

# Capacity Building Group

DRAFT Minutes for February 12th, 2018 Meeting

(See page 3 for Next Steps & Goals)

7-9:15pm at VIA offices, MarbleWorks

Members Present: Spence Putnam, Fred Dunnington, John Barstow, Andrea Murray, Fred Kenney, Steve Maier, Heather Neuwirth, Greg Dennis, Amy Sheldon

Absent: Claire Tebbs, Jeremy Gildrien, Lynn Coale, RJ Adler, Alan Moore

## Minutes

John Barstow volunteered to take notes tonight.

## Review Agenda, Check-in & thoughts/news since last meeting

Fred Dunnington tells us of [Burlington 2030 District](#) project and recommends all members visit its site to learn more and see what we might apply to our efforts. He explains that this is a [national](#), primarily urban effort.

Angela adds that there is now an [Architects 2030 Challenge](#) effort underway as well.

Spence reports that tomorrow's (2/12) VPR Vermont Edition (airing at noon & 7PM) is on energy efficiency and includes several "experts," among them UVM professors. Suggests members tune in, and discussion leads to notion that Task Force members and Steve call in to the show.

Amy, Middlebury's State Rep, reports that Commerce Committee, on which she sits, is focusing lots on climate economy

## Reports from liaisons with other Task Forces

**Energy**—Steve reports their one effort is a Pilot Neighborhood Carbon Reduction project, now underway. A neighborhood(s) has not been selected, but several have been contacted, including Gorham Lane, Morningside Drive. Want to make sure it's different from individuals undertaking such efforts, including:

- That utility partner incentives be bigger and better than standard offerings, etc.
- Hope that if 70-80% of a neighborhood reaches a goal or does something substantive, then other neighbors will follow suit and can be persuaded by their neighbors. Collective Impact model

**Agriculture**—Steve reports they are moving toward a focus in creating an Addison County LEED certification for farms/farmers. Different levels as w/LEED, and recognition for achieving same.

"Regenerative" found to be controversial word, so trying to avoid it.

Spence cautions that engagement with farmers is important, that current Task Force members are not farmers, etc.

**Transportation**—Claire reported to Spence that focus moving toward public transit, bus ridership, multimodal and light rail. Steve adds that at yesterday's meeting focus was more on bus ridership (which is currently in steep decline). Speculation that decline caused by moving bus stop to Academy Ave. from downtown location.

This Task Force is leaving walking/biking efforts to current, established organization.

Middlebury College's Nadine Barnicle, Adjunct Faculty & Coordinator for Community Based Environmental Studies, is helping teach Senior Seminar course re transportation.

**College contact**—Heather, who is in an interdisciplinary office connected to the College Office of Sustainability, said she has made no further attempts at establishing a contact there, is awaiting something concrete to present to them.

### **Report in Steering Team meeting**

Steering Team members: Jon Copans and the Chairs of the other groups, including Chris Huston (Energy), Asher Nelson (Ag), and Laura Asermily & Dorothy Mammen (Transportation)

- Spence reports to us that he is relieved that he feels Capacity group has good energy and that all members are participating to share the load. Others present agree with his assessment.
- Spence reports that he told Steering Team that he views Capacity Group as needing to take more time to chart its course and take the long view. Doesn't feel we ought to be rushed, but do it well and make it last. Others present strongly concur.
- Steve reports that Climate Economy website is now live and invites members to review it and give him feedback, both positive and constructive critiques. The url is [middclimateeconomy.org](http://middclimateeconomy.org) (Not Google searchable).
- Additionally reports progress toward a periodic organization-wide newsletter, both among task forces and with the public. Early news blasts will go out soon. Idea is for a monthly newsletter email with one task force reporting each month.

### **Vision / Mission**

General discussion/reactions to draft version circulated, with consensus that it is very close to final, but could use some editing. It was decided that Heather will turn current document (with Track Change comments) into a Google doc, to which all group members will be invited. Steve is the "owner" of the Google doc. Agreed members won't "go crazy" with edits, and will only use "Suggestion" function in Google docs rather than actually editing. Greg offers to tighten quite long Mission Statement. Heather offered help to any members unfamiliar with Google docs. All group feedback on draft Mission/Vision Statement due before next meeting, on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Revisit last meeting's Brainstorming Session**

Andrea started with Triple Bottom Line (People, Planet, Profit) in revisiting her argument that area businesses be seriously considered as a source of funding for Capacity Building's long-term functions. She also mentions co-op and other models of funding, different traditional non-profit donor and foundation funding, which is thin on the ground.

Steve voices some reservations about Climate Economy's public service mission (including everyone) and business support possibly compromising (or appearing to compromise) mission.

Andrea responds that there is growing interest in triple bottom line business model, in which profit is not the only or even the most important goal, but the balance between the three; profit, people, planet, and that more businesses adhering to that could create true, lasting change toward carbon neutrality. It is pointed out that all of these funding models can be used together.

Heather refocuses us back to mission statement, and the need to "clear up our direction" in order to move forward.

Amy offers that she likes "Climate Action Center" as a name for the effort, and all evince enthusiasm for this approach; that "center" implies a place to go and learn, do research, meet others, exchange ideas, a sort of clearinghouse. Enthusiasm gathers around this concept. Other possible names: Climate Economy Action Center (CEAC) or Climate Economy Resource Center (CERC).

Efficiency Vermont is offered as model worth our investigating and learning from. Benchmarking to help folks move forward: here's where you stand now, if you do this you can move the dial, etc...

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- All review Google doc of Mission/Vision statement, with feedback complete before March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- All visit and familiarize selves with [Burlington 2030 District](#) website
- All dig into [Efficiency Vermont](#) website with an eye to it as a model (or partial model)
- All visit [Vital Communities](#) website with the same aim
- All visit [middclimateconomy.org](#) and send feedback to Steve

#### **GOALS**

- **Research models for a "Center" or resource center**
- **Research funding models**
- **Develop materials for a case statement to possible source of funding or other backing**

#### **HOMEWORK**

Each group member to draft a 1- to 2-minute one-on-one pitch to convince an entity or individual to fund/support our effort. Can be whatever focuses your mind: business owner, individual donor, public official, foundation, etc. All pitches to be presented at next meeting.

**NEXT MEETING is Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 7PM at Vermont Integrated Architecture**

Respectfully submitted

John Barstow