



CITY OF CONCORD

New Hampshire's Main Street™
Conservation Commission

May 10, 2018

The Honorable Jim Bouley
Concord City Council
41 Green Street
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Proposed Resolution – Adopting a Goal of 100% Renewable Energy for the City of Concord

Dear Mayor Bouley and City Councilors:

The Concord Conservation Commission submits this letter to comment on the proposed resolution from the Concord Energy and Environment Committee (“CEEC”) captioned “Adopting a Goal of 100% Renewable Energy for the City of Concord.”

The Conservation Commission applauds both the concept of setting goals regarding a transition to the use of renewable energy sources and CEEC’s efforts to initiate a community-wide conversation about this important issue. However, we have concerns about the adoption of a City-wide policy before a study is conducted as part of the development of a plan for how the City would implement this proposed policy.

The Conservation Commission is very aware of and concerned about the impacts of climate change on our natural environment. The Commission’s charge—from this Council—include protecting, promoting and developing the City’s natural resources, and also protecting the watershed resources of the City. In implementing these goals, we have seen first-hand the adverse impacts to our natural environment and landscape from climate change. The recent spread and adverse impacts of non-native insects on trees throughout the City and the region, including the emerald ash borer and red pine scale, is but one example. When the Commission updated its Conservation and Open Space Plan this past year, impacts from climate change were part of the discussion and our conservation planning efforts under that revised Plan now include consideration of climate resiliency.

Given the Commission’s responsibilities within the City, and the impacts from climate change that we are already observing, we concur with the CEEC’s recommendation that the City undertake efforts to study how the City can take steps to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. However, we are concerned that CEEC’s proposed resolution puts the proverbial cart-before-the-horse by asking the Council to adopt the goals set forth in the proposed resolution *as City policy*

before the City undertakes the necessary studies that would lead to a plan for *how* the City would achieve those goals. This is particularly important given that CEEC's proposed resolution, as presented, "will apply to the entire Concord community, not just municipal government operations."

We encourage the Council to commit the resources required to study and develop proposals for how the City could achieve a goal of using 100% renewable energy by the target dates suggested by CEEC. As CEEC's proposed resolution recognizes, this process should engage the public and allow for community input on this important issue. The process also needs to include input from the various Committees and Commissions appointed by City Council. From the Conservation Commission's standpoint, we would like to see such a study include consideration of how the options for achieving the goals proposed by CEEC would impact the City's conservation lands. In addition, the City is in the process of studying an overhaul of its zoning ordinance. The options for implementing a goal of using 100% renewable energy in the future may require modifications of our zoning ordinances to address an increase in renewable energy from sources such as solar and wind. The time is ripe to integrate a study about setting and achieving a renewable energy goal with that zoning update process.

For all of these reasons, the Conservation Commission supports funding of a study to assess how we, as a community, can achieve renewable energy goals. Such a study, with active input from the community, is a necessary prerequisite to informed decision-making by this Council on the important issues embodied in CEEC's proposed resolution, including any decision on the long-term policy for the City.

Sincerely,



Kristine S. Tardiff
Chair

GREATER CONCORD
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



May 10, 2018

Dear Mayor Bouley and members of the Concord City Council:

I write to you on behalf of the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce relative to the proposed resolution adopting a goal of 100% renewable energy for the City of Concord. The goals and intent of the resolution are laudable. There are many potential benefits that could result from a move in this direction, both from an environmental and economic perspective. If implemented prudently, this could be part of Concord's marketing and economic development strategy. We do, however, have concerns regarding some of the specifics outlined in the resolution and potential unintended consequences.

First, the proposed resolution establishes a 12-year window in which to convert all buildings in the City of Concord, including private residences and businesses, to receive 100% of their electricity from renewable energy sources. This is a very aggressive step to take within a very short time frame and assumes a significant reduction in the cost of renewables and major advancements in technology that, while possible, are by no means guaranteed. Furthermore, there is not currently sufficient information available about the cost impacts to support such a timetable; a more thorough cost/benefits analysis is needed.

Second, it is unclear what the makeup of renewable sources will be and whether those sources will have their own detrimental impact on the City of Concord. For example, assuming that wind and solar will be significant sources, what impacts will this have on the landscape? Will their potentially negative environmental impacts be outweighed by the environmental benefits?

Third, the overall economic impact of this proposal on the community is unclear. New Hampshire has the 6th highest energy costs in the country. Without a greater understanding of the energy cost impacts of this resolution, there is a risk of putting Concord at a competitive disadvantage in terms of future tax base growth and attracting businesses, especially higher energy users.

Again, we support the spirit of this resolution. We commend the Concord Energy and Environment Committee for the work they have done. We do, however, advise caution relative to the proposed timetable, and we recommend the Concord Energy and Environment Committee take the time help the community at large better understand the long-term impacts and benefits of this ambitious proposal.

