

CITY OF JERSEY CITY
PLANNING BOARD

In the Matter of: :
: Transcript
ITEM 7 - REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF:
ADOPTION OF JERSEY CITY CLIMATE : of
AND ENERGY ACTION PLAN AS AN :
ELEMENT OF THE JERSEY CITY MASTER: Proceedings
PLAN :
-----X

Tuesday, July 20, 2021
Zoom Remote Videoconference
Commencing at 5:45 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:
CHRISTOPHER LANGSTON, Chairman
DR. ORLANDO V. GONZALEZ, Vice Chairman
JOYCE WATTERMAN, Council President
EDUARDO TORRES, Commissioner
HARKESH THAKUR, Commissioner
DAVID CRUZ, Commissioner
GEOFFREY ALLEN, Commissioner
VIDYA GANGADIN, Commissioner
DR. VIJAY DESAI, Commissioner
A P P E A R A N C E S:
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Attorney for the Board

MICHAEL LOMBARDOZZI,
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1 ALSO PRESENT:
2 CAMERON BLACK, A.I.C.P., P.P.
Senior Planner
3 City Planning Division
4 MALLORY CLARK, A.I.C.P.
Senior Planner
5 City Planning Division
6 TIMOTHY KREHEL, A.I.C.P., P.P.
Principal Planner
7 City Planning Division
8 KATHERINE LAWRENCE, A.I.C.P., P.P.
Director
9 Office of Sustainability

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1 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Let's move on to the
2 review and discussion of adoption of the Jersey City
3 Climate and Energy Action Plan as an element of the
4 Jersey City Master Plan. This was initiated by city
5 staff and carried from the July 6th meeting with
6 preservation of notice.
7 MS. LAWRENCE: Hello, commissioners. My
8 name is Katherine Lawrence, Kate Lawrence, and I'm
9 the Director of the Office of Sustainability.
10 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Hi, Kate. Good
11 evening.
12 MS. LAWRENCE: Good evening.
13 So should I just pull up my screen for
14 the presentation?
15 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Sure. Let's --
16 Santo, did we look at the notice previously for this?
17 MS. LAWRENCE: Sorry -- oh, you're
18 asking --
19 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Yeah, I'm asking
20 Santo. I'm looking for it.
21 THE REPORTER: Let me just swear in
22 Kate.
23 (Whereupon, Ms. Kate Lawrence is sworn
24 in.)
25 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Santo, it was in an

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1 email from about 2:30 this afternoon, from Cameron.

2 MR. BLACK: I realize now in I email I

3 sent you just the you recall and PDF for the

4 newspaper clipping, but on the data portal, all of

5 the components to the notice are available. I can

6 forward you those right now, Santo.

7 MR. ALAMPI: Yeah, because what I have

8 is the proof of publication, and that's obviously

9 correct.

10 (Whereupon, there is a brief pause in

11 the proceeding.)

12 MR. BLACK: All right. So the link I

13 just sent you will take you to the data portal where

14 all of the notices are uploaded.

15 (Whereupon, there is a brief pause in

16 the proceeding.)

17 MR. BLACK: How about I just share my

18 screen, and I can show you all the notice? Would

19 that work?

20 MR. ALAMPI: Sure.

21 MR. BLACK: All right. Let's do that.

22 All right. Here we go, the Jersey

23 Journal notice, and then there's the county as well.

24 So they noticed with the county, the Jersey Journal.

25 MR. ALAMPI: I have the Jersey Journal

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1 cities have, or a climate action plan. A climate

2 action plan is specifically a strategic framework for

3 meeting climate goals and emissions reductions.

4 Also, this planning process involved the

5 community, and it helped with identifying and

6 implementing strategies, helping getting them

7 involved in that process, and also getting everyone

8 object same page, including other departments within

9 the city, and other agencies the city works with, as

10 well as the residents, as I mentioned, and it ensures

11 the strategies will live on with future

12 administrations, by becoming a formally adopted plan

13 for the city.

14 So the Climate and Energy Action Plan

15 for the City of Jersey City aligns with New Jersey

16 state efforts. New Jersey passed their Energy Master

17 Plan in 2019 and their Global Warming Response Act

18 80x50 Report in 2020. The 80x50 Report looks at

19 reducing climate emissions within the state, and the

20 Energy Master Plan looks specifically at energy

21 policy within the state. The two overlap quite a

22 bit, though they take different approaches.

