

Climate Action Plan Advisory Group Meeting Summary

Meeting Date: April 25, 2007

Members present: Howard Geller, Bill Gruen, Blake Jones, Michael Reid, Francoise Poinsette, Amy Ellsworth, Adriana Raudzens, Jim Hill, Henry Mueller, Jeff Fiedler, Joe McDonald, Brian O'Neill, Jim Wilson, Dan Powers, Ann Livingston, and Pam Milmo

Members not present: Craig Eicher, Gwen Farnsworth, Jeff Fiedler, Carol Tombari, Paul Norton

Staff Present: Elizabeth Vasatka, Drew Bascue, Kevin Afflerbaugh, Beth Powell, Sarah Van Pelt, Yael Gichon

Andrew (Drew) Bascue introduced to CAP-AG team as Transportation Sustainability Coordinator.

Ann Livingston introduced to CAP-AG team as Boulder County's new Sustainability Coordinator.

Agenda:

Minutes

Codes update

New Report

Campaign naming

Introductions

Solar Rebate

New ideas

Future Agenda Topics

1. Elizabeth Vasatka (EV) provided an update on the Green Points program.

The Green Points program is being revised. AEC of Boulder is doing the energy component of the updated code. Energy component will be separated – sizes, energy stocks, remodels and additions will be analyzed. Jim Logan put together a spreadsheet modeling tool that can be used as a policy tool. We'll demo it at some point. EV will present the energy component to this group in the summer for comments. The commercial component being researched. The city of Boulder is interviewing candidates for Chief Building Official. The OEA will act in a support role to bring forward commercial codes. Boston has a commercial code and we'll assess what they've done. Consortium of Cities adopted in January for Superior – Boulder will endorse the Consortium's resolution on green building codes for public development, residential, and commercial. Henry asked if there will be a commercial Green Points program; EV says it may just be revisions of current code & regulations. The city is committed to LEED silver requirements for new construction and major remodels. EV confirms we're

looking at thresholds above IECC levels. Eagle and Aspen county embarking on a commercial code policy.

Howard mentioned that his colleague Steve Dunn at SWEEP is working on proposals for going beyond the residential and commercial areas' basic codes and suggested that EV touch base with him.

Amy Ellsworth asked whether LEED Commercial would be considered or pursued. Blake wonders if OEA makes up these code decisions; EV responded it's mostly up to Planning Board (P&DS); the OEA advises. Planning Board makes decisions and then sends to City Council. OEA facilitates public process & drives the effort, but from the back seat. The Green Points Residential code will be updated in 2007; any commercial efforts would begin in 2008.

Francoise asked when we can see the resolution and timelines. They are posted on City Council's WIP memo the Friday before each Council meeting (next one May 15). OEA will send links to CAP-AG when they're posted.

Francoise asks when funding may be available for enforcement. EV says it will be an option brought to the board. Currently many of the green measures are self-certified; we need accountability, whether through inspection or energy performance. We'd need to ask for funding – maybe in higher fees. Howard suggests considering other methods other than raising fees. Make it easier for staff and users; make it verifiable, with a link to our GHG emissions.

2. Beth Powell provided an update on the CAP Branding Campaign. She asked the group if they approved of using the ballot campaign name "ClimateSmart" for our overall campaign. There were no dissenters. Someone suggested "ClimateSmartBoulder", and then Sarah pointed out that OEA would like to partner with Boulder County in our efforts, so we'd like to keep the town name out.

Beth will send the survey of taglines to entire CAP-AG group and will provide 2-3 days for response.

3. Howard talked about a new SWEEP Report called "What Every Westerner Should Know about Energy Efficiency". Why you should care about saving energy – what's been achieved, case studies; significant policy discussion also. Available from swenergy.org – link on the homepage. You can order hard copy for \$10.

4. Howard also updated the group that energy efficiency (EE) legislation – demand side management (DSM) bill (HG 1037) sponsored by SWEEP and other groups passed today in the legislature. The bill will go to the governor next and is expected to pass. Electricity DSM calls for savings goals that will be set by the public utilities commission (PUC). Calls for an incentive mechanism so utility can benefit as well. Also calls for removing barriers existing in past. Commercial DSM is a main avenue for GHG reductions and he hopes this bill will support that effort. Will lead to Xcel implementing

EE programs on the gas side and includes a cost-recovery mechanism and other goals on DSM side. Changes can be expected next year with electricity and gas DSM programs. Residential may have additional programs whereas the other groups may just augment existing programs.

5. Yael Gichon provided a Solar Rebate Program Overview:

June 2006 – council directed ordinance for a solar rebate; a portion of the rebate is dedicated to a renewable energy fund to benefit lower income or site-based nonprofits. Went into effect December 06. We'd like CAP-AG group to participate in decision-making for grant applications.

Here's how the funding works:

Of the 8.31% total sales tax, city's portion of tax collected is 3.56%. 55% (of 3.56%) appropriated already to restricted city funds; 45% eligible for the solar rebate. 65% (of 45% eligible) allocated to RE fund; other 35% goes as rebate to resident or biz. Ends up being about 17% of total tax paid that will be rebated to customer; to date we've received 8 applications. Avg \$30/kw paid back or \$200-\$300. We have \$12,306 in the fund. Money that is not rebated to resident or business stays in the fund for granting. In June, 2006 we estimated 400kW would be installed in 2007. 216kW have been permitted in 2007 thus far. At this rate, we would see over 800 kW in 2007. 475 metric tons reduction with original projection of 400 kW for 2007. We plan to grant approximately \$30k in 2007. Richard Polk was the champion of the ordinance idea; to support Boulder solar businesses and promote solar in Colorado, and to showcases the city's commitment to renewable energy use.

