



Attachment 1
Environment & Climate Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes

MARCH 16, 2022 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT MINUTES EXTRACT

7.2 New Homes and Renewable Energy

Karen Crosby, Community Member, raised the topic of discussing speeding up the requirement for new homes and buildings to only use renewable energy, rather than natural gas hookups.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT ENCAC encourages New Westminster City Council to adopt a CEEP which includes a plan to create regulations by 2023 in New Westminster for new construction of single family dwellings that require builders to achieve level 5 of the STEP code, the highest standard for building energy efficiency, or if the builder uses a low-carbon (usually electric) system for heat and hot water, the STEP code is relaxed to level 3.

Procedural note: This motion did not go to a vote as the Committee wished for more information on Step Code before continuing the discussion.

The Committee had the following comments arising from discussion:

- Appreciate the intent of the motion, but it may not capture all considerations. Rather than just avoiding natural gas, would like to encourage a holistic approach which encourages builders to consider the building envelope and total efficiency of the system; and
- We need to also work to reduce consumption, and replacing everything with electricity may not be the answer. May want to amend the wording of the motion.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Environment and Climate Advisory Committee postpone New Homes and Renewable Energy to the next meeting so that staff may provide more information to the Committee about STEP code.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

MAY 18, 2022 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT MINUTES EXTRACT

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

6.1 New Homes and Renewable Energy

With discussion of Energy Step Code - Nayel Halim

Karen Crosby, Community Member, prefaced the conversation by highlighting the slide: The Case for Electrifying from the Energy Step Code presentation that was sent ahead to the committee. She noted the following:

- Electric heating without gas is much better than any step code level at reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- There are tradeoffs in any policy decision, and some level of energy efficiency will be lost with this proposal, but emissions would be lower overall, which must be our focus if we are to effectively solve the climate crisis;
- The energy step code seems to be designed to reduce energy demand in buildings, not necessarily change from fossil fuels to renewable energy, but the climate crisis demands that we make that change;
- If we continue to build with gas infrastructure, we will lock ourselves into another 20 to 100 years of burning gas in these buildings depending on how long the buildings last and how much (expensive) retrofitting happens; and
- To solve the climate crisis we need to realize there are large forces at play, and we need to be the strongest, most collective voice we can be to change the status quo away from burning gas as quickly as possible.

The Committee noted that one of the big challenges with electric heating is proper insulation, as older home technology is outdated; there are many homes in which it is very expensive to run electric heating.

Nayel Halim, Community Energy and Emissions Specialist, and Lynn Roxburgh, Acting Supervisor, Land Use Planning and Climate Action, provided a presentation entitled “Energy Step Code: An Overview” which included a summary of the committee’s discussion from March 16, and a brief summary of the Climate Action Work Plan and next steps that would be taken following the potential approval of this motion, as well as a high-level overview of Step Code. In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Halim and Ms. Roxburgh noted:

- Net Zero Energy Ready is defined in the Step Code, just categorized as “future-proofed” to be able to transition to net zero. It does not explicitly state that Step Code would achieve net zero; and
- Currently where the industry is at, steps four and five feels out of reach to the industry, and our current requirement is step three, which is the right step to offer for the incentive to be meaningful.

The Committee noted that one concern with mandating this is affordability, particularly for single-family homes. Serena Trachta, Manager, Inspections, advised that there is no good done by building a building that is not energy efficient.

Procedural Note: Teresa Morton left the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT EnCAC encourage New Westminster City Council to adopt a CEEP which includes a plan to create regulations by 2023 in New Westminster for new construction of single family dwellings that require builders to achieve level 5 of the Step code, the highest standard for building energy efficiency, or if the builder uses a low-carbon (usually electric) system for heat and hot water, the Step Code is relaxed to level 3.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.