



HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Thursday, June 23, 2022

5:30 PM

Sullivan Chamber
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Health and Environment Committee will conduct a public hearing to discuss the final report of the Climate Crisis Working Group

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Patricia Nolan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Burhan Azeem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dennis J. Carlone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marc C. McGovern	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Quinton Zondervan	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council’s Health and Environment Committee was held on Tuesday, June 23, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 5:30p.m. by the Chair, Councillor Nolan. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2022 adopted by the Massachusetts General Assembly and approved by the Governor, the public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

At the request of the Chair, Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Absent

Councillor Carlone – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor McGovern – Present/Remote

Councillor Nolan – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Zondervan – Present/Remote

Present – 4, Absent – 1. Quorum established.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan offered opening remarks and shared that the call of the meeting was to discuss the final report of the Climate Crisis Working Group (CCWG). Councillor Nolan noted that Mayor Siddiqui was also present at the meeting.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Mayor Siddiqui who noted that climate work is such an important issue and that the City and working group wanted to respond with urgency. Mayor Siddiqui thanked Councillor Nolan and members for the CCWG for all their hard work.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized members from the CCWG who offered their thanks and excitement for the work that has been done and look forward to reviewing the report.

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Jun 23, 2022 5:30 PM (Committee Reports)

The Chair, Councillor Nolan gave a quick overview of the CCWG findings and recommendations report which was provided in advance of the meeting and included in the Agenda Packet.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development Department (CDD) who was joined by Susanne Rasmussen and Seth Federspiel, as well as staff from the Department of Public Works (DPW) Owen O’Riordan, John Nardone, Kathy Watkins, and Ellen Katz. Iram Farooq noted that both CDD and DPW are City departments that are involved with the implementation of climate change recommendations and sustainability within the City. Commissioner O’Riordan shared that DPW has a significant commitment to climate issues and noted that the City has been taking positive steps when trying to reach climate goals. Susanne Rasmussen offered comments and shared examples of the efforts that CDD is currently working on to reach climate goals. Iram Farooq shared that staff is available to respond to any questions or concerns from Councillors.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Zondervan who thanked everyone who worked towards providing a detailed report on where the City is in regards to climate change. Councillor Zondervan had a question regarding the Community Choice Electricity (CCE) program and asked if there was an update on being able to provide and have a program for renewable electricity for residents and small businesses to be compliant with BEUDO by 2025. Iram Farooq was available to respond and shared that CDD is currently working on increasing the amount of renewable energy that is available through the City of Cambridge Community Electricity Aggregation program and shared that 100% green option is cheaper than the Eversource standard base rate. Susanne Rasmussen shared that the number of large properties that take advantage of the Aggregation program is very low. They are looking on how to expand the program and participation as well as expanding the supply is a long-range plan that CDD is working towards. Councillor Zondervan shared that he would like to see the CCE become 100% renewable by default, so all tenants of larger properties are purchasing renewable energy that is compliant with BEUDO. He shared that it would also help the City see a significant decrease in emissions. Councillor Zondervan asked for more information on how the Community Solar program will be available to lower income residents in the City. Seth Federspiel shared that CDD has been working with partners to take advantage of low-income solar opportunities and offered examples of how the City can take advantage of the opportunities that are provided by the partnerships and how the City can accelerate solar within Cambridge.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Carlone who thanked everyone involved for all their hard work. Councillor Carlone noted that there is an urgent need for the City to work towards and incorporate buildings to net zero. Councillor Carlone stressed the importance of considering the design, development, and use of materials for larger properties and what that means when trying to reach climate change goals and providing more open space in the City.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan along with members of the CCWG reviewed the proposed amendments to the report.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Zondervan who made a motion to substitute Section 4 with the proposed amendments. (Attachment A)

Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Absent

Councillor Carlone – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Absent

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Zondervan – Yes

Yes – 3, No – 0, Absent – 2. Motion passed.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Zondervan who made a motion to refer the report as amended back to the Full City Council.

Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Absent

Councillor Carlone – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Absent

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Zondervan – Yes

Yes – 3, No – 0, Absent – 2. Motion passed.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Absent

Councillor Carlone – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Absent

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Zondervan – Yes

Yes – 3, No – 0, Absent – 2. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:43p.m.

Attachment A – Proposed amendments to Section 4.

