



Fort Collins Climate Task Force

October 29, 2007
215 North Mason St.
MEETING MINUTES



Present:

Board Members and Alternates

John Bleem	P			Garry Steen	P
William Farland	A	Blue Hovatter	P	Norm Weaver	P
Dick Johnson	P				
Bill Franzen	P	Jeff Lebesch	P	Steve Wolley	P
Phil Friedman	P	Eric Levine	P		
Stephen Gillette	P	Liz Pruessner	P		

Others present: Art Bavoso, Facilitator

Judy Dorsey, The Brendle Group

Lucinda Smith, Natural Resources Department

Eric Sutherland

Public Input

Eric Sutherland raised a concern about RECs, stating that while the cost of RECs is low (\$/ton), they may not bring a significant benefit. He urged the task force to reevaluate the GHG benefit from RECs and the amount of RECs being recommended. He said the merits could probably be evaluated but do not reach the level that is widely claimed. He said that renewable energy companies laugh when asked how much the REC funding promotes building more renewable energy. He referenced Business Week article of Oct. 29, 2007, "Little Green Lies". He feels the role that REC s play in Fort Collins emissions inventory and reductions needs to be revised. He stated that Safeway, Whole Foods, and Lafarge all purchase RECs at the corporate level, so they can claim their emissions are already offset.

Task Force Member Input

Bill Franzen raised a question about where the task force is going. While the greenhouse gas reduction perspective is important, GHG is just one part of a large issue of environmental needs. He pointed out that the 1999 GHG plan did not meet the objective, perhaps because it was not connected with larger issues and citizens weren't bought in on the goal. He provided a handout showing that while Fossil Ridge High School is LEED Silver, Rocky Mt. High School has achieved comparable energy use levels thought student, teacher, and staff behavior change. He mentioned a recent PSD charette on how to really motivate lasting behavior change. The issues of Leadership, Communication, and Participation were identified as key. Bill asked, "What is it going to take for our community to embrace these concepts?" We need to focus on how we sell the package, and remember that the package itself is only about 20% of the whole picture. PSD is a microcosm of the larger community and it is appropriate to ask, at all levels,

“What is it that you believe in?”, “What will get you to change?” There is nothing in our list yet that people will want to say “I WANT to do this”.

Minutes Approval

The task force unanimously voted to approve the October 10 minutes.

Agenda Review

Lucinda reviewed the agenda and there were no changes to the agenda.

Numbers Update

Judy summarized the major changes to the quantification spreadsheet that had occurred as a result of the quality control review. She also noted that quality control could be never-ending as new data and programs become available, but they feel comfortable with the numbers for the purpose of estimating carbon benefits and costs.

Lucinda summarized the status of the transportation measures. Mason Street will be added to existing measures. The Transit-Oriented Development overlay zone will be added as an existing land use measure. She noted that transportation staff recommends funding the existing Transportation Master Plan, and does not recommend reinstating SmartTrips, although they do support promoting alternative modes. Eric asked if there are any triggers or contingency plans if we don't meet the objective of the Transportation Master Plan. The task force would like to discuss this with transportation planners before dropping the SmartTrips measure. Blue asked about components of the Transit Master Plan – can't we speed up the implementation of increased headways, frequency, ridership, etc. Lucinda also mentioned a possible parking management system downtown to reduce emissions and congestion. This is something the task force could consider. She also mentioned the state climate action panel recommendations that include clean car standards for Colorado and a clean fuels standard. The task force could consider supporting these state level initiatives.

John and Phil asked how double-counting with the state proposal will be handled. Norm suggested that the State recommendations could fall into a third category

When seeking clarification on whether to exclude the SmartTrips and to add the Clean Car Standards, etc. it was apparent the task force was not ready to change the list of measures yet. Not enough info was available on these options. Transportation staff will be invited to discuss what they are doing, what impact it will have, etc.

Task Force Internal Dialogue on Measures

The question arose over how the city works with the CTF to make a final recommendation. What is the process? It was also noted that the '08/'09 budget cycle decisions were largely already made, so that opportunity for funding these measures was lost. Eric felt that many of the strategies now under consideration are very straightforward. Lucinda indicated the process would likely be:

- CTF develops provisional recommendations

- Public input gathered
- Input from the city administrators gathered simultaneously
- Council work session
- CTF develops a final recommendation
- Staff recommendation also goes to City Council

The ideal situation would be to have a staff and CTF recommendation largely in sync. John asked if the CTF provisional recommendation would be a written document. The Denver model might be appropriate. Is Darin a member of this team? No, Norm is the City rep. Darin is the convener. Lucinda will clarify how Darin wants to handle this. Eric asked how the service directors will weigh in. Darin can play a very strong role in shaping the City position. He will want to hear from the Service Directors and it's staff's role to make sure they are informed about these options. The normal process would be for service area directors to hear about this through staff channels and through the staff team. Norm indicated there have been discussions with his service area director, but he has not had a more formal presentation yet.

There was significant interest on the task force for service area directors and other leaders within the city to be aware of and to weigh in on the recommendations as soon as possible. Bill would not want to go out to the public until the internal City staff is on board. John feels that City department heads should have opportunities in advance to weigh in.

