

**SUMMARY OF THE  
CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING TEAM MEETING  
VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK  
January 11, 2021**

**Call to Order**

Deputy Director of Development and Planning Services Michaela Kohlstedt called the CAPT meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. in a remote meeting through Zoom virtual meeting platform. Ms. Kohlstedt was present in the Village Hall, but there were no members of the public in attendance in the building.

**Roll Call**

The following Members were in attendance: Trustee Israel, Trustee Ross, John Albrecht, Frank Bleeker, Steven Elisco, Jill Franklin, Robyn Kole, Pat Lederer, Becky Mathison, Clare Poupard, Len Rago, Aaron Stash, Patti Vile, and Sandy Weiss.

Members absent: Jeni Brickman, Melissa Hirsch, Kim Ptak, Joan Scovic, Scott Robson, Derrik Chen, and Nell Badgley.

The following Village Staff were in attendance: Michaela Kohlstedt, Tom Poupard, Jackie Clawson, Madeline Farrell, Corey Friedman, Erik Jensen, Matt Morrison, Kelly Hamill, and Swati Pandey.

Also Present: paleBLUe dot consultant Ted Redmond, Greenest Region Corps Member Tessa Murray, and Members of the public: Ying Wang, and Doug Gerleman.

**Public Comments Regarding Items Not on the Agenda**

Doug Gerleman spoke on conserving energy in buildings through a blower door test, a machine used to measure the airtightness of buildings. He encouraged CAPT members to look into this or bring in a consultant for this service. Mr. Gerleman also urged the team to consider methods of carbon storage beyond tree planting, such as replacing parkway landscaping with native plantings. He mentioned clovers for ground cover and prairie grasses that have deep roots to sequester carbon within soil.

Ying Wang (member of GoGreen Northbrook) inquired about access to Northbrook's baseline assessment draft documents, and also asked how progress will be tracked for any goal of reducing greenhouse emissions that the CAPT commits to in years following. Ms. Kohlstedt responded that baseline documents are available on the Village website's Climate Action Plan page (<https://www.northbrook.il.us/993/Climate-Action-Plan>), and reminded that all other CAPT documents are currently in progress and not yet available to the public. Mr. Redmond responded that the plan will have an implementation matrix with a schedule to conduct greenhouse gas inventories at set intervals of time, to ensure emissions are decreasing as Northbrook takes action.

**Welcome and Meeting Goal Overview**

Mr. Redmond reminded members that the intent of the ACTION finder tool is to create a space to brainstorm ideas for Northbrook's climate plan. He made note that for some categories there may be repeated actions listed, and advised members to "save" only one of the same action. For members wishing to create their own action, they can either add them onto the ACTION finder spreadsheet or work in their own document. All actions will be refined and consolidated in upcoming workshops.

**Sub-Team Breakouts – Consensus on Sector Goals**

Mr. Redmond emphasized that the task for each breakout session is to collaborate in reviewing what actions may have potential for Northbrook and what may be missing from this list. Ms. Kohlstedt explained that each subteam

should designate a note-taker and presenter who will have three minutes to report back to the main group with a list of the main actions this sector is interested in pursuing.

### **Breakout Round 1: Transportation/Land Use, Waste Management, Local Food**

Member Kole represented the Transportation and Land Use subteam and first shared that the group agrees the Village should act as a model to its residents in bringing on a fleet of all electric vehicles. The team also discussed creating an app that encompasses all things transportation in Northbrook, with updated information and maps for bike paths, pedestrian paths, construction, and traffic. The team also determined that a full time staff person would be needed to oversee the entire project. They wish to pursue greater transparency in how much approved transportation plans cost and how long they take to construct. The subteam group also discussed reviewing the zoning of parklets and increasing downtown density.

Member Mathison stated support for mandatory recycling for all building types (commercial, industrial, construction, single and multi-family residential) on behalf of the Waste Management subteam. Member Mathison explained the goal of a communications campaign to inform residents on how to reduce waste through repurposing, composting, and recycling. This should involve clarification on what can and cannot be recycled in Northbrook and more reliable data from our waste service providers. Next, the team mentioned strategies for reducing single-use plastic items in take-out packaging through the promotion of bringing your own containers and including directions for how to recycle materials, and considering adding a fee to single-use plastic items. Lastly, Member Mathison stated the team's idea to reduce food waste through the creation of a program that coordinates composting or donating leftover food.

