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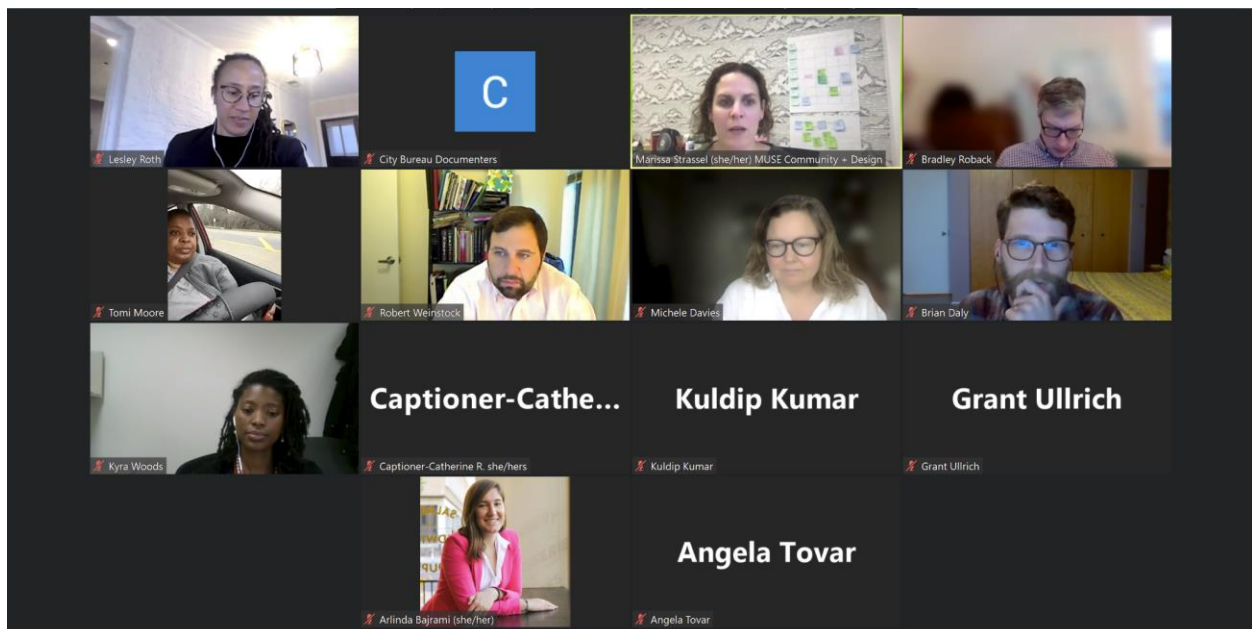
Environment, Climate + Energy Meeting #11

March 22, 2022, 06:00PM | 2 hours

Documented by: Collin Hazlett

ATTENDEES

- Marissa Strassel
 - Lesley Roth
 - Kuldip Kumar
 - Tomi Moore
 - Iyana Simba
- Bradley Roback
 - Brian Daly
 - Michele Davies
 - Angela Tovar
 - Mike Tomas
- Kyra Woods
 - Grant Ullrich
 - Robert Weinstock
 - Arlinda Bajrami
 - Frank Zhu



MEETING GOAL

Hear a follow-up on the city's Climate Action Plan and a presentation on possible data and metrics for Goal 5, begin to develop policy recommendations for Goal 5, and review the city's edits to Goals 1 and 2.

WHERE WE ARE

Step 1

We Are*Setting the Stage*

Step 2

We Have and Need*Develop A Policy Toolkit*

Step 3

We Will*Set Policy Framework***KEY TAKEAWAYS****1**

Kyra Woods, Policy Advisor in the Office of the Mayor, returned for a follow-up presentation on the 2022 Chicago Climate Plan, showcasing a draft copy of the plan and discussing the community engagement process that went into it. The Mayor's Office wants to stress that this plan incorporates community input.

2

The pillar members suggested specific, detailed policies to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions (Goal 5). Many of the proposed policies took the form of building code revisions, incentives and disincentives for real estate developers.

3

The pillar members made small edits for clarity to Goals 1 and 2 after they came back from review by city employees, but no major changes were made. The language for Goals 1 and 2 seems satisfactory to most pillar members.

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

"[Implementing the 2022 Chicago Climate Action Plan] will take coordination and policy development across different agencies. ... I think we have a lot of faith in this process right here [in We Will Chicago], and part of the reason we're having this conversation is so that we can have that dovetail. ... We are trying to be sensitive to the work that lies with this group, and to see ourselves as complementary."

Kyra Woods | Office of the Mayor, Policy Advisor

"Part of the thinking around looking at building codes – and this is one of our objectives – is how the regulatory environment can support better, higher-performing buildings, how we can look at ways to provide different types of housing that responds to the changing demographics of our city, and then also increasing density in areas where there is opportunity."

Lesley Roth | Lamar Johnson Collaborative, Principal, Urban Planner, Architect

"I think if you institute a planning policy where natural areas and tree canopy has to be considered at either every population density or geographic distance, you're going to address a lot of these issues that you're talking about like heat island effect, flood mitigation, carbon sequestration, all of these things."