23 Okay. Within the city, we have a number

24 of related city plans:

25 As you know, there's the master plan

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1 one. Go back to the county.

2 All right. Let's mark both of those as

3 A-1 for the record. You can proceed, Chairman.

4 (Whereupon, Exhibit A-1 is marked for

5 identification.)

6 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Thank you, Counsel.

7 Kate, go ahead.

8 MS. LAWRENCE: Wonderful. And can you

9 hear me all right? Because I also have headphones

10 with a speaker (sic), if that's better.

11 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: I can. Anyone else

12 have any problems or anything?

13 All right. We're good.

14 MS. LAWRENCE: Okay. Wonderful. I'm

15 going to pull up my screen. Can you see it all

16 right?

17 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: We got you.

18 MS. LAWRENCE: Wonderful. So I'm going

19 to talk about the Jersey City Climate and Energy

20 Action Plan, which has been in process for the past

21 approximately two years, interrupted slightly by the

22 global pandemic.

23 So why did we create a Climate and

24 Energy Action Plan? First of all, the city has never

25 had any sort of sustainability plan, which a lot of

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1 update, which is in process, which has incredible

2 overlap with the sustainable -- the Climate and

3 Energy Action Plan.

4 There's the Hudson County Hazard

5 Mitigation Plan, which was passed in 2020.

6 The parking plan from 2020.

7 The Bicycle Master Plan from 2019.

8 Our Vision Zero Action Plan from 2019.

9 The Pedestrian Enhancement Plan from

10 2018.

11 And then, all of the resiliency plans

12 from 2017, which I believe I presented to you all

13 back then.

14 So back in 2015, the city council passed

15 a resolution to reduce emissions by 80 percent by

16 2050. That was in line with state goals. And.

17 And in 2017, the mayor joined the

18 Climate Mayors, which is basically a coalition of

19 mayors that are committed to meeting the Paris

20 Climate Agreement, or upholding it. And that was --

21 they created that initiative after the U.S. dropped

22 out of the Paris Climate Agreement.

23 In 2018, he committed -- the mayor

24 committed to the commitment, the Global Covenant of

25 Mayors For Climate and Energy, similar to the first,

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1 but this one is -- is global, and it is an initiative
 2 that involves not only committing, but also going
 3 through a rigorous process, so that everybody across
 4 the world in cities are comparing their emissions in
 5 a similar fashion, that they're calculating their
 6 emissions in a similar fashion, and they're making
 7 strategic plans for meeting emission reduction goals.
 8 And then, in 2019, the office of
 9 sustainability completed the first ever
 10 community-wide greenhouse gas emissions inventory for
 11 the City of Jersey City, and that was based on 2016
 12 emissions. So it was completed in 2019 for 2016
 13 emissions, and that was to help meet our earlier goal
 14 of having -- reducing our emissions by 20 percent --
 15 I'm sorry, 80 percent by 2050, which is difficult to
 16 reach if you don't know what emissions you have.
 17 So when we did our community-wide
 18 greenhouse gas emissions inventory, we found out that
 19 67 percent of community-wide emissions come from
 20 buildings, 30 percent come from transportation, and 3
 21 percent come from waste. The per capita emissions
 22 for the City of Jersey City is about 10.3 -- sorry,
 23 10.3 metric tons of CO2 equivalent. So that puts us,
 24 sort of, in the middle of these cities that are shown
 25 on the graph.

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1 We also had working groups, which were a
 2 major part of this plan, and they really, sort of,
 3 came up with the bulk of the initiatives, in
 4 collaboration with the office of sustainability.
 5 So the working group, there were four of
 6 them, and each one had approximately 15 members.
 7 There was one working group dedicated to energy, one
 8 to transportation and land use, one to waste, and one
 9 to equity and outreach. So the first three were
 10 different sectors for emissions, where the emissions
 11 are coming from, and then the fourth one was
 12 overarching, looking at making sure that all of the
 13 proposed action items from the working groups were
 14 equitable, and that -- and it also included outreach,
 15 and making sure that we got the word out to the
 16 public about the initiatives, and got them involved
 17 in the process in an equitable manner.
 18 So we had two surveys as part of the
 19 process. Draft recommendations were made for how to
 20 meet our climate goals, by reducing emissions across
 21 all sectors, and then we drafted a plan, had some
 22 more public meetings, presented before council in
 23 May, and now we're presenting to you.
 24 So there were the two public surveys;
 25 over four public meetings. We had a meeting in a box