Clerk’s Note: The City of Cambridge/22 City View records every City Council meeting and every City Council Committee meeting. This is a permanent record. The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/281?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=0ead99b1ea4ff632107e97a87b3dee71

A communication was received from Mayor Siddiqui and Councillor Nolan, transmitting a report from the Climate Crisis Working Group

Suggested replacement/substitute for current section 4 on Transportation (pp 16-17 in report)

4. Transportation: Incentivize non-auto transportation through evidence-backed strategies to encourage mode shift, and accelerate electric micro-mobility and auto options

Transportation is the second largest source of emissions in Cambridge and the largest source statewide. In addition to reducing emissions, helping people moving through Cambridge transition away from cars as a primary form of transportation would reduce deaths and injuries resulting from crashes, traffic congestion, noise, and air pollution (which has a disproportionate impact on low income neighborhoods). Critical to achieving mode shift is both incentivizing safe mobility options for all citizens of Cambridge that serve as viable alternatives to private vehicles, alongside disincentivizing private vehicle usage. While Cambridge does not control every road within the city limits and many commuters simply travel through Cambridge, there are concrete steps that can be taken in the immediate term that would reduce transportation emissions and make Cambridge a safer, greener, healthier, and more equitable City.¹

RECOMMENDATIONS: See below for a list of specific recommendations from the transportation experts within the CCWG:

1. Establish a City-wide goal of more people walking, rolling, and taking public transportation rather than using single-occupancy vehicles in all citywide planning.
 - a. Incorporate explicit evaluation criteria in zoning, private development, and public engineering that prioritizes the needs of people walking, rolling, and using public transportation.
 - b. Incorporate private vehicle lane reduction and parking reduction whenever possible to disincentivize solo-occupancy driving and better use public space.
 - c. Use the model of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) to advance a unified clean transportation strategy. Where possible, collect best-practices data on transportation usage in order to better meet transportation goals (and interim goals) for Cambridge.
2. Advocate for authority to establish car-free and low and zero emission zones to reduce emissions and inequity in air quality and encourage economic growth in business areas of the City.
 - a. Where viable, conduct small-scale quick-build pilots of car-free zones in commercial areas of heavy pedestrian use and evaluate their impact on safety, customer transit choices, and business revenue.
 - b. Evidence shows that cycling and pedestrian infrastructure improvements can benefit businesses, especially small businesses.² Establish a city-funded business training program to work with local businesses to take advantage of new opportunities associated with increased pedestrian and cyclist traffic. Work with the state to move forward and

¹ Cambridge should consider developing a [Car Master Plan](#) to quantify how much of city' resources and land are devoted to car use, understand the impact of those choices on their most vulnerable residents, and commit to strategies for change.

² A [2019 city survey](#) of Porter Square customers found that 62 percent of shoppers walked to businesses. A third drove, and 16 percent arrived by bicycle.

- seek funding from both federal (e.g. ARPA, US DOT's [SS4A](#), DOE) and state (e.g. MassDOT's Complete Streets Program) sources to implement these zones as possible and encourage vehicle electrification.
- c. Better manage business delivery³ and curb space. As heavy duty vehicle deliveries increase air pollution, traffic, and safety risks, the city should launch pilot programs focused on emission free delivery, such as the utilization of cargo bikes.⁴ In tandem, the city should increase anti-idling efforts through increased automated, unarmed, or civilian enforcement. Explore support for small urban fleet electric truck leasing (as L.A. has done).
3. Expand bike and pedestrian infrastructure with the goal of reducing single-occupancy vehicle usage, increasing safety for all users and especially for Black and Hispanic residents⁵, providing public health benefits and improving quality of life for all residents, optimizing public space for the benefit of all, and reducing GHG emissions
 - a. Evidence shows that the biggest barrier to uptake of cycling as a form of transportation and other micro-mobility options is the (often correct) perception that these modes of transportation are unsafe due to a lack of protection from drivers of cars. Protected cycling infrastructure substantially improves perceptions of safety, which can lead to further uptake of non-car transportation.⁶ To encourage walking and rolling for all types of trips in Cambridge, the City should ensure that whenever possible the cycling and pedestrian infrastructure is improved or maintained in a way that increases the safety of users. This includes adding and maintaining physically protected cycling infrastructure, but should also include widening sidewalks and other traffic-calming measures that have been shown to slow vehicle speeds and increase safety.⁷
 - b. Invest in additional bike parking infrastructure in commercial and residential areas to enable more residents to own and use bikes.
 - i. The city should conduct a comprehensive assessment of bike parking infrastructure along with any assessment of car parking infrastructure in the city. To the extent that current bike parking is shown to be oversubscribed, additional parking should be provided.
 - ii. Public bike parking should be installed in residential neighborhoods where there is data to indicate a lack of indoor bike parking within private residences.⁸ The City should explore options like secure bike parking pods and helping residents store larger cargo bikes, making biking accessible to people with disabilities, and

³ Urban deliveries are projected to increase 78% by 2030, increasing emissions by 30%.

