

CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

Standing Committee on Energy and Sustainability

Councilor Jon Hinck (A/L), Chair

Councilor Spencer Thibodeau (D2), Vice Chair

Councilor Ed Suslovic (D3)

Minutes

August 17, 2016

Members Present: Councilor Hinck, Councilor Thibodeau

Staff Present: Troy Moon

Councilor Thibodeau makes a motion to approve the minutes. Seconded by Councilor Hinck. All in favor.

Presentation by Dr. Richard Silkman

Dr. Silkman introduced himself as CEO of Competitive Energy Services. His company assists businesses and institution with issues related to their use of energy. They also do sustainability consulting.

Dr. Silkman discussed the need to avoid setting abstract goals such as achieving carbon neutrality without a broad understanding of what it would take to achieve them. He provided examples showing how difficult it would be to meet Maine's energy needs if we used only renewable energy sources. He advocated for setting achievable incremental goals that would move the City steadily toward deep reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Project Updates

Councilor Hinck asked Mr. Moon about steps the City may have already taken toward emissions reductions. Mr. Moon indicated that increasing the energy efficiency of City buildings as part of the energy services contract in 2011 were the most significant steps. These included energy efficient lighting, energy management systems, fuel switching, building envelope improvements, and others. Councilor Hinck asked about any previous goals the City may have set to reduce emissions. Mr. Moon indicated that in 2001 and again in 2006 the Council adopted a goal of reducing emissions to 10% below 1990 levels by 2020. Unfortunately, we have no data about emission levels in 1990. The City has conducted emissions inventory but it is difficult to compare apples to apples. The latest inventory lacks specific information about City energy use. Mr. Moon added that the City would need to conduct a new inventory using a rigorous established inventory protocol in order to set a reliable baseline. It would have to have clear methodology so it could be repeated in future years. Councilor Hinck agreed with this and would like to discuss it further.

Councilor Hinck asked for a description of how participants in the 2030 District measure their reductions as part of that program. Mr. Moon responded that they benchmark the existing

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usage of building energy use, water, and transportation, which is compared to a previous benchmark. He was not sure what the benchmark is.

Councilor Thibodeau requested a memo describing the feasibility of creating separated bike lanes along important transportation corridors in Portland. Based on the memo, he may request a presentation at a future meeting. He feels it is import to make sure we take up transportation related issues more regularly. He would be interested in a demonstration project to see if a protected bike lane would make sense.

Councilor Hinck noted future agenda items. Next month he wants to take up the benchmarking ordinance and have the committee vote.

Councilors Hinck and Thibodeau both requested that Mr. Moon determine whether the Energy and Sustainability Committee or another body would be most appropriate for a discussion of how historic preservations standards impact energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in historic districts or in historic buildings.

Public Comment: Ellen Bailey, Hammond Street – She thanked the committee for taking up sea level rise and resilience. As a Bayside resident she sees it.

Councilor Hinck requests an update on efforts on resilience at the next meeting.