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1 This graph shows -- the black dotted
 2 line were our 2016 baseline emissions levels, as
 3 calculated within the greenhouse gas emissions
 4 inventory. The red line shows what would happen to
 5 our emissions if we completely stayed the same, as
 6 far as how we were consuming energy and, you know,
 7 using transportation, but our population increased as
 8 projected. So you'll see that that shows that we
 9 will be increasing our emissions overall. The orange
 10 line is if we had the 80 percent reduction by 2050
 11 that the city has committed to. The yellow line is
 12 if we've met Net Zero by 2050, which is a much more
 13 ambitious goal that many governments and the FPCC
 14 (ph) has suggested that we try to meet.
 15 So the Climate and Energy Action Plan,
 16 this is the timeline, it started in the fall of 2019,
 17 with the formation of the steering committee and a
 18 public meeting and surveys. We had -- so the
 19 steering committee, which I'll get to right here, was
 20 made up of 15-plus representatives from local,
 21 regional, and state agencies, from within city
 22 departments, as well as agencies that we work with.
 23 They generally steered the process of the Climate and
 24 Energy Action Plan, and helped with outreach and
 25 planning, and reviewed all of the major documents.

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1 as well, which was a way for people to, before COVID,
 2 have small gatherings of friends and family to
 3 discuss the Climate and Energy Action Plan, and about
 4 climate change within Jersey City. We had a website
 5 that is still up and live, so it's been updated with
 6 information about the planning process, as well as
 7 about climate change in Jersey City. And once again,
 8 we had the draft plan, and a comment period that was,
 9 I believe, over a month. So this is the website, or
 10 the web page on the JC Make it Green website, talking
 11 about climate change and how it affects Jersey City,
 12 and then also linking to the key plans that I
 13 referenced earlier.
 14 This is Konveio. This is the platform
 15 that we use for getting outreach -- I'm sorry,
 16 getting feedback on the draft plans, so people were
 17 able to read each others' comments. So going back to
 18 the timeline, you'll see there was, sort of, a gap.
 19 Obviously, that's when COVID happened. So we did
 20 pivot and try to create engagement opportunities that
 21 were not in person, through the Konveio site.
 22 So the goals of the Climate and Energy
 23 Action Plan are to find ways to reduce greenhouse gas
 24 emissions 80 percent below the 2016 baseline by the
 25 year 2050, and to also find ways to adapt to climate

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1 change, build community resilience, and ensure that
 2 solutions are implemented equitably throughout the
 3 city.

4 We took equity seriously within this
 5 plan, and we had some major objectives for climate
 6 equity within the plan.

7 So one was to improve energy security
 8 and affordable access to clean energy while
 9 minimizing displacement.

10 Then, we had the second objective, to
 11 increase access to active transportations and public
 12 transit options.

13 We wanted to improve and expand parks
 14 and public green spaces.

15 And then, reduce the risks and impacts
 16 of air pollution, flooding, and extreme heat.

17 So when the different working groups and
 18 the sustainability office came up with the different
 19 action that we could take to reduce emissions, we had
 20 all of those vetted by the equity and outreach
 21 working group, and the steering committee, to make
 22 sure that they wouldn't have any unforeseen negative
 23 impacts on any populations within the city.

24 We identified 57 action items, and that
 25 was culled from a much larger list across all of the

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1 state comes up with their plan for that. So putting
 2 in place building benchmarking and -- ahead of state
 3 regulations, or making them, you know, broader than
 4 they were in the state regulations.

5 Requiring solar/electric vehicle and
 6 demand response readiness for new buildings, I think,
 7 over 25,000 square feet.

8 Cool roofing requirement for some
 9 moderately sized buildings.

10 Promoting community solar.

11 Utilizing the BPU's energy savings
 12 improvement program for municipal energy efficiency
 13 improvements.

14 Clean and renewable energy for municipal
 15 facilities using solar.

16 And doing an assessment of municipal
 17 property for solar.

18 And implementing an energy task force to
 19 help with crafting the fine details of legislation
 20 related to 1, 2, and 3.

21 And then, for your reference -- or for
 22 your information, the energy savings and improvement
 23 program for municipal energy efficiency improvements
 24 is currently underway, and we hope to finalize our
 25 contract with our energy services contractor -- or

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1 sectors. The major strategy, sort of, centered
 2 around reducing energy use and carbon emissions in
 3 new and existing buildings; improving access to
 4 renewable and clean energy sources; decreasing, you
 5 know, how much we're traveling, vehicle miles;
 6 adopting a holistic waste management strategy; and
 7 demonstrating leadership and energy efficiency within
 8 the municipality and municipal operations.

