know hot plates were floated, and I think there's a really important story there around getting people to understand induction stoves—their benefits and challenges. We could do a raffle or have people enter a lottery for induction hot plates. We could go to a CMT, raffle them off, also bring pots and pans that can be used with the hot plate. It could be a small thing—a dozen cooktops, some media coverage in The Independent. That idea seemed very doable.*
6. *Melissa Kops: Could we do a demonstration with a pot that's cut in half and you put a chocolate bar that spans the pan? Some gimmick that allows us to show how it works?*
7. *Steve Winter: I think that's a cool idea!*
8. *Melissa Kops: We could do it at a farmer's market, in-person CMT meetings. You could record a video and put it up on the website.*
9. *Max Teirstein: The demonstration could be conducted on Zoom, too!*
10. *Steve Winter: This group out of Buffalo is replacing gas stoves with inductions, so here's some video inspiration: <https://www.pushbuffalo.org/out-of-gas>*
11. *Max Teirstein: Do we expect people to actually swap out their gas stoves with hot plates? Maybe if we want people to actually use the hot plates, we should be bringing hot plates to the unhoused population?*
12. *Steve Winter: I don't know why we think people wouldn't use them, especially if they don't have a well-ventilated kitchen. Once they learn that their gas stove is harmful they may reduce their use of it.*
13. *Steve Winter: We could also do something with bicycles/electric bicycles. New Haven did really well, we represented an eighth of all voucher applications, but only a 1/10th of applicants received a voucher. Our \$40,000 could go further.*
14. *Melissa Kops: I'm interested in that. Or both.*
15. *Steve Winter: I think there's definitely room for both!*
16. *Dawn Henning: That money should go to those with the most need for eBikes, ideally. Delivery people?*

17. *Melissa Kops: how much information do we want to gather, then? Is there a way to find out who applied and wasn't granted a voucher? Are there people who are already in programs that we could reach out to? I don't know how to start that process.*
 18. *Steve Winter: Max and I can give some thought to the eligibility piece. Members, should we move forward with the hot plate demo?*
 19. *Linda Reeder: Last time we discussed this, I recommended dovetailing the hot plate campaign with the unveiling of new rebates for induction stoves next year.*
 20. *Steve Winter: The federal rebate is for a full range.*
 21. *Linda Reeder: Right, but the hot plate could still be connected to this. Allowing them to try it out on a small scale.*
 22. *Steve Winter: We can get them thinking about the upcoming rebate.*
 23. *Alder Rodriguez: I have to agree with Linda. Yes, you can do a demonstration, but cost is going to be a concern for folks so having the information about the forthcoming rebates would be helpful for those who can go out and purchase things. We have to be sensitive to that and I think Linda's idea is a good one.*
 24. *Steve Winter: I think if we were giving things away, we'd be giving away smaller things with one or two heating elements, which can be 100-200 dollars, but the larger cooktop would be \$1000 or more. This would be about getting the idea out with demonstration versions. At our house we have a one burner and a two-burner, so they are very capable, but they wouldn't be the sort of thing that the federal rebates would cover. The federal rebates cover the replacement of one range with another one that's really installed in your kitchen.*
 25. *Linda Reeder: I do understand that, but I think they should be tied in. If you're promoting induction stoves, it's good to allow people to go use a rebate immediately, rather than having to remember for a few months.*
 26. *Steve Winter: So I think our office can map out what we might do, how much it might cost. We won't know when the rebates come out for some time. They may or may not come out this fiscal year. If we come up with a plan and it's approved, we can roll the money over to next year as long as there's a commitment for it. But I think that makes a lot of sense—to hold off until we're close to the rebates, if not concurrently with them.*
- iii. What message would we be amplifying? Could we organize a visual or storytelling campaign or contest to promote the Inflation Reduction Act home [electrification rebates](#), which will be available next year?
- d. *Steve Winter: Any other suggestions on issues to take up? One is Styrofoam. The Health Department sent a letter attesting to the fact that some food trucks have stopped using Styrofoam, but there are others that haven't yet. Alder Rodriguez is interested in this to avoid Styrofoam in the Sound and our staff having to pick it all up.*
 - i. *Melissa Kops: Have you ever been to Seattle or Portland and seen their Go Boxes?*

- ii. *Steve Winter: I don't think Max or I have the capacity to get this off the ground. Melissa is referring to reusable takeout containers that can be washed and given back.*
 - iii. *Melissa Kops: You don't wash them yourself, you give them to the City, who washes & sterilizes them and then returns them to the City.*
- e. *Alder Marchand: I have a question about the bike share program the City implemented and then abandoned. We have advertisements in the public ROW and empty bike racks that aren't filled with bikes folks can rent. Do you have any update on getting a new vendor?*
 - i. *Steve Winter: The short answer is that the Parking Authority has issued an RFP (<https://parknewhaven.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/23-065-Proposal-Documents-.pdf>) for a new bike share provider for regular and electric bikes at existing stations. As I understand it, they wouldn't be funding it with advertising like the previous bike share, but that the panels will remain for public messaging from the City or other groups. I think Doug has gotten responses on that—he may be able to tell us more at our next meeting.*
 - ii. *Steve Winter: The RFP specifically names electric power bikes—50 eBikes and the conversion of 100 regular bicycles to eBikes. They currently have 150 in stock so this would add 150 eBikes.*

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