

Kansas City, MO Climate Protection Steering Committee  
Online Meeting Via Microsoft Teams  
May 24, 2021

*CPSC Members Present:* Joanne Collins - Chair, Bob Berkebile, Kristin Riott, Tom Grever, David Warm, Dee Evans.

*CPSC Members Absent:* Cathy Bennett, Scott Burnett, Ellen Fairchild.

*Staff:* Jerry Shechter, Lara Isch, Rachel O’Neal, Chris Hays, and Andy Savastino, OEQ; Brandon Iloilo – General Services; Scott Cahail – Water.

*Other Attendees:* Judy Dorsey, Becca Stock, Shelby Sommer – The Brendle Group; Stephenie Smith – Sophic Solutions; David Hakan – KC Drawdown Society; Tom Jacobs – MARC; Don Wallace, Billy Davies, Claus Wawrzinek, Kevin Grooms – Sierra Club; Michael Kelley – BikeWalkKC & Environmental Management Commission; Kelly Gilbert, David Albrecht – Metropolitan Energy Center; Bridget Sanderson – Environment Missouri; Jeremy Knoll – BNIM; Robin Ganahl, Mary Kay McGinty – Mothers Out Front; Patrick Hosty – Dynamhex; Carol Macken - Evergy, Jane Van Sant – West Bannister Neighborhood Association, Joan Leavens – CAKC; Shaylyn Dean, Jabbar Wesley – Spire Energy; Andrew Linhares – Renew MO; Taylor Rippe; Lemartt Holman - CAAKC, Christy Engemann, Gina Boucher, Sarah Benal – Heartland Conservation Alliance, Thomas Schultz, Bill Griffith, Joshua Tapp.

## Meeting Minutes

### Introductions & Remarks by the Chair

Joanne Collins opened the meeting at 3:00 pm with a brief welcome and introductions by committee members, general public, and staff members.

### Approval of August 2020 Minutes

\*The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

### Climate Protection and Resiliency Plan

Please see attached presentation.

#### Welcome and Introductions:

Project Team:

- Becca Stock – Project Manager
- Judy Dorsey – Executive Project Manager
- Shelby Sommer – Engagement Lead
- Stephenie Smith – Equity Lead

Committee Members:

- Joanne Collins – Goal for plan: In budget and on time as well as improves the quality of life for all KCMO residents.
- Tom Jacobs – Trees are a metaphor for a larger idea of community stewardship, he would like to see this woven throughout the plan.
- Tom Grever – Would like to focus on issues relating to equity.
- David Warm – Specific, actionable items for the whole region to work on.

- Bob Berkebile – Allow both the City and Climate Action KC to embrace strategies to become a leader in carbon sequestration in the Heartland Region.
- Kristin Riott – Highly recommends investing in the urban forest and would like the plan to have an emphasis of water and energy efficiency in buildings.

### Equity Briefing

#### Guiding principles of equity

- Close the gap between what we say and what we do and who we do it with
- Lived experience is important
- Hope is steeped in action
- Advancing Climate Equity
  - How are where can climate equity be advanced? Who has been overlooked?
    - Tree canopy, housing, weather shifts, health impacts

### Project Overview

Even though The Brendle Group is a national firm, bringing on the local climate justice workers, a climate intern and strong partnerships with local entities will build a more local based team.

### Outreach and Engagement Plan: Phase 1

- Who, how, what
- Future phases

### CPSC Questions and Discussion

Neighborhood Engagement: UMKC Center for Neighborhoods, Urban Neighborhood Initiative

Immigrant and Refugee Population: Salvation Army and YMCA

North of the River - Northland Neighborhoods, Inc.

Lykins Neighborhood

Philanthropic community

City department heads have been updated, the City Council and the Mayor will be next to be updated during an upcoming business session.

### Public Comments

- Goals for Climate Action & Resiliency Plan:
  - The 2008 CAP did not include any "teeth" in the language about Energy Code adoption, which has resulted in delayed and very watered-down energy code adoption largely due to NAHB lobbying (we are currently under IECC 2012, but with the negotiated amendments, it acts more like IECC 2009). One large Energy goal I see in this plan is to include a clearly spelled out requirement for adopting the newest energy code without amendment, renewed on a 3-year (not 6 year) cycle, and tie ZERO Code compliance to any TIF or other municipally funded projects. {chat}
  - Will need to emphasize actions that must be taken by the Kansas City community, rather than those by City Government for not just mitigation but also adaptation or resiliency strategies. To ensure robust implementation, there will need to be some demanding oversight responsibilities in place to ensure that any and all policies and their implementation taken by the City that impact the community take a robust approach to climate concerns. Further, presumably the Steering Committee's role in serving as representative voice of the community:

- How different will the role become, for which the Steering Committee will need to undertake in the implementation of the 2021 Plan as compared to the 2008 plan?
    - What tools are needed, beyond more memberships filled and possibly more frequent meetings, by the Steering Committee or by other entities, to ensure appropriate oversight?
    - How will the Brendle consultants advise on these oversight concerns? {chat}
  - Problem: Stormwater and flooding is a big problem in our City. The current City requirements result in projects installing enormously expensive underground storage vaults, gravel beds, and other high-embodied carbon solutions. We have green infrastructure policies on the books, but they are typically not accepted for code compliance, nor are they clearly spelled out. Solution: One large water goal I see in this plan is to clarify and empower both private developers as well as the City to use engineered soils (up to 5% added Organic Matter) as an approved alternative compliance method for this water storage requirement. Benefits: This would encourage more green space in developments, healthier and older tree canopy, and developing the market for green-and-brown compost in our region. {chat}
  - A transparent, easy-to-understand document that clearly explains to the public where emissions are coming from today & how the City will do its part to bring emissions down in alignment with current guidance for Paris Climate Agreement countries. {chat}
  - Mothers Out Front KC wants Kansas City to have Carbon Free electricity by 2030.
    - This means we want all coal plants shut down by 2030, not net-zero by 2050
    - We want real emissions reductions not buying carbon offsets
    - We want an equitable transition that allows our communities to benefit from the transition to clean energy. For example, Rooftop Solar that is accessible and affordable to all. {chat}
- Equity:
  - Improve built environmental and push the city to do more to support active transport. {chat}
  - Investing in multimodal transportation, sidewalks, and adopt the BikeKC Master Plan, work to fully staff all environmental boards and commissions.
  - Toxic exposure to lead and mold in older buildings, flash flooding in neighborhoods with crumbling water infrastructure, and low-resource access during black-outs in extreme high/low temp events. {chat}
  - Water bills disproportionately high. {chat}
  - Increased emissions from highway traffic and industrial sources also contributes to increased instances of asthma in individuals who live near those corridors. {chat}
  - Approximately 50% of our residents are renters and have less control of their housing conditions. Municipal codes should be required to meet gaps in codes for housing retrofits. {chat}
  - Also looking forward to action the *city* will take and commit to supporting (as it is done so far on building codes, making public transit free, etc.) in order to support our communities. {chat}

- Transportation:
  - EVs weigh more than regular trucks and cars so this needs to be accounted for in making biking and walking safer. {chat}
  - Over the lifetime of the vehicle, EVs cost far less to own and operate than ICE cars and trucks - no oil, no transmission, no radiator, etc. By national average, charging costs for electricity run about 40% of using petroleum fuels. But up-front costs are likely prohibitive for lower-income families - and charging access is problematic, particularly for renters. How can we get these financial (and environmental) advantages into the hands of those who'd benefit the most from them? {chat}
  - Limit further buying of LPG vehicles, to stay nimble for conversion of truck/bus fleets to EV. {chat}
  - Respectfully, an overemphasis on electric cars isn't the right way to go on the transportation front. Besides the prohibitive costs for most (but especially low-income earners), they aren't as efficient here in Missouri because our energy profile is so carbon intensive. According to DOE, all-electric vehicles currently generate more GHG emissions than hybrid vehicles in Missouri. And that is before considering how cars and our street network are disproportionately unsafe for people of color and low-income earners. {chat}
  - The plan should emphasize *reducing* driving rather than simply trying to shift to a different source. {chat}
  - Bike infrastructure helps reduce reliance on cars, too. {chat}
  - It is urgent to reinforce the national transition to EVs. With ongoing pressure on Energy, the tech is available and feasible for them to move to more solar, wind, batteries, and less coal and gas. {chat}
  - I'm not saying we should abandon EVs entirely. What I'm saying is that our transportation efforts should be more focused on increasing walking, biking, transit, and accessibility. That route is cheaper, and will be better for the environment overall, than continuing to focus as much as we do on EVs. {chat}
  - In a city as auto centric as the KC metro (admittedly less so in KCMO than in the Suburban Kuiper Belt), it'll mean far more investment in public transit. I'm all for just that, but ingrained automotive habits are hard to break. {chat}
  - Vulnerable road users, i.e., pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and disabled travelers. Important to consider, given that transportation is the largest source of GHG emissions in the country. {chat}
  
- Energy Efficiency:
  - We need to look at an expanded definition of energy efficiency for homes. There needs to be financial elbow room that allows for repairs in addition to energy upgrades. All the insulation and air-sealing in the world isn't going to help if there's a hole in the roof, disintegrating soffits, inadequate gutters or if the sill plate is rotting and moldy. {chat}
  
- Community Engagement:
  - Can a modest stipend be made available to cover participants' time and travel expenses? I feel like we would get better participation. {chat}
  - Childcare is a big issue. Food always helps with turnout. {chat}

- Want to reiterate the need to reach out to the disabled community. Groups like the Whole Person and Ability KC can help. {chat}
- Transportation issues can impede people's involvement. Maybe we could have a ride share system. Also, I want to recommend that we include Carl Stafford who is the president for Noble and Gregory Ridge neighborhoods. He worked for BTG and knows a lot about environmental issues. Also, Mark Morales of Sheffield neighborhood in the northeast quadrant. {chat}
- Isn't there a danger in focusing too much on individuals and neighborhoods for the solutions to mitigation of climate change? Adaptation and resiliency issues are important even at the level of this city plan? Doesn't this approach let the fossil-fuel industry off the hook? Isn't this exactly the approach that Exxon-Mobil has been engaged in to shift responsibility for action away from them? There seems to be no discussion of how the City should be approaching the regional utilities to ensure a clean supply of electricity. {chat}
- Mothers Out Front think moms should have a voice on the committee, as well as communities that have borne the brunt of pollution & will suffer the most from the impacts of climate change. {chat}
- Advertising to the entire community as well as focused groups.

Announcement: MARC Regional Assembly and Leadership Awards, Friday June 11<sup>th</sup> 11:30am – 1pm. Please register in advance. <https://www.marc.org/About-MARC/Learn-More/Regional-Assembly.html>

**Future Agendas & Date for Next Steering Committee Meeting – Steering Committee Members**

Next meeting date – To be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 pm.

**\*Action Items**

{chat} – Discussion from meeting chat