Matt Freer | Chicago Park District, Assistant Director of Landscape

"The best practice we see in other cities is that after buildings have benchmarked for at least three years, they're kind of already improving, because you're basically providing data back to the city telling you where your energy consumption is coming from. ... They understand where their money is literally going out the window."

Angela Tovar | City of Chicago, Chief Sustainability Officer

NOTES

Update on Climate Action Plan

- Kyra Woods, a Policy Advisor in the Office of the Mayor, returns to give an update on the 2022 Chicago Climate Action Plan that she presented on in Meeting #9. She shares a link to a draft of the plan and briefly recaps its five “pillars.”
 - The five pillars are: increase household savings, reduce waste and create jobs, enable personal mobility and improve air quality, enable Chicago’s clean energy future, and strengthen communities and protect health.
- Woods gives an overview of the engagement process that her team implemented in drafting the plan. “We’ve tried to be responsive, and have had a number of touch points with different audiences throughout this process.” She describes several phases of the engagement process:
 - Stakeholder Engagement (Summer and Early Fall 2021). This phase “allowed us to talk not only internally with departments and sister agencies, but also to develop a smaller working group to really gut check the direction that we initially outlined based on some preliminary modeling, and of course lit review of other initiatives and commitments that were underway.”
 - Public Engagement (Winter 2022). The team launched a website for the Climate Action Plan, hosted two virtual town halls with 200 participants, and sent out two surveys.
 - The first survey, with 1311 responses, asked responders to share their own climate priorities. Woods notes that the first survey’s responses included 426 people of color and 95 people under the age of 18.
 - She displays a word cloud of common words and phrases used in respondents’ answers, including “Waste,” “Renewable Energy,” “Youth Engagement,” “Nature-based,” and “Greenspace.”
 - The second survey, with 335 responses, asked responders to allocate a virtual \$100 of funding to ten priorities. The three most popular funding priorities were “Better air quality and reduced pollution” (averaging 15% of the respondents’ virtual funds), “Better access to affordable and reliable renewable energy (13%), and “Better access to safe, affordable, and reliable transit that gets me where I need to go” (11%).
 - Public Comment Period (through April 4th). The Mayor’s Office is now soliciting public comment on the draft, which can be submitted in three ways:
 - Leave a message on the CAP hotline at 312-744-0100
 - Send general comments to chicagocap@cityofchicago.org
- Woods gives a brief Q&A.
 - Lesley Roth asks: “What is the difference between this climate action plan and its engagement process and other guiding documents that focus on sustainability or the environment that the City has produced in the past?”

- Woods replies that the 2008 Chicago Climate Action Plan and the 2011 Sustainability Agenda had more corporate stakeholders involved in their creation, and focused mostly on carbon reduction, with little emphasis on community benefit. With the 2022 Climate Action Plan, Woods says, “we’ve really tried to keep a tighter focus on community and individual benefits, and call that out where possible throughout the plan.” She says her team has focused more on outreach to community groups, residents, and advocates than to corporate sponsors or industry.
- Robert Weinstock asks how to “move this forward and implement everything in here,” especially in future administrations.
 - Woods says there will be several tiers of implementation necessary across different agencies to hit the goal of 60% greenhouse gas emissions reduction by 2040, on a path to net zero by 2050. “I think we have a lot of faith in this process right here [in We Will Chicago], and part of the reason we’re having this conversation is so that we can have that dovetail.” She anticipates that legislation will be introduced in City Council to formally adopt the goals of the plan.

Presentation on Data and Metrics for Goal 5

- Leslie Roth presents a collection of documents and websites she has gathered to aid the group in policy creation for Goal 5, “Mitigate then eliminate sources of carbon emissions in alignment with national and global climate goals”
- Roth first discusses **building code innovation**. She reminds the group that building systems make up a significant amount of carbon emissions on Earth. She highlights four relevant building codes and ordinances:
 - The 2019 revisions to the City of Chicago Construction Codes, the first revision in 70 years. As part of these revisions, Chicago included pilot programs to test alternative materials in building systems. “We’re getting there, but there’s room to move some of these things forward.”
 - The 2021 Affordable Requirements Ordinance, which supports affordable housing in areas that have had affordable housing reductions or where there has not been an emphasis on accommodating all income levels.
 - The 2020 Accessory Dwelling Units Ordinance, which allows coach houses, a traditional housing type that increases density and affordability
 - The Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD) Policy Plan, which considers how to more closely connect development and transportation to mitigate carbon emissions.
- Roth discusses **climate impact mitigation** next, highlighting several related items:
 - She displays the website climateactiontracker.org and suggests that the group may be able to use it as a data source.
 - She mentions the American Institute of Architects’ 2030 Challenge, which she says has not had impressive results and has significant room for improvement.

- Roth shares an article written by Veronica Scotti of the reinsurance company Swiss Re published on the World Economic Forum’s website. “I will be at Davos with my counterparts in the public sector to tackle this challenge together – because public-private partnerships are the smart way to go.”

