

Climate Emergency Taskforce Meeting 3/22/2023

1. Introductions

- a. Steve Winter, Executive Director, Office of Climate & Sustainability
- b. Max Teirstein, Sustainability Analyst & Engagement Coordinator, Office of Climate & Sustainability
- c. Linda Reeder, Prof. of Construction Management at CCS & Architect & Author
- d. Joaquin Dominguez, Data Scientist
- e. Kai Addae, Safe Streets Coalition & Sunrise New Haven
- f. Melissa Kops, Architect in City Department of Engineering & Municipal Representative to the Energy Efficiency Board & Chair of Residential Committee
- g. Alder Rodriguez
- h. Latha Swamy, Director of Food Policy
- i. Giovanni Zinn, City Engineer
- j. Dawn Henning, Assistant City Engineer
- k. Alder Marchand

2. Project updates from the Office of Climate and Sustainability staff

- a. *EPA Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling grant application*

Explanation of the grant from Steven Winter:

- i. Submitted in coordination with West Haven
 - ii. West Haven would expand capacity for composting, purchase machines that could decontaminate compost
 1. Depackaging machines (compost put in green bags)
 2. Slurry-making machine
 - a. Currently asking residents to separate refuse and organics, but a lot of refuse is ending up in organics
 3. Conveyor belt for composting bags to be removed from waste stream by hand
 - iii. 25% of our refuse is organics, big environmental & financial opportunity
 1. Costs \$112 to tip right now
 - iv. Projects begin October 1st
 - v. Question from Joaquin Dominguez: could machine learning be used to separate bags for trash from bags of organic material?
 - vi. Steven Winter: such a large upfront capital cost that seems unlikely but we should look into an automated sorted machine to at least know
 1. There's already a cost to having people pull those bags by hand
- b. *EPA Recycling Education and Outreach grant application*

Explanation of the grant from Steven Winter:

- i. Health department leading the grant
- ii. Goal: Improve recycling rate & clean up what's put in the blue bins
- iii. Paying more per ton to have items be recycled than incinerated
 1. Due to high levels of nonrecyclables ending up in the recycling
- iv. Grant will be used for:
 1. Education in schools

- a. Recycling in schools has largely collapsed
 - 2. Elm City Conservation Core: broad public outreach
 - 3. Education & enforcement via landlords
- v. Alder Rodriguez: who can we connect with in the school system to make this engaging for students at the start of the year?
 - 1. New Haven Public Schools Administration said it was a school-by-school situation where some are more open to it than others
 - 2. Board of Education reporting at the end of April to the New Haven Climate Movement so that might be an opportunity to ask about composting and recycling in schools
 - 3. Steve meeting with a group from Clinton Ave School to discuss their materials management strategy, all are welcome: 4 PM on Friday @ Clinton Ave School
- c. *United Illuminating Community Partnership application*

Explanation of the grant from Steven Winter:

- i. Submitted in partnership with Neighborhood Housing Services
- ii. 9-12 months long campaign to engage people in the Home Energy Solutions Income Eligible (HES-IE) Program, specifically targeting renters, non-English-speakers, and folks who are income eligible in environmental justice neighborhoods
 - 1. End of May/Early June, should we get funded
- iii. NHS' I <3 My Home Program will walk folks through the programs they're eligible for (energy audit, weatherization, asbestos/mold, insulation/windows, even new heating systems)
- iv. We'll need support with this campaign!
- v. Question from Joaquin Dominguez: open to renters?
 - 1. Steven Winter: must have consent of landlord to make major changes in weatherization, but benefits are based on renter's income so could get free insulation or new windows if landlord signs on
- vi. Question from Kai Addae: how many people are you trying to reach?
 - 1. If proposal is accepted, work with utilities to set an appropriate goal
 - 2. Melissa Kops: annual report shows that New Haven got over \$5 million in energy incentives, so clearly we are using these programs and the funding is not unlimited.
 - 3. Steven Winter: HB 5634 would plug a hole in the efficiency budget, and SB4 "moonshot bill" of \$600 million over 5 years for EJ communities
 - a. https://cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&which_year=2023&bill_num=5634
 - b. https://cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&which_year=2023&bill_num=4
 - 4. Melissa Kops: state currently spends ~\$45 million/year on HES-IE
- d. *Drafted request for proposals for solar on City-owned properties*

Explanation of the request for proposals from Steven Winter:

- i. Drafted an RFP for solar on city-owned properties, will hopefully get posted this Sunday
- ii. Would include the Obama School and the landfill, as well as the new public works facility on 424 Chapel
- e. *Begun work on Buildings UP prize application with Small Contractor Development Office and Earth Forward Group*

