

**Boston Greenhouse Gas Plan Update Process
Fourth Leadership Committee Meeting**

November 5, 2009

Lenox Hotel, Boston

Meeting Summary

**Co-Chairs, Mindy Lubber, CERES and
Jim Hunt, City of Boston**

Co-Facilitators: Dr. Jonathan Raab, Raab Associates and
Cynthia Parker, IISC

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Context

Mindy Lubber

Glad to be staying the course on this work under the leadership of Mayor Menino

Most pressing here—make economic arguments to move things forward in Congress

- Need capital market flows
- Need to think about what's going to drive our economy. Evergreen Solar moving operations to China is not unique. We have a market that is ready to launch and grow, but mixed signals

We also have a huge scientific imperative

- International Energy Association says we need to invest \$50 billion/year x 20 years to address global warming to get to 450 ppm, where most say we need to get to 350.
- The most ambitious technologies are only getting us to 450 ppm

Congress and Copenhagen as backdrop.

- We need to put a cap on carbon, put a price on carbon and make clear that US is ready to act/willing to take leadership going into Copenhagen discussions... would send right messages to that gathering and also to the markets. That will flow capital into the market and jump start the green economy. Going into Copenhagen without these strong signals will be a problem.

Jim Hunt

Mayor Menino put the green agenda at the forefront of his agenda.

Local updates and links to available federal funds:

- Economic stimulus has helped solidify and jump-start much of our work. Running on parallel track: Renew Boston to catalyze energy efficiency in all sectors, support by the Barr Foundation.
- Approved energy conservation strategy by Dept of Energy: \$6 million that will leverage \$20 million more to retrofit small commercial and residential properties.
- Approval of \$1.3 million solar grant, to light an evacuation route. Coordinating with Homeland Security.
- Preparing for new retro-fit ramp-up grant. Up to \$75 million, coordinating with a number of partners. Ambitious, fast-tracked opportunity bringing in partners to link energy efficiency, renewables and green jobs.
- Filed \$4 million green jobs training grant under US Dept of Labor. Bringing in to do training and retrofits along Blue Hill Ave. corridor. Some of the most distressed properties and residents that have been passed over in the economy.
- Green Building Strategy -- Boston is renowned for green building. First city to incorporate LEED standards into building codes. Many properties recognized by USGBC for adapting a historic building for LEED Gold. Staples—LEED Gold in Roslindale

facility. Showing you can go green in retail—e.g. lighting with passive solar. 179 Lincoln-refurbished, Millennium Partners—who worked early on with city on zoning changes. Going this green has helped them get the ecologically interested tenants they have in the building: e.g. First Wind with 70 jobs

- Barr Foundation has supported a request to get out into neighborhoods to engage the communities on climate change, what it means to local communities and how we can engage local residents in this effort. It will take a movement to get buy in, grow the green economy, and connect jobs to neighborhoods.

CAC Update.

See slides for details of presentation.

No questions or additional comments.

Mitigation Measures

Big Picture considerations:

Ensure report shows “big picture”

- Recommendations rolled up in residential, commercial, and municipal.
- Structural questions that we need to discuss.
- Engagement its own category.
 - NOTE: engagement will be a separate section that cuts across the other categories.

Municipal piece has two parts:

- Municipal programs (what to do with its own buildings and fleet, etc.)
- Governance (how cities are organizing themselves to deliver green services over the long term).
- LC has discussed municipal buildings and fleets, but we need to talk about governance

Goals and benchmarking:

- Plan needs sub-goals and objectives with specific metrics other than the big goals for 2020 and 2050. We’ve done some of this in transportation work group. Don’t want these details to get lost.
- “Score boarding” will be important for average residents, and should be non-technical, easy to understand

Identify the three most important things to do

- Three things won’t get us to 25% reduction, but after we quantify the impacts of each measure we can prioritize options and begin with the 3 or 4 that provide the biggest bang for the buck as part of the implementation strategy

Identify the co-benefits of these goals

- How will it improve quality of life? Identifying other benefits could be important.
- It will be easier to identify once we have identified savings, jobs-related, measure air pollution benefits, etc.

Action planning and accountability

- Build in ways to see how we're doing over time. Also, who's responsible, not just the metric. E.g., green roof—how many are we going to do? Who is going to do what?
- Can we have an implementation plan as part of the plan? It may be difficult to do, but may be important to have different parts of city government take lead/take responsibility for different pieces.

