



Clean Energy Commission MEETING MINUTES

June 22, 2020
4:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

1. Roll Call

Commissioner	Present	Alternates	Present	Additional Attendees
Catherine Diviney	X	Robert Palmer		
Chris Nelson		Dave Mello		
Joe Campanella	X	James Capella	X	
Bernie Pelletier	X			
Max DuBuisson				

Note: a video recording of this meeting is available on demand at:

<https://www.whctv.org/whats-new/654-clean-energy-commission-special-virtual-meeting>

- 1. Approval of Minutes** [Deferred](#)
- 2. Energy Plan Draft** [Bernie gave a walk-thru presentation of the 6/16 Draft of the Energy Plan \(attached\). Verbal public comments made by several attendees, including Commissioner Ben Winograd, Steve Sak, Samantha Dynowski.](#)
- 3. Discuss Plan for Public Comments or Feedback on Energy Plan** [Catherine to have draft plan posted on website with email address for written comments. Should begin reaching out to folks for input, next 2-3 virtual Commission meetings should be focused on plan with goal to approach Council or subcommittee \(as suggested by Commissioner Winograd\) in September/October. People should be encourage to submit comments and alternate language in writing so they can be addressed.](#)
- 4. Letter of Support for High Performance Building Standards (State Legislation)** [Handled via email in interest of time. Unanimously approved by Commissioners via email, approval to sign on given to Sierra Club, notice sent to Councilor Winograd. Copy of letter attached.](#)
- 5. Adjournment**

Sign on letter - Draft as of 6.11.20
To be sent to DEEP and DAS

With only ten short years to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Connecticut to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) must take every opportunity to strengthen policies and practices that will reduce or eliminate the use of fossil fuels.

One such opportunity is now before DEEP. [Connecticut's High Performance Building Standard](#), the minimum building standard for new buildings and major retrofits that receive certain state funding for construction, must be updated based on a national sustainable construction code.

We urge DEEP to update Connecticut's High Performance Building Standard to mandate a net-zero, all-electric standard and a zero carbon profile (energy and embodied carbon). This standard should include alternate compliance paths for third party certified green building standards.

Connecticut's Global Warming Solutions Act requires a 45% reduction in greenhouse gases from 2001 level by 2030 and 80% by 2050. New buildings and major retrofits will last well into both the 2030 and 2050 targets.

As Connecticut updates the High Performance Building Standard, it should be noted that Federal law requires new Federal buildings and major renovations of existing buildings to reduce fossil fuel-generated energy consumption by 55% in fiscal year (FY) 2010, 65% in FY 2015, 80% in FY 2020, 90% in FY 2025, and 100% in FY 2030, compared to a FY 2003 baseline.¹

Net-zero all-electric, zero carbon profile buildings are not only better for the planet, they have financial, health and educational benefits. A common misconception is that these buildings will cost more to build. Because of advances in technology - solar, LEDs, battery storage, heat pumps, and other equipment and design techniques, the initial cost of a net-zero building need not be higher than that of a conventional energy building.² Net-zero all-electric buildings also have lower lifetime costs, using significantly less energy than conventionally constructed buildings and by supplying their own renewable energy.

In addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, net-zero all-electric, zero carbon profile buildings are also better for human health. The use of gas in buildings produces a range of air pollutants with both acute and chronic health effects. The air particulates associated with combustion are particularly harmful as they are small enough to be absorbed through the lungs into the bloodstream where they cause respiratory and cardiovascular disease. [UCLA](#)

1

https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www4.eere.energy.gov/femp/requirements/laws_and_requirements/fossil_fuel_reduction&sa=D&ust=1588702069044000&usq=AFQjCNHVuj6Vap-nMyWmrTXf0Q7yJo-Y6g

² <https://livingbuilding.kendedafund.org/2017/04/11/net-zero-energy-schools-roadmap/>

[researchers found](#) that after an hour of cooking on a gas stove, 98 percent of smaller apartments had peak levels of NO2 that exceeded state and national air-quality standards. In other words, the air quality inside nearly every apartment was so bad that it would be illegal if measured outside. While the study was limited to homes and apartments, gas combustion in all types of buildings has health and air quality implications.

Here in Connecticut, the move towards net-zero buildings has already begun. For example, Mansfield recently passed a referendum to build the first net-zero public school in Connecticut. Other school districts are interested. Meanwhile, the Blake Group in East Windsor is the first net-zero commercial building in Connecticut, and Eversource has held conferences in 2018 and 2019 on net-zero design for commercial buildings, including schools.

Embodied carbon associated with the materials and construction of buildings and infrastructure accounts for 11% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Concrete alone contributes 8% of annual global GHG emissions. There are concrete technologies available now that can reduce or eliminate the GHG emissions associated with concrete production, and the use of fly ash or recycled glass powder as a supplementary cementitious material in the production of Portland cement.

Embodied carbon is projected to be responsible for almost half of total new construction GHG emissions between now and 2050, and 74% of new construction emissions between now and 2030. Addressing embodied carbon by 1) repurposing existing buildings where appropriate rather than building new and 2) by requiring evaluation of embodied carbon when specifying and selecting industrial materials for state-funded projects is a relatively simple way to make significant reductions in the State's GHG emissions.

The effect of Connecticut adopting net-zero, all-electric and zero carbon profile as its new High Performance Building Standard will go far beyond the public sector. It will signal to businesses, private developers, architects and engineers that net-zero, all-electric is viable and the future of building design. DEEP has an opportunity and responsibility to adopt a net-zero all-electric, zero carbon profile High Performance Building Standard, and we urge you to do so.

Signed,

(Organizational Sign On, please email samantha.dynowski@sierraclub.org to sign on)

Acadia Center
Citizens Campaign for the Environment
Clean Water Action/Clean Water Fund
Connecticut Citizen Action Group
Connecticut Green Building Council
Connecticut League of Conservation Voters
Connecticut Living Future Collaborative
Consumers for Sensible Energy

Eastern Connecticut Green Action
Environment Connecticut
Operation Fuel
People's Action for Clean Energy
Save the Sound
Sierra Club Connecticut
West Hartford Clean Energy Commission