Policy Creation for Goal 5 - Working Groups

- Marissa Strassel leads one of the two breakout groups in discussing and editing the working document for Goal 5, Objectives 5.1 and 5.2, while the other breakout group handles Objective 3.
- Goal 5 is “Mitigate then eliminate sources of carbon emissions in alignment with national and global climate goals”
 - Objective 5.1: “Address the ongoing impact of climate change in our neighborhoods.”
 - Angela Tovar suggests that the “Innovative Policies from Other Cities” listed in this section focus largely on stormwater, whereas our policies need to focus more on transportation strategies and emissions reduction in buildings.
 - Bradley Roback mentions that the draft Climate Action Plan has some concrete actions that would fit in this section, including electrification of buildings.
 - Tovar adds that the policies in this section should focus not only on downtown: “When we’re talking about the decarbonization of our buildings, we’ve always historically been focused on the commercial building sector downtown, but there is a way for us to really be thinking about how we can address emissions reduction at the community level and identify pathways and funding mechanisms and technical assistance that can provide our homes, our one-to-two family or multifamily homes, to make this transition, and in doing so address energy insecurity and our energy burden.”
 - Robert Weinstock: “How do we make sure the City takes into account climate change in every small decision it makes?” As an example, he mentions a questionable City decision to install a concrete island in the intersection outside his window, which causes that intersection to flood.
 - Objective 5.2: “Plan for green infrastructure that reduces the embodied and overall carbon impact of the city in public and private developments.”
 - Roback admires the Edmonton policy “Ensure consideration of full lifecycle cost and benefits when maintaining and renewing public infrastructure” and suggests adopting it.
 - Michele Davies suggests that the social cost of carbon should be taken into account in public and private construction projects. Rob Weinstock clarifies that the “social cost of carbon” is a dollar figure per ton of carbon emitted that represents its social externalities. Weinstock suggests that when the City is in procurement, taking bids for a project, they should add the social cost of carbon to each bid.

- Rob Weinstock links to an [Institute for Policy Integrity study](#) on incorporating the social cost of carbon into federal policy
- Strassel asks Matt Freer about a draft policy the pillar had discussed in the past about expanding tree canopy. Strassel asks if native plants should also be considered. Freer agrees, listing the benefits of policies that require a certain amount of tree canopy or natural space.
 - A participant types a link to the [Tree Equity Score website](#) with a map displaying a metric that compares tree canopy and population density
- Freer suggests implementing [StormShore stormwater credits](#), which imposes a fee on developers whose properties lose more water than they retain.
- Tovar points out that incentives for developers like social cost of carbon, tree equity, stormwater credits, etc. may happen at the design phase, but we still need to account for the full life cycle of the building, possibly through environmental benchmarking (which Frank Zhu explains as a sort of energy use report card). Tovar suggests extending benchmarking to smaller buildings to help them understand where they could save on energy usage.

Policy Refinement Exercise

- The policy statements for Goals 1 and 2 have been now reviewed by City staff. Marissa Strassel and other pillar team members have made light edits for clarity based on their feedback.
- The pillar members engage in an exercise where they rank the existing policy statements for Goals 1 and 2 from 1-10, on whether they are ready (1) or need more work or rewording (10).
- Objectives 1.1.b, 1.2.c, and 2.1.a all receive scores greater than 5, indicating that, on average, pillar members think the wording of these three objectives needs to be improved.
- 1.1.b reads “Launch fund using financial levers and tools to raise awareness and inspire action towards making Chicago more sustainable to climate impact.” Rob Weinstock says it’s not clear where the money comes from and how much. The group decides to change “inspire” to “fund.” Weinstock suggests that it be added that the fund is to be raised in a climate-positive way, e.g. through congestion pricing.
- 1.2.c reads “Establish a moratorium on permits for expansion of existing polluting facilities as defined by EPA and local regulatory agencies.” Frank Zhu says it is not clear what the moratorium is for or what will happen after the moratorium. David Yocca says an undefined moratorium can have unintended consequences. Zhu also points out that “polluting facilities” needs to be better defined. Angela Tovar volunteers to come back next time with a proposed revision of this objective.
- 2.1.a reads “Use the government lever to evaluate ward-level leadership and accountability for environmental and sustainable decision-making.” Michele Davies says the “government lever” phrasing is unclear to her. Frank Zhu and Leslie Roth agree.

Q&A / Closeout

- There are no final Q&A questions.

RESOURCES

2022 Chicago Climate Action Plan

[Draft for Public Comment](#)

2019 Chicago Building Code Now Available Online

[Revisions to the City of Chicago construction codes](#)

Chicago 2021 Affordable Requirements Ordinance

[Description of City's inclusionary housing program](#)

Chicago 2020 Accessory Dwelling Units Ordinance

[Description of ordinance allowing ADUs in attics, basements and accessory buildings.](#)

Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD) Policy Plan

[Call for proposals.](#)

Broadening the Use of the Social Cost of Greenhouse Gasses in Federal Policy

[Report suggesting the applications of research on policy.](#)

StormStore

[A stormwater credit trading market for Cook County](#)

Tree Equity Score

[Map of "tree equity" in cities and towns in America.](#)

NEXT STEPS

- Next meeting is April 26, 2022
- Participants are asked to review the draft policies for Goals 3-5 for next time.