

## Vermont Climate Council November 2, 2021 -Minutes

Date/Time: November 2, 2021, 1:30 PM  
Location: Zoom Meeting Recorded and [Posted Online](#)  
Physical Location to Attend in Person: Agency of Natural Resources, One National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT 05602 in Catamount NL D215  
Vermont Climate Council members: Abbie Corse, Chris Cochran, Anson Tebbetts, Bram Kleppner, Brian Gray, Catherine Dimitruk, Chad Farrell, Chris Company, Erica Bornemann, Iris Hsiang, Jared Duval, Johanna Miller, Joe Flynn, Julie Moore, June Tierney, Kelly Klein, Lauren Oates, Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, Liz Miller, Richard Cowart, Sean Brown, Sue Minter, Susanne Young  
Sub-committee co-chairs: Billy Coster, TJ Poor, Peter Walke  
Staff and support: Jane Lazorchak, David Plumb, Cameron Hager, Marian Wolz  
Minutes By: David Plumb, Cameron Hager

1:30 PM **Convene/Welcome/Overview and Approval of Agenda**  
*David Plumb, Consensus Building Institute*

Agenda was approved by the Council.

1:35 PM **Review and Approval of [Oct. 26, 2021 minutes](#)**  
*David Plumb, Consensus Building Institute*

Minutes were approved by the Council.

1:40 PM **Just Transition Reflection**  
*Sue Minter, Just Transitions Sub-Committee Co-Chair*

Sue Minter led the Just Transitions reflection. She presented a 5-minute clip of comments that Just Transitions subcommittee members provided to the House Energy and Technology committee. The full recording is here [LINK](#).

1:55 PM **Cross-Sector Mitigation Pathways, Strategies and Actions**  
[\[Link to Presentation\]](#)  
*Sub-Committee Co-Chairs*

Peter Walke led the overview for the Cross-Sector Mitigation Sub-Committee's Pathways, Strategies, and Actions contained in the draft text for the initial CAP.

2:25 PM      **Technical analysis of emission reduction pathways** [\[Link to Presentation\]](#)  
*Cadmus and EFG*

Liz Hanson and David Hill gave their technical analysis of the pathways needed to reach the emissions reduction goals of the Global Warming Solutions Act. Main points of discussion with Council Members included:

- On the modeling, it appears we are overshooting the 2025 significantly.
  - EFG/CADMUS: If we don't overshoot in 2025, meeting the 2030 requirements becomes quite difficult.
- How should we view the investments and savings chart?
  - EFG/CADMUS. It does not include the social cost of carbon. But even without including the social cost of carbon, the fuel savings offset much of the upfront investment costs. Therefore, from a social policy standpoint, in the long term, this is cost effective.
- For the building sector, there didn't seem to be any building cooling requirements. Could you explain?
  - EFG/CADMUS. Primarily, space cooling is not provided by fossil fuel. It is primarily clean electricity thus it is not shown in that type of modeling.
- The modeling shows a relatively high fraction of heat pumps compared to biofuels. Vermont has a significant fraction of wood heat. Is the ratio based on an educated guess?
  - EFG/CADMUS. Yes. The ratio incorporates advanced pellet stoves. There is a decline in the solid biofuel options. Wood heat is often used as supplemental source rather than a primary source from the research that exists.
- Councilors asked to clarify if the numbers presented are fully updated from the last time Cadmus presented.
  - EFG/CADMUS: The numbers presented today were updated over the weekend.
- Does the model include constraints, such as sufficient supply of heat pumps or workforce? Also, the targets for weatherization appear unrealistic.
  - EFG/CADMUS: The modeling and the work done is meant to present pathways and analysis that help illustrate what is needed to meet the GWSA requirements. It did not include those kinds of constraints.

3:10 PM      BREAK

3:20 PM      **Discussion of key issues** [\[Link to Survey Summary\]](#)  
*Full council*

David Plumb presented a summary of findings from a survey of the Cross-Sector Mitigation Pathways, Strategies, and Actions. The Council proceeded to have a discussion on these key issues. Key points of discussion include:

- On **industrial buildings**, council members asked that they be more explicitly included in the recommendations. The sub-committee clarified that industrial buildings are,

however, included in the Clean Heat Standard as proposed

- For **commercial buildings**, commercial tenants should be included in the on-bill financing tariff plan. In general, council members would like to see some detail into how commercial tenants and landlords can be better included in this plan.
- For **on-bill finance tariffs**, council members asked many questions and raised concerns around this proposed plan. Councilors raised concerns about how these tariffs would transfer to a new tenant or owner, the scope of what they would cover, and other practical details. A suggestion was offered that this should be introduced as a pilot.
- On **unregulated fuels** such as propane, council members asked for clarity surrounding the requirements in the Clean Heat Standard for individual Vermont residents. The sub-committee clarified that the standard makes no requirements on individual Vermonters, only on fuel providers. Vermonters can continue to choose the option that most suits them. A couple of key questions and concerns are highlighted below:
  - What parallel structure could be available for rural residents that would mirror the on-bill tariff opportunity provided to regulated utilities?
  - If I'm a propane customer, will I see propane become less available and more expensive? What will help residents in that situation?
- On **rental properties**, council members expressed concerns about the pressure on rents from new requirements, which in turn could cause other outcomes (i.e. homelessness, people moving out of state, etc.). Council members would like clarity on how renters could be protected.
- Council members requested a **combined strategy** for buildings around pathway 2 and strategy for enabling electrification.
- Council members raised concerns **about the amount of homes** that need to be weatherized in this plan. The goal seems unrealistic.
  - The EAN Wx at Scale Working Group provided a recommendation on achievable scale, funding and approach that is posted in the public comments on the VCC website [LINK](#).
- Council members raised concerns about **biofuels** such as which would be used and to how much. There is an understanding from the sub-committee that there is a wide range of biofuels, some of which are not sustainable and not desirable. The recommendation calls for a process for evaluating biofuels similar to a Technical Advisory Group, which will determine the carbon footprint of different fuels.
- One councilor emphasized that the Clean Heat Standard allows the VCC to meet emissions requirements using a variety of clean heat solutions which can help with the pacing of installing new technology.
- One councilor noted that there are many parallels in these conversations with the Clean Water Act in 2015. The VCC should look at the model that was followed in that process.

4:40 PM      Public comment

The following individuals made public comment:

- Jennifer Byrne
- Matt Cota
- Linda Gray

- Ben Edgerly Walsh

4:50 PM      Next Steps and adjourn

David Plumb and Secretary Young presented next steps for the council. These can be seen below:

- Deputy Secretary Kristin Clouser will be serving as chair and be at the next climate council meeting until a permanent secretary is appointed by the Governor.
- For the council, people value the time to talk through the many substantive issues on the table.
- The council discussed a specific proposal to extend Council meetings for as long as the agenda requires. Many councilors agreed to the idea, yet several said they could not. The council agreed to use meeting time as efficiently as possible, minimizing presentation and maximizing substantive discussion. The Steering Committee will suggest additional possible meeting times in advance of December 1.
- Jane Lazorchak gave some information about the current process for clarity:
  - Notes are provided to task leads and subcommittees as a whole, including meeting minutes and written comments.
  - Revised versions of the text will be posted in track changed versions and clean versions within a week.
  - November 16<sup>th</sup> is intended to be a longer meeting that will address issues that we haven't resolved.

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