

## Local Action on Climate Change.

A breakout session on climate change was held at the CACOR Annual General Meeting on 2014 May 29. This summary is based on notes taken by Ian Whyte and a commentary by Mary Hegan.

### Recommendations to CACOR

1. CACOR should document what candidates in the fall municipal election are saying and writing re climate change action and adaptation.
2. Members should be invited to bring candidates for the next Ottawa City Council to CACOR's September lunch meeting.
3. Need regular column in key media sites starting late-August.
4. CACOR should roll up and publicize local innovative actions for climate change happening now.
  - Host or co-host<sup>1</sup> a process to provide an ongoing picture of community-led<sup>2</sup> activities in the Ottawa area to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions or to adapt, or both, including emergency planning. Do so in key public domains. Players self submit.
- From this compilation, CACOR could host a focused Ottawa review of where we are and what gaps need to be filled. Would need to document actions and decisions whereby CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are being promoted to a higher level as well and host public discussion re finding other solutions for consumers, businesses, and residents.
5. CACOR should sponsor a "suggestion box" where people could send their carbon reduction ideas – on the CACOR website.
6. A *3iSummit*-approach to climate change would enable City Hall to join as it sees fit and may foster a serious set of activities if things like use of roads and local government incentives fit into the broader community-led path.

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<sup>1</sup> Mary noted, for example, that Ecology Ottawa has staff and volunteer resources dedicated to climate change action.

<sup>2</sup> private sector, NGOs, communities, governments.

### Summaries of interventions<sup>3</sup>

Bill Teron reiterated the main points of his keynote speaker's address at the AGM: change, if it is to happen, must be affordable (or people won't do it, voluntarily anyway). People won't change unless they see it to be in their (direct) interest to do so.

Low-energy nuclear, which provides heat, is a new, non-carbon form of energy. Education is also needed. Recommended the following references on cold fusion and suggested the following URLs:

<http://nickelpower.org/2014/02/08/a-great-little-mit-video/> and <http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2014-01/15/cold-fusion-moves-into-mainstream>

Reform must be from bottom up, not top down, and the bottom will be asking "what's in it for us?"

The City controls taxes and roads. We need an 80% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction.

The population will double in 30 years. Therefore housing (and other infrastructure) will be up. His building methods will reduce energy, and therefore CO<sub>2</sub>, requirements by 30%. This will help with per capita emissions, but it clearly shows that gross CO<sub>2</sub> will rise dramatically. (Buildings x 2) less 30% on the new ones = 170% of present CO<sub>2</sub>.

We have not yet mentioned the easy stuff, like cars and parking. After reviewing these notes one Member added: "I'm sorry that I didn't get vehicle reductions into the discussion"

Home offices were suggested as a means of CO<sub>2</sub> reduction.

Worldview is that climate change = global warming. The science is understood, but (in theory, or is it denial?) not by many of the populace. Therefore education is necessary.

We need to think outside the box - find new ways to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>

Support education and diplomacy

There is an online training group and a series of workshops, (perhaps) titled "Turn Down the Heat" sponsored by the World Bank. He was asked to forward the URLs.

We could sponsor a "suggestion box" where people could send their carbon reduction ideas. Perhaps in conjunction with the CACOR website.

There are lots of catalogues of problems but there it ends; there are mostly the catalogues are followed by "something should be done by somebody"

We have to offer solutions, not just lists of problems

The 6,000 new residences a year built in Ottawa will be better if built with Teron's new methods, and if their energy comes from geothermal sources.

If Teron's geothermal prefab housing units were used for some or all of the new units then that would begin the reduction of GHGs from buildings in Ottawa

We need to tackle carbon dependency

Every day we need to re-examine the world

We should all bring a candidate for City Council to CACOR's September meeting.

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<sup>3</sup> Participants: Bill Pugsley, Ann Galley, Isaac Goodine, Mary Hegan, Art Hunter, Margo Manning, Bill Teron, Ian Whyte

**Commentary – Ian Whyte, convenor**

- Probably more of what has not already worked will not work
- Bill Teron is correct when he emphasizes bottom up and (unfortunately) the importance of narrow self interest
- I don't think what Bill Teron said precludes working on City Council to do the right thing, although he never endorsed that, but he is right in asserting that it's not nearly enough
- Also, that we need a great leap sideways (my interpretation)
- Bill Teron's building concepts will maybe lower per capita, but not gross, emissions
- Population growth was not debated, just accepted as a given. Without a hold, and then a reduction, on population growth, all is lost.
- My top three ideas from the discussion:
  - The suggestion box
  - Better buildings
  - Bring politicians to CACOR meetings (specifically, September)

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**POSTSCRIPT**

After the session was over one of the participants suggested, under the persistent education theme, that CACOR members should go to the following URL and take the climate related course offered: <http://unccelearn.org/course/view.php?id=7>

Comments:

\*Very dynamic discussion, with new twists in answer to our question of basing our actions on City Hall agenda and speed of deliberations.

\*I identified with those who encouraged CACOR not to depend on City Hall proposed Plans for speedy change to address both CO2 reductions and adaptation to extreme weather conditions now felt by more of population. I agree the City Hall resources could go into documenting the results of actions now being taken by individuals, NGOs and private sector ...with measurement framework defined by doers & knowledgeable citizens. A prime example: a)Bill Teron communicated well his initiative, soon to be launched, of having each building become its own power plant, be carbon free, not use fossil fuels. b)Work at neighbourhood level of energy change such as community geothermal. c) We will hear more re Art Hunter's emerging technology for affordable, carbon free energy

\*I was struck at the confidence, determination of the likes of Bill Teron, Art Hunter, Bill Pugsley and think of others out there taking action into their own hands. (e.g. the solar coalition)