

Town of Chevy Chase Climate Protection Committee
Minutes December 4, 2007

Present:

Judy McGuire (Chair), Andy Knauss, Betsy Johnson, Dian Seidel, Catherine Fraas, Christine Real de Azua, Elizabeth Mumford, Rob Enelow (Town Council liaison)

Committee Membership:

Judy introduced Catherine, who is working with Stuart Sessions to analyze data from the survey of residents.

Judy announced that Lynn Lichenstein resigned from the committee for health reasons. Her contributions, particularly in keeping meeting minutes, will be much missed.

Land Use Committee Proposed Regulation:

The committee discussed the soon-to-be-made-public proposal of the Land Use Committee regarding building regulations for new construction and renovation projects. Our main concern is that energy efficiency and other climate change mitigation measures be included. When the proposal is released, we will be looking to see if Energy Star or LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards or certification is included.

Actions:

- **Rob will inquire with Town counsel to see if the Town has the authority to include these matters in the regulation, either as requirements or as incentives for, e.g., increases in building floor-to-area ratio.**
- **Judy will contact the Land Use and Environment Committees to ascertain their positions on this issue, noting that this issue was discussed at our joint meeting earlier this year.**
- **Judy and others will provide comments on the proposal, based on the Committee position.**

If it turns out that the Town does not have authority to include energy use in the regulation, then Committee position would be to support a floor/area ratio (FAR) baseline consistent with (1) the average current FAR or (2) the FAR of the existing home to be replaced/renovated, whichever is larger.

Christine raised the related issue of potential inclusion in the Town Charter amendments of a tax reduction (or elimination) for homes that meet Energy Star or LEED standards. She noted that Montgomery County provides such a tax rebate.

Committee Budget:

Judy reported that Andi Silverstone of the Town Staff indicated that the committee does, indeed, have a budget. We discussed using these funds to hire a facilitator for a meeting of residents to discuss a proposed Town action plan for climate protection, probably to be held in Spring 2008.

Climate Protection Tips:

The committee agreed to prepare short (a few sentences) tips for residents, to be distributed once every two weeks via the Town's list serve.

Action: Judy and Betsy will prepare the tips

Climate Protection Pledge:

Judy reported that 18 households have completed the pledge in paper form. No information was available about pledge made online.

Survey of Residents:

Catherine reported that about 100 surveys had been received. There is a need to follow up to correct potentially erroneous information on gas mileage and to obtain electricity use information in units of kW-hours rather than in dollars. Analysis of the data will begin soon. **A message should go out to encourage more submissions and set a deadline.**

Upcoming Forecast Articles:

We agreed on the following topics and writers for articles:

January – Eating Green – Judy/Betsy

February – Recycling – Carla

March – Living La Vida LoCO2 – Judy w/Elizabeth

April – Green Gardening

May – Survey Results

Lecture: Feb. 21, 2008:

Marney Bruce will give a talk at Leland Center on gardening green, as arranged by Judy and Betsy.

Possible Earth Day (April 21, 2008) Event:

We discussed presenting the survey results and the committee's proposed Town climate protection action plan to residents on or about Earth Day.

Action: Judy will consult with Environment and Community Relations Committee chairs to coordinate an event.

Lightbulb Update:

We now have a good idea which parts of Town have had CFLs distributed.

Action: Judy, Andy, Betsy and Dian agreed to cover the remaining areas in early January.

Work Plan for 2008:

We agreed to focus on:

Completing the survey

Developing a Town Action Plan for Climate Protection

Sponsoring a “Low Carbon Diet” discussion/support group

Exploring options for installing solar panels on public buildings in Town.

Actions:

Judy will check with Stuart on a schedule for completing the survey.

All should develop ideas for including in the action plan, including both goals and actions.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday January 29, 2007 at Town Hall.