⁴ For example, URB-E is carving out a high-density niche in the market for electric commercial vehicles, which market intelligence advisory Guidehouse Insights says is expected to hit \$370 billion by 2030. They want to build an ecosystem around cargo e-bikes, aiming to expand from 50 to 500 of them by next year.

⁵ Recent research indicates that fatality rates per mile traveled are 4.5 times higher for Black Americans while cycling and 2.2 times higher while walking than for White Americans. Matthew A. Raifman and Ernani F. Choma. 2022. "Disparities in Activity and Traffic Fatalities by Race/Ethnicity." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2022.03.012>

⁶ Nathan McNeil, Christopher M. Monsere, and Jennifer Dill. 2015. "Influence of Bike Lane Buffer Types on Perceived Comfort and Safety of Bicyclists and Potential Bicyclists." *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board* 2520(1): 132-142. <https://doi.org/10.3141/2520-15>

⁷ Note that Paris has committed to ban most private vehicles used for through traffic in much of the historic section (5.4 square miles); this is expected to take about 50% of cars off the road.

⁸ Jersey City has added a network of secure bike lockers doubling as transit shelters.

- outlets to charge e-bikes.
- iii. Minimum bike parking requirements at most non-residential developments; public bike parking should be installed in commercial zones to encourage zero-emissions transportation for customers of Cambridge businesses and stimulate economic growth for the city's local businesses. Such parking is space-efficient and as such should replace private on-street car parking where there is limited physical space on sidewalks.
 - c. Expand BlueBikes infrastructure such that all residents of Cambridge have easy access to public bikes.
 - i. The City should purchase and provide space for the installation of additional bike share equipment such that every Cambridge resident lives within a 5-minute walk of a BlueBikes station. In neighborhoods with denser residential or commercial uses, the City should expand existing bike share infrastructure.
 - ii. Since e-bikes are especially likely to replace car trips, the City should invest in e-bike infrastructure via the BlueBikes network to expand the reach of the system to neighborhoods further from commercial centers in order to reduce more car trips through mode replacement.
4. Provide positive incentives for bicycling and use of electric bicycles. The City should conduct a study of the cost and feasibility of cash rebates to encourage residents of Cambridge, and especially low-income residents, to purchase bikes, e-bikes, and bike share memberships.
- i. Establish concrete monetary incentives for purchase of e-bikes by Cambridge residents, with additional incentives for low-income residents.⁹ Build on pilot programs by the City of Boston and others to incentivize purchases of e-bikes that will replace cars. Design this program under the clear best practices recommendations from the Transportation Research and Education Center (TREC).¹⁰
 - ii. Establish e-bike purchase incentives for local businesses that currently use delivery services to reach customers; build recharging and repair stations for e-bike couriers (for an example, see NYC's Los Deliveristas Unidos HUB)
5. Expand bus priority infrastructure to make public transit more efficient and competitive with private vehicles.
- a. Work with the MBTA to expand past bus lane efforts and identify additional corridors by prioritizing bus passenger travel time improvements.
 - b. Commit funding to additional painted bus-only lanes on routes with high bus route usage, and seek out funding in partnership with the MBTA, other state actors, and private foundations for protected center-running bus lane infrastructure and boarding platforms where appropriate due to passenger demand and physical space limits.
6. End parking minimums and institute parking maximums.
- a. Evidence shows that parking minimums in residential housing development encourage additional car ownership and car usage, which increases overall carbon emissions and traffic. The evidence also indicates that eliminating parking minimums can reduce the

⁹ Many U.S. cities are providing such [incentives](#), in addition, the [Equitable Commute Project](#) has created a micromobility subsidy program.

¹⁰ See the TREC report [here](#) for detailed information.

