

Town of Chevy Chase Climate Protection Committee
Minutes
May 29, 2007

Present: Dian Seidel, Interim Chair; Rob Enelow, Town Council Liaison; Andy Knaus; Betsy Johnson; Stuart Sessions; and Lynn Lichtenstein.

Guests: Pat Burda, Chair, Long Range Planning Committee; Joan Rood, Chair, Environmental Committee; and Lees Hartman, Land Use Committee.

This meeting provided an opportunity for the Climate Protection Committee to exchange information with three other Town Committees, Long-Range Planning, Environment, and Land Use, and identify areas of common interest for collaboration and coordination.

1. Climate Protection Committee activities and plans--Dian

Dian presented an overview of the Committee's activities including the Greenhouse Gas Emission inventory, articles in the Forecast, distribution of compact fluorescent lights bulbs and climate change information, lowering impact of Town electricity usage (street lights), a global warming discussion circle, and public forums on various topics, such as green building standards. (See attached Summary.)

Areas of common interest—(1) Maintaining or increasing lawn areas and tree canopy. (2) Educational efforts to increase awareness of GHG emissions and the environment (example, light bulb giveaway, Forecast articles). (3) LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building standards for energy efficiency. (4) reduced use of power mowers and blowers).

Ideas/Questions—Could residents (in addition to local governments) be part of an eventual negotiating group for green energy? Forecast article comparing energy use of an old house and a new house, or of the same house before and after energy improvements (new fluorescent light bulbs, energy efficient appliances, higher thermostat setting for summer), or providing family profiles.

2. Long-Range Planning Committee—Pat Burda, Chair

This Committee is intended to position the Town to be proactive with respect to future developments. Committee projects are:

(1) Following development in Bethesda and participating as appropriate. Example is new building on site of Pier 1 using air rights purchased from St. Johns Episcopal Church.

- (2) Outlining ways to target properties for open space within the Town (Tamara Harris, contact person).
- (3) Border issues—submitted a nomination for the 4-H property for the legacy open space program. If a property is on the legacy open space list, Town could apply for funds to purchase the property if it is sold.
- (4) Encouraging donation of conservation easements to the Town. Public access is not required, only preservation of green space, but there may not be a tax benefit.
- (5) Purple line. Town to do a study and sponsor community discussion June 6.

Areas of overlapping interest—Purple Line—loss of trees from clear cutting of the right of way, but more public transportation.

3. Environment Committee—Joan Rood, Chair

The Environment Committee proposed a Tree Ordinance which Town Council adopted. Tree Ordinance tries to slow the loss of tree canopy. Committee is currently

- (1) considering an enforceable noise ordinance for blowers used by contractors and landscape companies;
- (2) communicating to residents what the Water Drainage Ordinance means;
- (3) investigating ways to promote planting of trees on private property—may include a strategic plan for Town tree canopy, what trees are best to plant, how to provide this information to residents;
- (4) considering a new issue—possible pesticide ban.

Suggestions/contacts—Environment Committee could contact State Dept. of Natural Resources to see what kind of assistance state gives under its urban forestry program. (Vicki Taplan on Environment Committee to contact re trees.) Tree issues, questions in the Town, call Dave Strom.

Areas of common concern—Trees; noise; County rain barrels and gardens program (Rainscapes--
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Content/DEP/Rainscapes/home.html>). Town is one of seven communities that will have the opportunity to participate if this program goes forward. Need 50% participation by Town households to take part. County would either install or reimburse costs. CPC supports this program; could help to get residents to participate.

4. Land Use Committee—Lees Hartman

Within the last year, the State granted Town enabling authority to regulate height, bulk, mass, design, and lot coverage of houses. Town hired a consultant, Jakubiak and Associates, to study whether setback law has been successful and how to use Town's new authority to maintain Town's character. Consultant is considering various floor/area

ratios (FAR), *i.e.*, the ratio of the square footage of the floors (whether attic and basement are included to be determined) to the square footage of the lot, as a means of controlling the mass or bulk of a house. Considering a base FAR with higher FAR (more lot coverage) permitted if certain objectives are met—storm water management, LEED standards, an addition instead of new construction, breaking up the plane of the house. Proposal to Council in June or July.

Areas of common concern—Lot coverage of houses; the bigger the houses the less lawn and trees and the more GHG emissions.

5. Climate Protection Committee Business

A. Global Warming Changing Course (Climate Circle) – Betsy

Organizational meeting May 30, 7:30 p.m., in the Town Hall. The purpose of the group is for each member to examine his/her personal relationship to climate change and to reflect on values and habits as we consider taking action on behalf of the Earth.

B. Town Greenhouse Gas Inventory --Stuart

Stuart presented the draft questionnaire to the Town Council at the May meeting. Comments included: too many surveys, questions need work, offer reward for filing it out, pre-test. Stuart is reworking the questionnaire, pre-testing it with six neighbors, will provide reward of a mini-energy audit, and will bring revised version to the Council.

C. “Inconvenient Truth” talk by Dick D’Amato June 25, 2007

Want to reach a wide audience.

*Betsy to write text for ad, do posters, and place ad in Gazette.

*Stuart to provide names and e-mail addresses of Climate change people in other communities.

*Dian to ask Belinda about article in Forecast.

*Rob to (1) mention at next Town meeting; (2) contact Mier Wolf about article in Forecast.

D. Next Meeting

Instead of meeting in June, the Committee will attend the D’Amato talk on June 25.

E. Home Visits (light bulb giveaway) – Andy

Has distributed 150 light bulbs to residents; 50 light bulbs are with volunteers; and is asking Town to order 200 more. First step to using energy differently. An educational effort.

F. July Column for Forecast— Dian

The column will describe composting.

G. Maryland State and Local Government Climate Protection Roundtable June 7, 2007

Dave Walton will be representing the Town. Purpose of the meeting is to discuss collaboration of local entities and initiatives they can take.

H. Table at Town's July 4 Celebration

The Committee will have a table, as it did last year, at the July 4 celebration to hand out light bulbs and other climate related materials. Possibilities are handouts on composting, previous Forecast articles, energy tips.

*Lynn to coordinate.

*Stuart to provide materials on the coming survey.

*Rob to tell Belinda that the Committee will have table at this event.

Climate Protection Committee: Summary of Committee Activities and Plans
Prepared May 29, 2007

Purview: In early 2006 the Town of Chevy Chase passed the Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement. The Climate Protection Committee is working to help the Town meet its obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 7% from 1990 levels by 2012.

Members: Judy McGuire (Founder), Andy Knaus, Betsey Haddad, Betsy Johnson, Christine Real de Azua, Dian Seidel (Acting Chair), Stuart Sessions, Carla Graeff, Lynn Lichtenstein, Rob Enelow (Council Liaison)

Meetings: Generally the last Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm, Town Hall

Activities:

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory – A comprehensive study to establish the baseline from which reductions will be measured. Committee Lead: Stuart Sessions

Articles in the Forecast – Topics to date include: Global Warming (06/06), The 5-Bulb Challenge (07/06), Energy Efficiency at Home (09/06), Energy Audits/Graeff Family Experience (10/06), Raking Leaves (11/06), Green Gift Ideas (12/06), Energy Saving Ideas (01/07), Mayor's Agreement on Climate Change (02/07), Walking and Biking (03/07), Water Conservation (04/07), Maryland Environmental Legislation (05/07), Green Energy (06/07). Committee Leads: Judy McGuire, Dian Seidel

Distribution of Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs and Climate Change Information – Bulbs and information sheets were distributed at the 2006 July 4 picnic, on Halloween 2006, at the Spring 2007 Newcomers' Reception, via numerous home visits, and via the Town Office. Committee Lead: Andy Knaus

Lowering Impact of Town Electricity Usage (Street Lights) – Have purchased "green energy" offsets for FY07 and FY08 (or 06 and 07?). Intend to partner with other local jurisdictions for a more comprehensive approach in next 6-12 months. Committee Lead: Christine Real de Azua

"Global Warming: Changing CO₂urse" Discussion Circle – The Northwest Earth Institute's new guided discussion group, to examine our personal relationship to climate change. Committee Lead: Betsy Johnson

Public Forums – Green Architecture (Stephen Muse 02/28 07), LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Building Standards (Batya Metalitz 03/21/07), Composting (Bruce Russell 04/23/07), Climate Change (Dick D'Amato 06/25/07)

Plans and Issues of Concern:

1. Changes to Town building regulations to promote energy efficient and low-energy-use buildings, retention of natural carbon sinks, wise water management.
2. Improving energy efficiency of Town-owned street lights and using 'greener' electricity to power them.
3. Encouraging low/no fossil fuel transportation alternatives (walking, biking, public transportation), both for official Town travel and residents.

4. Changes to local landscaping practices to reduce transportation of yard debris, encourage local composting, reduce reliance on fossil-fueled mowers, blowers, etc.
5. Education/outreach to make the Town more conscious of how individual and community actions can impact climate.
6. Improved liaison with other Town committees and staff