When will Darin get involved? Eric feels we have enough of a provisional plan to begin getting input from Service Area directors. Blue gave an overview of the efforts of the CTF Outreach Committee. Blue felt the task force should get input from Council on what THEY want to see. Eric feels comfortable with the numbers. Steve asks what is Darin's expectation – that the CTF gain the acceptance of staff? Steve points out that this is much bigger, more time-consuming task. John would not be comfortable bringing anything to Council that staff does not support. Liz thinks getting staff feedback is critical, but it is not the role of the CTF, that is up to staff. Lucinda mentioned there will be a discussion at the SIT team this coming Wednesday and another presentation could be scheduled with them in January. Phil points out this task force is not unique – we should learn what Council wants (through the Mayor?) and how Darin wants this to move through the City structure. Phil thinks City Council will want to see various package options, rather than selecting from a long list of individual measures. Bill points out that buy-in from City departments is critical. Norm questions whether we have 'the pitch' in hand yet.

BREAK

Art reviewed the process that was discussed previously and discussion ensued about the level of detail to share in upcoming presentations. John indicated that Congress now discussing carbon mitigation at ~ \$30/ton average, so this package average at < \$20/ton is very good. Norm corroborates that he thinks the group is on the right track. Norm indicated that he thinks the conservative approach is workable in the short term, but it would take over five years to implement the aggressive approach.

The group developed different concepts for packages as follows:

Plan A – uses existing measures and suggests a range of implementation from conservative to aggressive. Norm feels that the conservative scenario might miss the time milestone but would eventually get the goal. Phil points out that it is not actually a range, but rather the conservative scenario or the aggressive scenario. Some said the conservative approach is more plausible and defensible.

Plan B – conservative approach plus purchase RECs to fill in the gap. This option may not be as fiscally plausible.

Plan C - ignore the 2010 milestone and find out when this set of measures meets the goal.

Blue thinks that the task force might choose to not saddle the community with meeting the goal by 2010. Eric suggested that if the CTF is looking at various package recommendations, we should go to the Fort Collins Sustainability Group to get their feedback on which package is preferable. Also, the concept of “defensible” can cut both ways. The aggressive scenario is more defensive for actually meeting the goal. The conservative scenario here is 30% off from the original conservative goal, so it doesn’t seem like things are reaching far enough. Eric doesn’t want to sell longer range quality short in an effort to meet the short term goal. He’d rather see the date slip a few years and have a very good plan. Lucinda gave a very preliminary assessment that the conservative measures or a mix of conservative and aggressive would meet the goal in ~ 2014.

Norm thinks some of the measures (i.e. tiered electric rates) are a matter of policy to set the level of the tiers, and can be done relatively quickly, whereas others actually require more time to ramp up. John questioned whether it was possible to buy enough RECS that have 100% additionality (NEW carbon reduction) to cover the ~ 450,000 tons CO2 new, so maybe purchasing offsets is more possible than purchasing RECs.

Steve wants to see the CTF push for and seek Council support for the aggressive goal. He thinks the CTF would be remiss if they did not recommend the aggressive scenario, based on their charge from Council. It is important to acknowledge the level of urgency in the world, at the state level, and from Council on this issue.

Stephen asked how do we know people will embrace it, regardless of the level we recommend. We have to start somewhere, but how can Council adopt this without having the money to implement it? What is the cost to each individual? It seems like the CTF is handing off something that the Council can’t adopt. So much time is being spent on this, but we have no idea at all about the buy-in of the decision makers. Have the City decision-makers and department heads even seen these numbers yet? It will probably scare them. The tendency of Council might be to slice off an easy piece. It will be tough to get people to see the benefit. Stephen is not sure what Larimer County will think about this. He doesn’t even think recycling is an ‘easy’ thing because there isn’t the buy-in. Until you have buy-in, it’s not going to happen.

Liz referred back to Bill's earlier remarks about having to do the big things. Doing the big things challenges people, excites the imagination, and gets people going in a direction, but the goal is still important. The city has given us a charge and we have to come up with a plan. The City is getting the benefit of all the work that has already gone into this plan. Dollars have already been spent on fleshing out a plan. These are dollars well spent to enable informed decision-making. But we need to figure out how to get the community engaged.

Garry thinks we need to concentrate on the paradigm change. The Denver Greenprint plan was struggling with 2012, but looked out to 2020, so we are not the only ones dealing with this. Dick said the CTF was charged with a very difficult task and they could have refused to accept the charge but now we are here and need to come forward with a plan to meet the proposed goal. But we also need to think of 2010 as concept in a direction towards a longer term goal. Dick acknowledges 2010 is arbitrary, but that we want to make major strides long term.

Lucinda reviewed the CTF schedule and asked about extending the public open house to January. John suggested making sure Darin is okay, then fleshing out the dates. Bill felt it is important to share information with internal stakeholder first, before broader public outreach. Phil wanted to be sure to avoid schedule creep on the far end.

At the upcoming SIT meeting, it was suggested to present the history and what is happening regionally, then some of the details.

The Outreach Committee will meet again before the next meeting.

Art drew analogies with the task force's effort to promote paradigm shift to Art's own experience with fund-raising efforts. Fund-raising should not start primarily by looking at who has money, but instead focusing on the following criteria;

- Linkage – does the funder value the project/program? Is there a linkage?
- Ability
- Interest

Steve mentioned a book by Jared Diamond called "Collapse" as offering valuable perspective. Societies collapse because they destroy the environment they live in (environment defined large.)

Next Meeting

Monday, November 28, 2007

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

City Hall, CIC Room

300 Laporte Street