



**Minutes – Friday, December 12, 2025**  
**Video Conference**  
**9 am to 11 am**

**Attending:** Brian Eden, Bob Howarth, Dave Bradley, Tom Hirasuna, Sheila Out, George Loreface, Fred Schoeps, Paul Moore, Jen Myers, Nick Goldsmith, Alice Green, Hailley Delisle, Marie McRae, Yayoi Koizumi, Terry Carroll, Hilary Swartwood, Rebecca Evans, David Gower, Margaret Johnson, Peter Bardaglio

**2026 TCCPI Priorities – All**

*TCCPI priorities for last year included advocating for state climate and clean energy policies, strengthening climate resilience, and supporting efforts to decarbonize and electrify the city's built environment. New issues have emerged recently, including the TeraWulf proposal to establish a data center in Lansing, the debate over nuclear power in the state, and Gov. Hochul's backing away from key climate and clean energy policies. We discussed how recent developments should shape the coming year.*

**Overview**

The group discussed the governor's actions to undermine the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), including blocking the all-electric building rule and targeting the Northeast pipeline. The repeal of the 100-foot rule could save \$581 billion in utility costs.

**Governor's Actions and Political Dynamics**

- Peter Bardaglio discussed the governor's actions to undermine the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) over the past three years.
- Bob Howarth confirmed the governor's backtracking and mentioned the political pressure from conservative lawmakers like Elise Stefanik.
- Peter highlighted the governor's recent actions, including blocking the all-electric building rule and approving the Northeast pipeline.
- Brian Eden mentioned the successful fossil fuel campaign in Western New York to blame rising electric rates on clean energy transition programs.

**Impact of Fossil Fuel Lobby and Affordability Concerns**

- Brian explained how the fossil fuel industry has influenced the governor's decisions by claiming clean energy programs are unaffordable.
- Peter and Bob discussed the affordability of electricity and the misleading claims that rising rates are due to the CLCPA.
- Bob mentioned the U.S. Department of Energy's report on the impact of LNG exports on US gas and electricity prices. It stated that increased rates of export lead to a rise in gas prices and US electric prices.

- The governor's not paying attention to that argument. Arguing that it's too much green energy that's driving up the cost of electricity is exactly backwards from what's really happening.
- Peter and Bob discussed the effectiveness of propaganda and the need for rational thinking in addressing climate change.

### **Community Efforts and Legislative Priorities**

- Peter outlined the community's efforts to push back against the governor's actions, noting that the repeal of the 100-foot rule was the one place where Hochul could make a positive difference.
- Brian observed that it looked like the Hochul administration wants to change the accounting methodology for greenhouse gas emissions, dropping the more progressive approach that Bob proposed.
- Bob mentioned the upcoming approval of the new energy plan and the potential weakening of the scoping plan.
- Bob discussed the current political dynamics and the governor's focus on reelection.
- Peter emphasized the importance of community coalitions like New York Renews, Renewable Heat Now, and Climate Can't Wait in advocating for climate action.

### **Nuclear Power and Data Centers**

- Peter turned to the debate on nuclear power and the upcoming TCCPI meeting in February to discuss the issue.
- Brian highlighted the split in the environmental community over nuclear power and the financial impact on renewable energy projects.
- Peter mentioned the aggressive promotion of data centers like TeraWulf and the community's resistance to their expansion.
- Brian discussed the legal and environmental issues surrounding TeraWulf's data center in Lansing and the community's efforts to oppose it.

### **Decarbonization and Community Engagement**

- Peter talked about the Ithaca 2030 District's efforts to decarbonize non-residential buildings and downtown Ithaca.
- Peter mentioned the recruitment of new members, including the Community School of Music and Arts, and his hope that the district would soon include 1 million square feet of commercial building space.
- Peter discussed the need for focusing on climate resilience and the threat of flooding in downtown Ithaca.
- Rebecca Evans raised a question about the elasticity of the Ithaca 2030 district boundaries and the possibility of including additional buildings. Peter pointed out that the district already has so-called satellite buildings outside the boundaries.

### **Federal and State Policy Impact**

- Nick from the Park Foundation raised concerns about the impact of federal policies on local sustainability efforts and the need for flexibility in the Ithaca Green New Deal.
- Rebecca discussed the importance of community resilience and the need for mutual aid and support in times of political uncertainty.

- She asked, how do you balance the mission of sustainable Ithaca around climate change and sustainability issues and the larger issues that the community is facing around attacks on minority populations and democracy?