Residential Mitigation Strategies – Buildings

See slides for details of presentation.

Major Themes/Issues that need to be addressed

- **How to maximize residential participation in utility-sponsored energy efficiency programs?**
- **How to tailor the LC recommendations to residents with different income levels, and in different housing types?**
- **How to successfully promote behavioral change among individuals?**

Presentation Comments:

- **Funding for utility energy efficiency**
 - Comment: the utility funds are 10x the stimulus funds, and are likely available through 2020. We need to be sure Boston residents (and businesses) participate such that Bostonians get at least the funds they contribute through the utility SBC charges
 - Q: Where are we on utilities spending the money? Do we have to do marketing on this?
 - Comment: Statewide coalition trying to influence Green Communities Act, EEAC commitments. A lot of people don't have the money to pay out of pocket. Important to find ways low income folks can get this work done on their homes. Also, making sure that jobs are linked to distressed neighborhoods, that jobs pay living wages and are safe jobs. (*get details from Kalila*)
- **In-sink food disposal**
 - Check with MWRA and BWSC re: whether they can handle large increases in ground food waste
 - Be sure that it doesn't mostly end up in the Harbor

Discussion Comments:

Problem of landlords (capital) vs. tenants (operating)—split incentives

Trying to put together better programs, nationally. There are some multifamily utility programs, but probably not sufficient. The green lease is another way to deal with this/share costs and benefits with tenants. Property tax financing is another potential way to spread costs across time. Residential energy conservation ordinance would, in the end, also take care of it.

Behavioral change is important

Is behavior change parked for community engagement side? That has to cross every sector and strategy.

Explain how recommendations do/don't work for residents of different income levels.

Show that we're clear different people are in different situations. Make clear what city is doing to help each group. E.g., low income, multifamily).

- If you are low income, a lot is free. The challenge is to get those residents to participate. People need to know that they're qualified and how to take advantage.
- For people who don't qualify for free and not enough to manage paying for their share—need subsidy and possibly financing for out-of-pocket share.

Large multifamily building challenges

Owners can't get readily get the data on usage/collect data from all tenants. Some states have dealt with this.

A lot of creative ideas about creative financing

By including financial community as partners, we can take some of the burdens of up front costs off homeowners.

- *Carbon trading system that links residential and commercial buildings?* Financing mechanism through bank loan, tied to long term carbon contract, social component as well as environmental component. Broach with US Green Building Council. If can't meet the goals on site, could there be a portfolio of buildings throughout the city where we could put solar on the roof, tie to long term contract. This is a green building that is also supporting a neighborhood building over here. Gets to community justice issues/social part. Rent control and controlling long term cost of living for residents.
 - Bud has been approached by a few folks about this in past year. Chicago is implementing a carbon trading system within the loop. Maybe we could do that.
- *City's linkage funds and affordable housing component.* Is there a reasonableness to work with linkage program to create incentives for making the affordable units greener? Take advantage of existing commercial relationships, add "policy envelope" to existing resource.
 - *Jim: Some internal discussion about this already. Good to hear that coming up here. Perhaps we could use some of the funds we have in the bank to green housing.*

Building and Zoning Codes:

We've talked about some barriers. Are there other things we need to remove because they are restricting good things from happening because of aesthetics, other issues, where thinking is entrenched.

- Came up at CAC: have to lay these proposals alongside historic preservation codes and others, see if there are conflicts, and resolve.

Residential Mitigation Strategies — personal transportation

See slides for details of presentation.

Major Themes/Issues to be addressed

- **Walking is a major transportation mode that needs to be emphasized more explicitly**
- **Explore the potential for prioritized and coordinated enforcement of moving violations and environmental violations**

Discussion Comments:

“Don’t block the box”

Program works in NYC. Have education and campaign for drivers, taxi drivers, etc. would reduce idling in traffic. Might be easy and cheap.

- Boston did try this. There is a rule on the books. Challenge is enforcement. Look at how we might be able to get some of the *moving violations* directed toward parking enforcement officers or other city personnel. Create joint “green team” with Boston Police, Traffic Enforcement and ISD/Code Enforcement
- Use traffic cameras to enforce “don’t block the box.” Governor’s administration is supportive, ACLU looking at civil liberties issues.

