

MINUTES

NEW HAVEN CLIMATE EMERGENCY TASKFORCE

REGULAR MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24TH, 2023, 5:15 PM

Present: Steven Winter, Max Teirstein, Giovanni Zinn, Douglas Hausladen, Linda Reeder, Melissa Kops, Alder Carmen Rodriguez

The New Haven Climate Emergency Taskforce will meet on Wednesday, May 24th, 2023 at 5:15 PM to on Zoom to discuss the following items:

1. Project updates from the Office of Climate and Sustainability (OCS) staff
 - a. PosiGen and OCS launched [Solar for All campaign](#), a solar lease program that allows homeowners of any income level to go solar with no upfront costs and no credit check.

Steven Winter gave an update on PosiGen:

- i. We will be bringing PosiGen to Community Management Team meetings and they have signed up for Arts & Ideas neighborhood events
- ii. Are there additional events or groups that you think might be interested in hearing about PosiGen?
- b. Green STEP

Steven Winter gave an update on the Green STEP program:

- i. The City and Board of Education are partnering with United Illuminating and Eversource to bring the Green STEP program to High School in the Community this July. Green STEP is a month long paid green building, energy efficiency, and renewable energy training and certification program for high school students hosted at High School in the Community this July. Registration is now live with half of spots reserved for New Haven students.
 1. Registration: <http://ow.ly/ix9Q5006ER5>
 2. Program Schedule: <http://ow.ly/2zTN5006zws>
 3. Program Poster: <http://ow.ly/JW8S50Ohaif>
- c. Composting and Food Waste Reduction Grant due June 14th

Steven Winter gave an update on the USDA composting and food waste reduction grant:

- i. OCS is planning to apply for the USDA Composting and Food Waste Reduction grant, with the potential to help boost food donation and composting in the Downtown area and to support Haven's Harvest and Peels on Wheels efforts throughout the City. Downtown is an area of focus as it would not be part of a composting program run through the City's DPPW refuse division.
 1. Doug Hausladen: Do you need volunteer site for hosting big bellies? They could be hosted at NHPA
 2. Linda Reeder: Has the City looked into anaerobic digesters and siting them locally?

3. Melissa Kops: Digesters would look best if there's industry right next to them
 4. Melissa Kops: There's still the burden of air pollution associated with digester; would be difficult to have this in the City; would be best to co-locate with existing industry that's currently using a lot of fossil
 5. Linda Reeder: Could the methane from a digester be used in a fuel cell?
 6. Giovanni Zinn: Methane from these sorts of processing is quite dirty; fuel cells are very picky with inputs.
- d. US Department of Transportation Charging & Fueling Infrastructure Grant due June 13th

Steven Winter gave an update on the Charging & Fueling Infrastructure grant application:

- i. We are planning to schedule community meetings for feedback on 6 proposed charging station locations, 5 of which are in US DOT disadvantaged communities
 - ii. Plan is to pair education about EV incentives with installations of EV charging stations in areas of the city with high proportions of medium density (2-4 family housing), many units of which lack off street parking for charging EVs
 - iii. Discuss proposed charging station locations
 1. Linda Reeder: how do you deal with people who find a parking place?
 2. Melissa Kops: Are we charging for this?
 3. Steven Winter: We would charge for use of the charging stations.
- e. US Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry due June 1st

Steven Winter gave an update on the USFS Urban & Community Forest grant:

- i. We have been working with Urban Resources Initiative and the Department of Parks and Public Works on two complementary proposals, one focused on stump removal, tree pit expansion, new tree pit creation, and the planting of 2500 additional trees in environmental justice communities over five years
- ii. Goal of increasing tree canopy, reducing urban heat island effect, and providing green jobs to 60 residents
 1. Alder Rodriguez: When this tree planting happens is that URI?
 2. Steven Winter: Yes it is. Tree planting helps reduce the urban heat island effect, which can lead to temperature disparities of up to 10-15 degrees between the Hill and Westville.
 3. Alder Rodriguez: We have to ensure adjacent homeowners are notified – a neighbor two doors down got the tree planted in front of a homeowner's property; URI said it's the City's property; the resident who agreed to water moved; URI was not helpful in this instance; you are left with a tree that wasn't asked for by the adjacent property owner and wasn't adopted long-term; need to ensure that whoever lives adjacent to the tree needs to have a say in it as well
 4. Giovanni Zinn: how did we find out that the Hill is 10-15 degrees warmer than Westville? Is this modeled or measured?
 5. Steven Winter: Will look into measured or modeled question.

2. Discussion Item: How should OCS engage renters and landlords to increase participation in energy efficiency programs?
 - a. Engagement in energy efficiency programs skews heavily towards homeowners. Who should OCS reach out to and how should OCS spread the word to increase participation among non-owner occupied properties? All ideas are welcome.
 - i. Melissa Kops: It sounds like in couple weeks we'll know what's going on with rental energy labeling; there's a bill before the legislature to require landlords to disclose energy costs to potential residents; if it doesn't pass, then having some sort of rental licensing program that encourages or requires a label.
 - ii. Steven Winter: You could also require something like this through property sales.
 - iii. Melissa Kops: It's required similar to a home inspection; it has to be listed as part of the MLS; this works great for Portland, OR but in New Haven many rentals don't change hands as often.
 - iv. Melissa Kops: We can work with NEEP to generate an energy label using tax assessment data; the owner can refine it if they don't like it
 - v. Linda Reeder: Can a renter ask for utility history?
 - vi. Melissa Kops: The utility can give you the historical usage but they don't have to
 - vii. Linda Reeder: Why don't financials take into account the cost of operating a building?
 - viii. Melissa Kops: For high performance homes you can ask for an appraiser who can appraise for this
 - ix. Melissa Kops: We could make the rental score publicly available; in Montpelier it was provided from the landlord to the renter
 - x. Alder Rodriguez: If work has to be done, who is going to be able to help this homeowner to get in a state of good repair? We need to have a solution for these homeowners.
 - xi. Alder Rodriguez: Some families like to light up house like a Christmas tree; you'd want homeowners to be included in the rental grading process.
 - xii. Melissa: This is the time to do this education – with federal funding this is a good opportunity (e.g. weatherization assistance program, high efficiency electric home rebate).
 - xiii. Alder Rodriguez: We need to do a better job of getting the word out about these programs
3. Update on Climate Emergency Taskforce budget

Steven Winter gave an update on the remaining Climate Emergency Taskforce budget:

- a. A request for agreement has been issued to fund Neighborhood Housing Services' I Heart My Home program with the remaining Climate Taskforce funding. Funds should allow for one-on-one energy coaching with 100-150 New Haven households.
4. New membership
 - a. Please let us know if you have recommendations of new members for the Taskforce.
 - b. Discussion of ideas for outreach to new members.