## **2026 TCCPI Priorities**

- Pushing back on the effort to weaken the CLCPA and state climate goals
- Supporting the city climate action plan
- Raising public awareness about nuclear power, data centers, and energy affordability
- Continuing to develop the Ithaca 2030 District and support building decarbonization
- Participating in statewide coalitions focused on climate action and renewable energy

## **The City of Ithaca Climate Action Plan – Rebecca Evans**

*Rebecca Evans, director of sustainability for the City of Ithaca, provided an overview of the latest version of the city's climate action plan. The plan has evolved significantly over the last few months, and Rebecca will bring us up to date on where it currently stands as well as the next steps in the process of securing its approval.*

### **Overview**

The new Climate Action Plan, titled "Dignity Toward Decarbonization," focuses on human-centered goals, including housing stability, public health, and equity. The plan aims to balance climate mitigation with social and economic resilience, aligning with existing city priorities and comprehensive plans. The meeting discussed the importance of quantifying sustainability measurements across departments, with a focus on deliverables like mini-splits for equity. The Climate Action Plan will be finalized by January 2026, incorporating baseline assessments, risk assessments, and data collection.

### **Climate Action Plan and Human-Centered Approach**

- Rebecca introduced the new Climate Action Plan titled "Dignity Toward Decarbonization" and its focus on human-centered goals.
- She explained the shift from a net zero emissions goal to a more inclusive approach that addresses social and economic challenges.
- Rebecca highlighted the importance of storytelling and human experience in engaging the public and policymakers.
- She discussed the interconnectedness of climate goals with other community priorities, such as housing, labor, and public health.

### **Implementation and Public Engagement**

- Rebecca outlined the process of finalizing the Climate Action Plan and stressed the importance of public feedback.
- She introduced a tool to help the public and policymakers understand the interconnectedness of climate goals and community priorities.
- Rebecca emphasized the need for a systems-level approach to climate action and the removal of barriers to achieving climate goals.
- She discussed the importance of accountability and transparency in the implementation of the Climate Action Plan.

### **Rebecca's Presentation and Initial Feedback**

- Fred Schoeps thanked Rebecca for her presentation and spreadsheet, noting the importance of quantifying sustainability measurements.
- Fred emphasized the need for executive authority to provide an overview across all departments and deliverables.
- Rebecca appreciated the feedback and discusses the importance of deliverables, using a mini-split example to illustrate equity.

### **Scorecard Team's Assessment and Website Considerations**

- Tom Hirasuna pointed out the challenge of adjusting the scorecard team's assessment process to take into account the new approach and mentions the lack of assessments since the end of 2024.
- Tom suggested the public might use a website to track progress, but the city could also create its own website.
- Rebecca expressed a preference for continuing the partnership with the Green New Deal scorecard team but said she was open to creating a website.

### **Community Involvement in Measuring Progress**

- Rebecca discussed the idea of a "Cosmo quiz" for the Green New Deal, asking simple yes/no questions to measure household resilience.
- There might be a question that asks, for example, do you have air conditioning in your apartment? Do you have a bus stop within three quarters of a mile? Then based on how many yeses you got, we could determine how well we're doing in your neighborhood.
- That could also help reveal where our gaps are in terms of investment.
- Rebecca considered involving the community in measuring progress, suggesting a working group to examine human dignity and climate change.
- She expressed her belief that community involvement is the most equitable and transparent approach.

### **County and Town Level Perspectives**

- Peter asked Hilary Swartwood what she thought about the approach Rebecca was taking.
- Hilary appreciated the new direction of the city's efforts – she noted that the Town of Ithaca does not have a climate action plan.
- She works with each department to help them align with sustainability goals.
- Peter asked Terry about the county's perspective on the city's new approach.
- Terry praised Rebecca's work, especially how she has established charts to track the city's progress.

### **Next Steps and Climate Action Plan**

- Peter asked about next steps and logistical details.
- Rebecca outlined the timeline for the final version of the Climate Action Plan.
- Public feedback regarding the Climate Action Plan will be made public in early January, and it will be discussed at the January Sustainability and Climate Justice Commission meeting,

- It will come before Common Council in in February and then adoption in early March. Hopefully it'll ultimately be adopted as part of the comprehensive plan, which is not typical.
- Rebecca announced the addition of a new team member, Siobhan Hull, who will significantly expand the capacity of the city sustainability office.