- cost of housing development, increase housing affordability, and discourage single-occupancy car use.
- b. We recommend that the City amend its zoning code to eliminate all parking minimums and institute parking maximums in all residential zones and especially in areas within a half-mile of transit stations with rail or high-frequency bus service.
7. Invest in fare-free transit.
 - a. Though fares are not the biggest barrier to greater public transit usage and therefore decreased vehicle emissions, eliminating fares can ensure that those people adapting to higher costs of driving alone (as suggested by this document) have lower barriers in shifting to public transportation.
 - b. The city should implement pilot programs covering the costs of fare revenue on high-usage bus routes, and work with the MBTA and neighboring cities to expand the number of fare-free public transit routes that travel in and through Cambridge.
 8. Transition to an all-electric municipal fleet with an aggressive timeline.
 - a. Strengthen and codify the current Green Fleet Policy in ordinance.
 - b. As soon as an EV is available, all new purchases should be EV - with an expected complete replacement for passenger vehicles and light commercial vehicles by 2030;¹¹ the city's medium and heavy duty fleet should transition by 2035 or sooner.¹²
 - c. Ensure that all leased and owned school buses are electric vehicles are EVs.
 9. Expand electric car charging infrastructure to encourage electrification of private automobiles in Cambridge.
 - a. Create an aggressive plan for the expansion of EV charging infrastructure in both commercial districts and residential neighborhoods.
 - i. Use plans from other cities with EV goals, such as Boston, as a template in the breadth of expansion of these resources.
 - b. Utilize all existing options - light pole charging¹³, public lot chargers, right to charge, to allow private residences to lease their chargers to the public.
 - c. 100 more publicly available EV chargers should be installed in the next 5 years and goal established for next 5 years
 - i. Create a comprehensive plan with community input to identify demand for and placement of these chargers.
 - ii. Develop an equity evaluation plan¹⁴ to ensure electric charging infrastructure is expanded to reach *all* Cambridge residents, and not only those with current electric vehicles.
 - d. Seek funding from federal (e.g. ARPA, DOE) and state (e.g. MA's Public Access Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment, or EVSE) sources to enable these incentives.
 10. Explore electric car sharing, which can reduce emissions by up to 43%.

¹¹ NYC, with the largest municipal fleet in the country, has set this goal.

¹² Charlotte, NC plans to convert its 4200 vehicle fleet to electric by 2030; L.A. has committed to electrify its 10,000 vehicle fleet by 2035. Note that certain use cases, such as electric refuse trucks, make sense now - Ocala FL and Miami-Dade County have both added Mack electric refuse trucks to their fleets.

¹³ Kansas City has started a streetlight-mounted EV charger pilot focused on equity and accessibility.

¹⁴ Useful mobility equity resource: [Greenlining Clean Mobility Equity Report](#)

- a. Work with existing regional non-profit models for electric vehicle sharing programs, such as Boston's Good2Go, that encourage use of electric vehicles without ownership.¹⁵
11. Increase parking registration fees in order to fund sustainable low-emissions transportation options for Cambridge residents.
- a. Increase resident parking registration fees to more appropriately price the cost of public street space dedicated to cars relative to the status quo. Use established accounting principles to explicitly model the cost of public road space relative to other potential uses.
 - b. Further increase resident parking registration fees for those cars beyond the first car owned by each household.
 - c. Establish a low-income parking registration fee program that either scales the cost of parking registration to the vehicle value or a flat reduction in fees to current levels for any low-income Cambridge resident.
 - d. Use the increased funding from parking registration fees to directly fund tools that encourage alternative forms of transportation identified in this report, such as fare-free transit and e-bike incentive programs.
12. Develop a comprehensive communications and outreach plan for above recommendations to ensure community buy-in and limit policy backlash.
- a. With the ambitious goals identified in this section to reduce transportation emissions by encouraging mode shift away from single-occupancy car usage, it is inevitable that there will be political resistance.
 - b. The City should establish a comprehensive communications plan that uses all available resources to conduct early and thorough community engagement with the clear goal to best implement the policy goals in this document in a way that helps Cambridge residents and businesses to transition away from fossil fuel dependency.

¹⁵ Additional resources: [St. Paul's EV Carshare Program](#); partnership between St. Paul, Minneapolis, HOURCAR, and dealer partners for bringing EV option to the carshare (now one of the largest operating in the country), alongside the [EV Spot Network](#) (that provides charging for carshare vehicles and public EV owners alike. Specific to equity and environmental justice, there are varying subscription rates for lower income earners, and a [further expansion of EV carshare option to existing multi-unit dwelling carshare operation](<https://hourcar.org/multifamily/>) (partnership between Xcel Energy, ALA Minnesota, HOURCAR, and East Metro Strong) is currently underworks. Operational area for the Evie Carshare was also designed to incorporate various neighborhoods across the Twin Cities, rather than only focus on high-traffic/downtown areas. A lot of partners brought together, both through federal-funded programming and the Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge.