

CITY OF CONCORD
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF September 29, 2021

PLANNING AND VISIONING SESSION

The Concord Energy and Environment Advisory Committee met at 5:30 p.m., on September 29, 2021, in City Council Chambers at 37 Green Street.

Attendees: City Councilor Rob Werner, City Councilor Karen McNamara, Henry Herndon, Chuck Willing, Jerry Eaton, Jessica Forrest, Nick Babladelis, Jennifer Galbraith, Carl Cooley (via phone), Dot Currier

Absent: None

Staff: Sam Durfee

Guest(s): Jeff Evans

Regular Meeting Updates

Rob briefly updated the Committee on the scheduled discussion of the Joint Powers Agreement with the Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee on October 18th at 4:30pm at City Hall. He added that there are discussions occurring between the City and Briar Hydro for a potential net metering agreement and he will keep the committee posted as to how those talks progress.

Planning Session

The Committee began by brainstorming ideas about what “Energy & Environment” encompasses. These ideas included:

- Energy
- Community power
- Natural disaster resilience
- Adequate cooling space
- Additional city staff (Energy Manager)
- Non-motorized transportation
- Mobility
- Public Transportation
- Housing
- Migration
- Adaptation
- Water Conservation
- Recycling
- Single use plastics
- Air quality
- Carbon footprint reduction
- Food security and local sourcing
- Community gardens
- Pollinator habitat
- Invasive species
- Economics
- Waste management
- Municipal solid waste
- Waste water
- Hazardous materials
- Composting
- Preparation for electrification
- Greening of the energy portfolio
- Advocacy
- Environmental Justice
- Outreach/Education/Communication
- Health
- Access to nature

The Committee then grouped these ideas into three categories: Economics, Environment, and People.

The Committee split into three groups and took 10-15 minutes to further discuss each category. Members were encouraged to identify a role the Committee could take in addressing, advancing, or participating in elements of these categories.

Once each group spent time on each category, the Committee came back together and presented each category. While discussing each category, the Committee worked to distill actions the Committee could take on. The following action items came out of this exercise:

ECONOMICS

1. In order to encourage greater participation in weatherization and solarization campaigns and to make these improvements more accessible to lower income residents, the Committee can explore the possibility of bundling weatherization/solarization projects, marketing them to contractors, and developing a financing mechanism that is appropriate for low-income households. This eliminates the need to write many, small loans, saving staff time and financing costs.
2. To pay for large municipal capital projects, the Committee can advocate for the creation of a revolving green fund, where the savings from energy efficiency projects are rolled back into the fund to pay for future efficiency projects
3. To reduce the overall cost of electricity, the Committee will continue to advocate for the City to sign the Joint Powers Agreement and join the Community Power Coalition of NH. The Committee can also take an active role in writing the required Community Power Plan when the time comes.
4. The Committee can advocate for a municipal Energy Manager position and assist in developing the job description.

ENVIRONMENT

1. To ensure sustainable land use, the Committee can work with the Conservation Commission and other interested parties to strike a balance between the preservation of open space and the development of renewable energy projects.
2. To limit the use of single use plastics, the Committee can advocate for enabling legislation to permit municipalities to enact restrictions on single use plastics.
3. Research examples of and advocate for the establishment of a point-based sustainability ordinance, where site plans must score a minimum amount of points through things like rain gardens, green or white roofs, on-site solar, passive heating design, to ensure resilient design.
4. To encourage non-motorized transportation, walkability, and the use of public transportation, the Committee can support the efforts of the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) and its subcommittees.

PEOPLE

1. To facilitate continued communication of the Committee's efforts to the public, the Committee can work on developing a Energy & Environment column in the City Manager's newsletter, in addition to keeping the Committee's Facebook page update and

frequently communicating with the City's Public Information Officer about ongoing efforts. The Committee can also continue to participate in community events such as Market Days.

2. To promote the sourcing of locally grown food, the Committee can work to get solar-power wells, or river pumps installed for the community gardens at Birch St and NHTI.
3. To increase the amount of non-motorized trips taken in the City, the Committee can advocate for the presence of a bike and/or scooter share system in the City, and support any associated efforts of TPAC and its subcommittees.
4. To expand its network of partners and to promote environmental stewardship in young people, the Committee can work with the school districts in Concord to provide energy & environment learning opportunities in the class room and assist the School Districts with energy efficiency and renewable energy projects for district facilities.