On behalf of the Local Food group, Trustee Ross stated that the team should review zoning codes and evaluate the cost of installing indoor farming and hydroponics systems in Northbrook, particularly in commercial areas and empty warehouse space. The group also discussed establishing multiple inter-departmental collaborations between the Village and partnering entities: the school districts, Northbrook Park District, and Northbrook Public Library. Members agreed that planting a public food forest for residents to learn from and enjoy may be a viable opportunity for the Village to pursue with a landholding partnership. Another collaboration Trustee Ross mentioned is a virtual library program with general education on how to landscape sustainably in Northbrook. The group suggested the Village create a program similar to the reduced price rain barrels for compost bins, or partner with a business that will process residential compost and sell back to residents for their gardens. A local Northbrook business, the Organic Gardener, may be a resource to reach out to for multiple projects. Finally, the Local Food groups hope to see the Village encourage food donation programs, educate local restaurants and grocery stores about repurposing food, and look into tax incentives for doing so.

### **Breakout Round 1: Buildings and Energy, Climate Health and Safety**

Member Friedman led the discussion for the Buildings and Energy subteam in which members focused on encouraging energy efficiency in existing stock of commercial buildings through multiple possible approaches. One idea is to establish a relationship between a solar farm contractor and commercial building owners. For commercial building owners to see an economic advantage to solar installation, the contractor should either take charge of roof maintenance upon installing or lease out the space of the roof as a tenant space. Another suggestion Member Friedman raised is a program similar to ComEd's rebate incentives to change lighting fixtures to LED, if something similar exists for heating systems. Additionally, the team agreed to look into IL PACE and CPACE, which provide for communities to sell bonds that pay for energy efficiency upgrades to commercial buildings. A webinar that reviews the pros and cons of cool roofs, green roofs, white roofs, and PV systems may serve as an opportunity to improve Northbrook community member's understanding of building energy efficiency.

Member Weiss spoke on behalf of the Climate Health and Safety team, stating the need for cooling centers for vulnerable populations. To address heat islands in Northbrook, the team wants to incentivize efforts to replace

asphalt with permeable materials either through reviewing Village code, or through bidding and permitting processes. Another idea discussed was a code modification to require more greenspaces and tree plantings in new developments for benefits to air quality and local cooling effects. Member Weiss also called for providing education on the risks and illnesses associated with extreme heat events and poor air quality in multiple languages.

### **Breakout Round 3: Water and Waste Water, Greenspace/Tree, Climate Economy**

Trustee Israel represented the Water and Wastewater subteam and began by reminding members that a natural reduction in water consumption of 7% per year occurs due to improvements in hydrological technology and design. He stated that the group agreed that reducing gray water (wastewater generated from all sources other than toilets) usage should be a top priority. Trustee Israel also mentioned that the Village should support water conservation by using irrigation systems that do not start when moisture is detected. This plan should first review multiple methods of stormwater management (permeable pavements in soils with high clay content, flood-tolerant plantings) and choosing the most effective opportunity for water detention and absorption in Northbrook.

On behalf of the Greenspace and Tree Canopy subteam, Member Poupard began summarizing a comprehensive action item (number 206 on the ACTION finder tool) that plans out an all-encompassing tree and plant maintenance guide and designates a Village employee as responsible for implementing this interdepartmental and intergovernmental effort. Members of this subteam agreed on the creation of an expansion to the parkway tree program, to include private property or to allow crowdsourcing of funds to plant trees in underserved tracts of Northbrook. Member Poupard mentioned incentivizing lawn contractors to switch to electric equipment by allowing quieter gear to start earlier in the morning. This subteam echoed the idea of creating a campaign to shift practices in lawncare to inform on benefits of leaving leaves, avoiding pesticides, and planting natives. The plan could also include creation of volunteer events run through the Village for invasive removal and tree planting days. Finally, Member Poupard mentioned planting natives in parkways, planting trees in parking lots that have not yet updated to Northbrook's new standard, and improving connectivity between green spaces through public or private sponsorship with larger businesses.

Director Poupard recounted that the Climate Economy subteam members agree on a main focus of positioning Northbrook as an attractive place for green businesses. He mentioned methods to accomplish this could include county real estate or property tax incentives for green businesses or those that improve their sustainability efforts. Mr. Poupard also spoke on expanding the Green Awards into a more constant certification process for green businesses. He described the possibility of a "sustainability impact fee" for new developments that receive payback when certain environmental standards and requirements are met. The subteam members also discussed promoting living near where you work and the repurposing and reusing of building materials as additional climate strategies.

### **Next Steps**

Mr. Redmond clarified that if subteams would like to work collaboratively, feel free to do so. If any team decides to review actions in an extra breakout session, Mr. Redmond can help coordinate a Zoom link. CAPT members should focus getting all potential ideas "saved" and entered into ACTION finder tool before February 1. After this the team will begin to organize actions relative to larger strategic goals and reviewing against screening criteria. The next CAPT meeting will be held on February 8 at 6:00 p.m.

### **Adjourn**

At this time, Ms. Kohlstedt told members any questions can be directed to her or Tessa Murray via phone or email. She adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Tessa Murray  
Recorder