Explanation of the application from Steven Winter:

- i. One object is to bring more Spanish-speaking contractors into the small contractors program and training them on energy efficiency installation
 - 1. Particularly focused on oil heating systems
- ii. The City is submitting a pre-application to the Department of Energy for assistance completing the application
- f. *Begun work on 2021 Greenhouse Gas Inventory*
- g. *Begun work on pathways to increase energy efficiency program participation and adoption of deeper energy efficiency measures, including energy efficiency counseling and workforce development*

Overview of the problem from Steven Winter:

- i. Lots of incentives (e.g., State of CT will take \$8,000 off heat pumps at point of sale for income-eligible buyers)
- ii. Would be good to have someone who can answer questions people have about these incentives
- iii. If the budget hole gets plugged, there should be contractors looking to expand their workforce, could use the workforce pipeline we have in New Haven to train people into energy auditing and other energy efficiency work
 - 1. Dependent on state funding and this budgetary issue
- iv. Melissa Kops: There is additional funding to the Weatherization Assistance Program that will be coming, can create a New Haven ecosystem of dispersing the \$3 million over 5 years from the infrastructure bill
 - 1. Steven Winter: WAP is similar to the state-supported program (Home Energy Solutions Program). We could be the center of gravity for energy efficiency work if the state splits half WAP, half HES
- v. Linda Reeder: how would we find people for training? Construction is suffering staffing shortages
 - 1. Steven Winter: we're focused on folks who are entering the workforce and re-entering the workforce than recruiting folks from adjacent trades
- vi. Alder Marchand: Keen to keep working on workforce development, we have a housing crisis in New Haven.
 - 1. Steven Winter: if the budget hole weren't filled, we may be able to use the American Rescue Plan funding for our office to cover weatherization, energy audits
 - 2. Alder Marchand: we need funding to get people trained and we need funding for people to afford the service.

3. Alder Marchand: last week was the 10th anniversary of New Haven Works, has been successful because of its wraparound services. We need to ensure that graduates of workforce training programs have opportunities once the program is completed.

3. Potential uses of Climate Emergency Taskforce budget

Steven Winter described the remaining Taskforce budget and some potential uses.

- a. \$15,000 allocated to Board of Ed, \$35,000 more is available. Looking for things that are valuable or tell an important story
 - b. *Heat pump contractor training?*
 - i. Earth Forward put together a \$25,000 proposal to bring local contractors doing HVAC work into the business of installing heat pumps
 - ii. Earth Forward would help contractors to get set up on the state's heat pump installer registry
 - c. *Electric bike rebate*
 - i. Denver had a very successful electric bike rebate program
 1. Joaquin Dominguez: Denver program was successful because streets are configured for biking but harder to bike around New Haven, wouldn't go as far until we have more infrastructure.
 - ii. Melissa Kops: a bill was passed for e-bike rebates at the state level, would this be in addition?
 1. Steve: Yes, it would, may not make sense to set rebates until they've set an amount for that rebate
 2. Kai Addae: We should do an outreach campaign on the state's rebate program. We did get funds last year to expand the cargo e-bike library. Outreach around buying, borrowing, and rebates.
 3. Kai Addae: Latest update is that the program will launch soon "late winter/early Spring 2023" <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Air/Mobile-Sources/CHEAPR/Electric-Bicycles>
 - a. Steve: we will try and get an update on that!
 4. Alder Marchand: would support a campaign getting people out on the Canal Trail on ebikes. Canal Trail is an amazing corridor that connects people to services.
 - a. Steve: maybe around Earth Day we should do something around ebikes
 - d. *Induction Cooktops?*
 - i. We could give out 100-200 cooktops with our budget. Health Department has Healthy Homes funds, they've said they're making electric stoves a part of their health assessments
 - e. Melissa Kops moves to move forward with funding the Heat Pump Training, Alder Marchand seconds the motion with no discussion. Voting members of the taskforce are in unanimous agreement.
- ### 4. Action Items & Upcoming Events/Opportunities:
- a. OCS will move forward with funding the heat pump training.
 - b. OCS will look into the cost for an automated sorting machine for solid waste.

- c. Board of Education reporting to New Haven Climate Movement at end of April (date TBA).
- d. Volunteer with OCS/Neighborhood Housing Services energy efficiency campaign beginning in June.
- e. OCS will look into electric bike rebates (<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Air/Mobile-Sources/CHEAPR/Electric-Bicycles>)
- f. Begin thinking about outreach/advertising campaign on e-bikes and a potential event on the Canal Trail on Earth Day