9 Within the energy sector, we had 20
 10 actions -- I should probably take out draft, that's
 11 now been finalized. So within those 20 actions, we
 12 did identify eight actions as being the highest
 13 priority, and we identified priority actions by
 14 seeing how feasible it was, how much it would cost,
 15 what impact would be on emissions, as well as what
 16 its co-benefits would be, so looking at would it also
 17 benefit public health, or economic sustainability,
 18 equity, or resiliency. And the more co-benefits, the
 19 more of a priority project it is, because it has so
 20 many positive impacts.

21 So within the high-priority actions for
 22 the energy sector:

23 One was implementing and building
 24 benchmarking marks, which is also -- many of these are
 25 state goals as well, or will be state law, once the

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1 company, later this summer.

2 The transportation and land use, there
 3 were 22 actions that were identified, and eight of
 4 those were high priority:

5 So increasing bicycle connectivity, and,
 6 overall, implementing the Vision Zero Action Plan
 7 with Pedestrian Enhancement Plan, to make it easier
 8 and more enjoyable for people to walk around the
 9 city.

10 Promoting transit-oriented development.

11 Putting in place the parking changes
 12 that were proposed as part of the 2020 parking
 13 management plan.

14 Improving our existing transit, working
 15 with the state and the regional organizations to
 16 improve our existing transit, so that it serves the
 17 community better.

18 Making sure that the electric buses that
 19 have been in the -- you know, promised through the
 20 state, and through NJ Transit, are put in place in
 21 urban areas like Jersey City as soon as possible, so
 22 that we can reduce -- or improve air quality.

23 And put in place electric municipal
 24 fleet, which is currently underway.

25 Increase the number of street trees to

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1 help with increasing air quality and reducing the
 2 heat island effect.
 3 And then, in the waste sector, we had 15
 4 actions; five high priority ones:
 5 One was to develop a zero waste plan
 6 that looked comprehensively at waste and how it's
 7 managed within the city.
 8 Finding ways to improve reuse or
 9 facilitate reuse within the city.
 10 Increasing recycling education.
 11 Moving on with composting of business
 12 food waste, which is -- we currently have residential
 13 food waste, but expanding that.
 14 And then, expanding residential
 15 composting programs, so it serves more people more
 16 easily.
 17 So it's a big plan, it just got passed
 18 by council, we would love the planning board to adopt
 19 it as well, and then have it included as an element
 20 within the master plan.
 21 I should also note that you may have
 22 heard that the governor signed a climate change bill,
 23 which requires that climate change-related hazard
 24 vulnerability assessments be included as part of
 25 master plans -- or part of land use elements, I'm

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1 board, to make sure that equity is addressed, as we
 2 put in place actions within this plan, as well as
 3 others that the city may take on unrelated.
 4 And then, progressing a progress report
 5 every two years, to see how we are going in our plan
 6 to reduce our emissions by 2050.
 7 So I am the director of the office of
 8 sustainability, and I can be reached here. There's
 9 more information about this plan on our website.
 10 And we hope to be -- continue to have
 11 information about the Climate and Energy Action Plan
 12 available to the public throughout the year.
 13 And I'm not sure how to get this off,
 14 sorry -- oh, there we go.
 15 Any questions?
 16 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Yeah. I went pretty
 17 deep on this, I read into this a lot here, Kate. I
 18 do have a lot -- not a lot of questions, but there's
 19 certainly things that you didn't talk about tonight.
 20 So one thing I saw was we're trying to
 21 reach 35 percent renewable energy by 2025. Are we on
 22 target for that? Because that's, you know, right
 23 around the corner.
 24 MS. LAWRENCE: Can you say that one more
 25 time?