Bikes

- Increase number of pedi-cabs (bike cabs): We have 70 permits, NYC has 1000
- Need to ensure the bike share program is accessible to all visitors (by allowing multiple ways to procure/pay), not just locals (including international visitors)

Commercial Mitigation Strategies – Buildings and Transportation

Major Themes/Issues to be addressed

- **The Stretch Code needs to be further evaluated and the LC needs more data before making a final decision about whether or not to recommend Boston adoption**
- **Develop something like a Commercial RECO with Alternative Compliance options**
- **Consider value-ads for existing private infrastructure (e.g. showers and parking)**
- **Develop a Leadership Committee Policy Statement regarding the importance of the MBTA to Boston environmental, economic, and community well being**

Stretch Code Discussion Details

- The building codes increase efficiency standards every three years. The Stretch Code allows cities to opt into a more aggressive building code, about 20% more efficient than the regular upgrades.

- Are there incentives to adopt the stretch code?
 - Commonwealth’s perspective would be that owners are being required to do things that will save money in the long run.
 - It’s also a pre-requisite for a community to qualify as a “green community” under the State Green Communities Act. That opens other incentives to the community, though not necessarily to the building owner.
- Concern about possible unanticipated outcomes
 - Increased costs create a bias against new construction and in favor of renovation which can meet a lower standard currently
 - Could also tip some developers to developing outside city limits resulting in less property tax revenue from new buildings in future
 - Focus is on new buildings rather than existing buildings where most of energy will be consumed for decades
 - Disproportionate effect on buildings over 100,000 square feet, no analysis on buildings over that size
 - Unclear how variances would work
- Would like a prescriptive compliance path for buildings over 100,000 sq. ft.
 - Would make it easier to sell space in a speculative venture
- Examples from other cities in MA or other states? How well are they implemented?
 - Several MA communities are talking about adopting the code, but the earliest this will happen is January 2010, so there are no current examples in the state

Discussion Comments:

Energy conservation measure trading/Commercial RECO concept

Consider a RECO-type rule that requires “you touch it you upgrade it” for retrofits to existing buildings. But look at ways to trade measures between locations to achieve aggregated level of efficiency, i.e. give owners option to offset by making investment somewhere else

Financial incentives and access to capital

Bridge resources so that all of the costs don’t get passed along to tenants

- Add a Tenant Improvement Program
- Access to capital for renovations and capital improvements, similar issues as those discussed in residential context

Existing private infrastructure value-ads

Look at existing infrastructure for creative uses/links/other values that land/building owners have that could be made accessible to public at large. E.g., parking lot that could be used for re-charging station; YMCAs and Health Clubs showering infrastructure for bike riders; use parking garages as distribution center—e.g., Prudential Center garage as entry point into city for commuters, with links to Zip Car, Pedicab, MBTA

Transportation-related revenues

Capture the value of the parking freeze and drive revenues generated by parking meter or residential permits back into some of these programs.

The MBTA system is critical to Boston

We have to communicate the importance of the transit system to the economic, quality of life and environmental health of the city. We might need to figure out a way to be clear about what that asset means to these goals and objectives. The response to the infrastructure issues and financing so far have been inadequate; need more leadership at state level on this. Mayors can't control but do have a bully pulpit. Important that this be part of our recommendations. The response to infrastructure in past has been to put it on the backs of riders because of 'forward funding' law. Doesn't work. We saw that ridership increased when gas prices went up. If fares go up, we can expect ridership to go down and cars/GHG emissions to go up. Good time to talk to Mass DOT now (a 5 day old agency).

Adaptation—Commonwealth's Plans and Boston

Presentation by Kathy Baskin of MA EEA

The MA process involved a committee of 35 (including some people from LC and City supporting this planning effort); 150+ other people involved. It yielded 200+ very specific recommendations.

MA Leadership Committee Meeting focus is on several cross-cutting strategies:

1. Improve information available
2. Research and development/alternative technology and methods
3. Reduce impact of climate change through mitigation
4. Improve planning
5. Adopt land use practices—most politically charged recommendation re: when to accommodate/protect and when to retreat/get people out of harm's way (relates to new development, existing development, planning/ regulations/assistance)
6. Protect water as an asset (water supply, waste water system, etc.)
7. Improve design standards
8. Assist vulnerable populations
9. Include market-based incentives (e.g., permitting, private insurance, government as insurer of last resort)
10. Provide leadership—a call for government to lead/coordinate
11. Enhance emergency preparedness (e.g., gear up for peak demand for emergency response)
12. Education and outreach
13. Seek opportunities (e.g., building/demolition; longer grower/tourist season; research/development)

<http://www.mass.gov/dep/public/committee/ccaac.htm>

See slides for details.