Sincerely,

Timothy G. Sink, CCE
President

ROBERT P. STEIGMEYER
PRESIDENT AND CEO



May 10, 2018

Robert Werner
82 Hooksett Turnpike
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Rob:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me to share the initiative of the City's Energy and Environment Committee to put forth a resolution to the City Council to adopt a goal of 100 percent renewable sources in Concord by 2050.

This initiative is vitally important for both our environment and our health. Concord Hospital supports the health of our community members in our daily work and also looks forward to supporting this initiative via changes within our facilities to reduce our own carbon footprint.

Our Hospital has a long history of engaging in initiatives that lessen our environmental impact. In 2009, the U.S. Green Building Council recognized our East Wing Addition, which houses the Emergency Department, as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certified. More recently, the Hospital's new parking garage was constructed to allow for solar panels in the future. In addition, we have created temporary charging stations for electric vehicles on campus and are working toward a more long-term solution.

I look forward to hearing about a positive response from the City Council for this lofty resolution and the necessary engagement of all to assure its success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob P. Steigmeyer'.

Robert P. Steigmeyer
President and CEO

Bonenfant, Janice

From: Coen, Mark
Sent: Friday, May 11, 2018 7:20 AM
To: Aspell, Thomas; steveshurtleff@aol.com; Shurtleff, Stephen; robwerner.uvm@gmail.com; Werner, Robert; magrw@myfairpoint.net; Mulholland, Michelle; jpbouley@comcast.net; l.kenison@comcast.net; Kenison, Linda; Keith.Nyhan@ins.nh.gov; Nyhan, Keith; jennifer.kretovic@gmail.com; Kretovic, Jennifer; Bonenfant, Janice; Matson, Gail; Keach, Fred; dansthilaire@comcast.net; St. Hilaire, Dan; brenttoddconcord@gmail.com; markcoen@tds.net; chamby@comcast.net; cwbourchard@aol.com; Bouchard, Candace; Sexton, Amanda; amandakrady@gmail.com; Herschlag, Allan
Subject: Fwd: Concord City Council May 14, agenda item 48E

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Deborah Carley <Deborah.Carley@comcast.net>
Date: May 10, 2018 at 10:11:11 AM EDT
To: <deborah.carley@comcast.net>
Subject: Concord City Council May 14, agenda item 48E

Good morning,

I am writing in regard to the May 14, 2018 City Council meeting and agenda item 48E, "Resolution adopting a goal of 100% renewable energy for the City of Concord".

My husband and I purchased a roof-top solar array for our mid-19th century home in 2015 and are pleased to report that it supplies nearly 100% of our electricity. We have added insulation and storm windows to our property, and use a woodstove to supplement gas heat in the wintertime. Rather than air conditioning, we use window blinds and fans for summer comfort. We recycle and compost food waste, and bike and walk rather than using the car as often as possible. We do support reducing the use of fossil fuels and using renewable energy!

The goals of energy conservation are desirable. The City Council currently has the ability to encourage reducing the use of fossil fuels to the extent that it is practical and cost-effective. I urge them to continue to do this. However, to commit time and resources to developing a strategic plan to achieve the goals in the resolution distorts the logical process by leap-frogging these goals ahead of other, equally desirable goals.

I oppose this resolution. I do not think it is in the best interests of Concord taxpayers to commit to these specific goals by the specific dates as described in the resolution. Energy consumption is just one of many components to the city budget. The landscape of energy creation and distribution changes rapidly. Technologies associated with renewable energy change rapidly. We absolutely cannot know what this will look like in 5 years, let alone 12 or 32 years. Please do not bind the City Council, the City Manager, and the budget process in this way.

Thank you for your commitment to Concord by serving as Concord City Councilor At-Large, and for your consideration of this testimony.

Sincerely,

Deborah Carley
4 Vernon Street
Concord, NH 03301

Mulholland, Michelle

From: Kretovic, Jennifer
Sent: Monday, May 14, 2018 9:01 AM
To: Mulholland, Michelle
Subject: FW: Renewable Energy resolution

Hello Michelle,

For the Council, an additional comment on the 100% renewable energy initiative. See below and thank you.

Councilor Jennifer Kretovic
City of Concord, New Hampshire

Home Contact: 8 Gallen Drive, Concord, NH 03303, (603) 228-8395
jkretovic@concordnh.gov

From: Tom Irwin [tirwin@clf.org]
Sent: Monday, May 14, 2018 8:33 AM
To: Kretovic, Jennifer
Subject: Renewable Energy resolution

Hi Jen,

I hope this finds you well. I'm writing both on behalf of CLF, and in my personal capacity as a Concord resident, in strong support of the Renewable Energy resolution to be considered by City Council tonight. I trust you'll be supporting it as well, and would be grateful for your leadership in helping to secure its passage.

I hope to attend tonight but may have a family obligation that prevents me from being there.

Best wishes,
Tom

Tom Irwin
Vice President
Director, CLF New Hampshire

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Concord, NH 03301-4930

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E: tirwin@clf.org