Henry suggests the ordinance be expanded to include geo-thermal and other site-specific EE measures.

The city recognizes issues: fast-tracking permitting, height restrictions, mechanical permit, etc. and will be making changes to make it easier for residents and solar companies.

Michael Reid mentions he thinks the rebate might not be substantial enough to be an attractant for consumers by itself. Could some of the monies be redirected to allow it to be larger? At this time, that wouldn't be possible.

Dan Powers asked Xcel offers rebates for solar? Yes, as part of Amendment 37; they typically cover 50-60% of total cost of a system.

Adriana: Posits that it can be promoted – encourage homeowners to donate rebate to cause of choice – low-income opportunities. Yes, that's the original mandate of Council.

Brian: Suggests solar companies spend some money promoting the program with marketing. Blake suggests the city encourage solar installers to promote it – example is giving them the application which gives them opportunity to redirect the monies. City could create the form and provide to solar companies.

Henry: Wants to see homeowners be able to donate in addition to giving back their rebate. Great idea!

Howard: Suggests a smaller group to advise on grant selection. All agree. OEA will form a sub-committee of those interested.

Bill Gruen: Any way to set it up so that the rebate can be paid in cash, since it's so small, so that people don't have to fill out the paperwork? Probably not possible. We'd like to keep the \$\$ that isn't claimed so it all has to go into one fund.

Discussion of Criteria for accepting grants:

Blake asks if grant money can help facilitate the permitting process – fast-tracking, lower permit costs. Could reach more projects per year.

Jeff: adds to the list above 'technical soundness' of the design; look at track record of installers.

Henry: Believes the energy efficiency criteria FIRST is very important. Many agree. Solar not always best solution before other measures taken to button down the house/building.

Michael Reid: Would it be wise to ask applicant for a commitment for an education or outreach plan to their business members/constituents to increase awareness about their project and the goals of the program? GREAT idea.

Amy pointed out the difference in GHG reductions for PV versus solar thermal.

Developers lose \$\$ on affordable housing developments. Discussion about whether the grants will benefit a commercial or individual.

Andrew: suggests that the word "leveraging" be added to #7.

Henry: suggests that an audit be required on non-new construction, and an energy model on new construction, as criteria for grantees to apply. Also, many non-profits can't apply because they rent space. Intention is to provide funds for non-profits to get solar; we'll keep it separate from our CAP programs. Perhaps we could request or require that they document measures they've taken already in their space.

Amy: Include MFU (multi-family units), REAP, and other programs on the application to educate all about our other programs so that applicants can take advantage of everything available to them.

Jeff: Cost effectiveness should relate to GHG goals. What are issues around low-income housing and solar cost effectiveness?

6. Sarah began the discussion of asking the CAP-AG to help us brainstorm “big ideas” – GHG program ideas they’d like to see implemented, so that OEA staff can start research on budgets/effort required, so we can prioritize new ideas for next year – OEA could present a specific number of new program ideas to Council during the budget process this summer.

Howard: two suggestions: 1) Xcel rebates, particularly to business customers. Incentive money, significant, 50% of a project cost. Set quantitative goals to ensure we’re milking the resource (Xcel’s incentive dollars). Boulder has 4.5% of total electric sales by Xcel. Try to get a disproportionate share of other cities’ rebate dollars. Try to get 10% of the DSM programs. Track it, set goals, based on where we were last year (if possible). How can we milk that? Who would we need to engage? 2) Residential marketing and EE promotion campaign. (ClimateSmart Households). Simple checklist – mini Green Points with 12-15 items. One point awarded for each item (installing at least 10 CFLs, installing or having insulation, E-Star appliances, etc.). Collateral talking about what to do and how. Recognize them. Self-certified program. Camera ad, awards, website recognition. Promote via water bill inserts; radio, Channel 8.

Henry: Educating building owners and facility managers is critical. Negotiating leases hard enough already. Could city help property owners be more aware of availability of DSM programs? Kevin told the group about the Trade Ally program. Suggests sending collateral to property owners.

Adriana: important to provide follow-up on all city programs to ensure people have the resources they need. Personal contact important – invest in that. She really supports “positive programs” – like xeriscaping, recycling clinics, home remodels, etc.

Jeff: Transportation & efficient vehicles. Can Boulder support the vehicle standards group driven by California? Can Colorado join? Legislative issues for 2008. Howard confirms there will be a bill. Will probably show up on the city’s legislative agenda.

Michael: Wonders if we should publicize programs one at a time – since there so many programs- could saturate one target audience at a time.

Blake: Likes the points program Howard proposed; it makes it easier for neighborhoods to organize themselves. Perhaps Green Points is a good starting point. Also, could city help neighborhoods reach more people by using neighborhood champions? This city is hoping to use this approach.

Henry: leverage caucuses and their mailing lists. Worked in Shananan Ridge.

Jim: be sure to align programs with goals – how will the program elements relate to the goals? Make sure they are clear. Be sure we quantify the overarching programs or strategies and relate them to our individual programs – how many tons will we reduce with THIS program, etc. We need to focus on what will achieve the goals; what will be most impactful.

Jeff: Believes it's a bad idea that we participate in CCX.

Sarah: Council wanted to endorse the concept of a trading system and testing of it. We joined because we weren't going to have to buy credits. We knew we'd meet the target and exceeded it – so we will retire those credits. We paid membership fees at start and now we don't have to as a municipality.

CAP-AG decided we'd spend more time on the "big ideas" next month. Meeting adjourned 5pm