Comments/questions

- LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) is a remote sensing system used to collect topographic data) —where is it now? When will we have it? Does it include inland topographical map?
 - Boston has arranged for LIDAR reading of Boston; BRA is processing this arrangement
 - In general, spotty coverage in MA. Whole town of Hull; some private entities have done it for their facilities.
 - Inland important in flood plains... controversies re: predictions and boundaries of wetlands, coastal zones, floodplains etc. need to give builders a clue about that
 - UCS did not use LIDAR in their report
- Uncertainty is less about the science of what is going to happen, but more about the emissions estimates and how much that affects temperature and sea level rise. Most of the FEMA maps for floods are already irrelevant but we are basing a lot of public policy on them. Have to upgrade quickly.
- The public infrastructure is great concern, especially downtown. The state agencies control much of that. MWRA, MassPort, MBTA, etc. Boston is going to need to retrofit and plan to recover from events.
- Uplander/interior issues that affect flooding upstream. 1970s Charles River natural Valley Storage program by Army Corps of Engineers so that property didn't get developed, used as area for holding flood water. Also protected water quality in downstream watersheds. Should programs like that be considered? Natural protections up in watershed so we don't have to restrict development downstream.
 - This is in the report as a case study. Saved a lot of money not building dams. Promoting natural strategies did come up
- Policy levers available at city vs. state level. With adaptation, where are changes going to need to be made in governance, policy levers for cities and towns to be more proactive.
 - All the policy levers are on the table right now. E.g., with respect to development community, tier properties; consider allowing more dense development in areas where development can be supported.

What should the Climate Action Leadership Committee be aiming for by 4/15 and 12/31, given that state's plan will not be finished until the end of year?

- Jim: When we started this process, we worked with state to align our work plan with theirs. We want to build on this and perhaps get a little more detailed about key things for Boston. In addition to leadership here, we've engaged other stakeholders, state agencies (MWRA, Central Artery, others) and envision them as a larger technical advisory group to help develop this. Our recommendations here would be more forest-like, less detailed. Likely to focus on public infrastructure; urban heat island effect and the energy and other effects of that. We have engaged BRA and will have a lot of support on development/planning side.
- Don't think it would be hard to identify 3-4 issues, their impact and how to get ready for them (e.g., heat stress, sea level rise, storm water and drainage).

Parking Lot/Specific Ideas to follow up on

- See Big Picture concerns above:
 - Show community engagement as its own section.
 - Municipal: both programs and governance (get this on an LC agenda to discuss)
 - Issues that came up in the meeting related to this:
 - “Green Team” of BPD, Traffic Enforcement and ISD/Code Enforcement on enforcement (parking, idling, other)
 - Partner with private transportation demand management associations
 - Collaborate with EOEA re: enforcement of commute mode reporting, and work with business associations and transportation management associations to educate businesses
 - Goals, objectives, shorter term benchmarks
 - Focus—What’s most important? Where to start? Identify limited number of things to implement first
 - Action planning and accountability
- Do we need to do a marketing campaign for utility program funding/programs?
- Get info on the statewide coalition trying to influence Green Communities Act, EAC commitments re: programs and jobs. (*get details from Kalila*)
- In report: develop overlays to describe the multiple strategies for different sectors (e.g., low income, rental housing, etc.)
- Implications of laws, regulations, zoning codes (like historic preservation) for implementation , and strategy to resolve
- Creative financial options
 - Pull Chuck, Mark, others from financial community into Renew Boston’s working group re: creative finance, which is looking at revolving loan fund/long lost reserve funds; how can city help spread
 - Other ways to get financial community into the discussion
- Subcommittee to look at MBTA, involve internal city hall people who are working on this, bring a recommendation back to the LC.

Next Steps

- Working Group discussion on stretch code coming soon.
- Working Group on Adaptation—volunteers: Chuck, Judith, Mark, Bud, Mindy-a staffer who deals with adaptation, Ted-a staff person
- City and Consultants to begin quantitative analysis of mitigation measure GHG reduction impacts