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1 sorry, and also looking at a number of hazards, and
 2 build-out analysis, and threats and vulnerabilities
 3 in the communities. So part of that is done through
 4 the Climate and Energy Action Plan, it does have a
 5 vulnerability assessment, and so including as part of
 6 the master plan, as an element, will help meet part
 7 of that, and then, I've spoken also with the master
 8 planning team to make sure we meet all the other
 9 requirements as part of the climate change bill.
 10 Going forward, we also need to
 11 coordinate with the state, to make sure that all of
 12 their proposed actions as part of that Energy Master
 13 Plan for the state, as well as any other plans that
 14 they have in place, or any other legislation, that
 15 we're in concert with them, and that we're basically
 16 doing the same thing, and not pushing in different
 17 directions, and then not putting in place any --
 18 double work for any developers.
 19 Also, implementing that one-year energy
 20 task force to start drafting the legislation and
 21 working out all of the language; make sure that it is
 22 something that the residents, as well as developers
 23 and business community, can agree on.
 24 Then, also creating an equity assessment
 25 tool in coordination with the diversity inclusion

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1 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: I saw something in
 2 there that the goal was to reach 35 percent renewable
 3 energy by 2025. Are we going to be on target for
 4 that?
 5 MS. LAWRENCE: Well, I mean, we just
 6 passed the plan, so we can't be on target for that if
 7 we don't start moving now. But, yes, there are
 8 things we can do to get to that point. It's not
 9 something that is unobtainable, but since we --
 10 that's why we have to keep moving and keep up with
 11 the momentum of the plan.
 12 So there are a lot of things that are
 13 happening also at the state level that help us get
 14 there, because they are also putting in place their
 15 own requirements.
 16 I believe that what you just quoted was
 17 specific to municipal operations, no?
 18 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: I'm not sure.
 19 MS. LAWRENCE: Because there's different
 20 goals for municipal operations as well as
 21 community-wide, and I think that the community-wide
 22 goal wasn't renewable, but it was clean energy, which
 23 is the distinction that is important within the state
 24 of New Jersey, because the State of New Jersey has
 25 taken the stance that they're aiming to have 100

1 percent clean energy by 2050, and that includes
 2 nuclear, not just renewables.
 3 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Understood.
 4 There's one portion that references a
 5 four-day work week. Is that just for city employees,
 6 or is that something that's going to be, you know,
 7 city wide, as far as other businesses go, or is that
 8 just a wish list?
 9 MS. LAWRENCE: That's one of the things
 10 to consider. I think that's what it said, to look
 11 into it. So some of them I think we definitely
 12 should do, and others are actions that should be
 13 considered going forward. And that was especially
 14 true of, sort of, looking at how people adjusted
 15 after COVID, and how people have adjusted their
 16 workweeks, and what that meant for transportation. I
 17 think it made it a little bit more palatable for
 18 people to work from home. So the idea is to continue
 19 to look at that, and finding ways to make it easier
 20 for people to do that.
 21 Within the city, they actually allow it
 22 for -- I believe it's management employees at this
 23 point, and they've offered it to other employees, but
 24 it's pending union approval.
 25 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. Yeah, one of

1 a lot of -- when it comes to which vehicles are
 2 available for different tasks, police vehicles are
 3 one where there are hybrid electric vehicles
 4 available, and electric police vehicles, and I think
 5 there are some plug-in models that are, sort of,
 6 being tested, or that have been tried out by some
 7 police departments throughout the country; however,
 8 they're still, sort of, up in the air about how they
 9 feel about it. I think that the technology needs to,
 10 kind of, ramp up a little bit, for police departments
 11 to feel comfortable, and part of the issue is their
 12 equipment, and how much energy it requires on a
 13 constant basis.
 14 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Got you.
 15 MS. LAWRENCE: So, basically, the answer
 16 is yes, ultimately, but we're not there yet.
 17 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. Are there
 18 grants available for the municipal fleet; converting
 19 it, I mean.
 20 MS. LAWRENCE: Yes. So because this
 21 plan is so closely aligned with the Energy Master
 22 Plan coming from the state, you know, it's trying to
 23 get to the same goals, and the state has been rolling
 24 out new initiatives. They currently have -- so, with
 25 the garbage trucks, we got a grant from the state

1 my big questions with that was is that going to be
 2 optional if you have school age children?
 3 MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah, the idea was not to
 4 make this a requirement; it was to continue to look
 5 at how -- you know, to make the work week more
 6 flexible, and what that -- the impact would be on
 7 reducing emissions. This is not something we'd be
 8 requiring. It's also not required within city
 9 operations for management employees; it's an option.
 10 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Got you.
 11 There's a 100 percent electric municipal
 12 vehicle fleet that's referenced in there. Is that
 13 going to include police vehicles?
 14 MS. LAWRENCE: Right. So, sorry,
 15 that -- the -- I believe that what you are referring
 16 to is -- also was signed by the mayor. It was a
 17 commitment to all new purchase of applicable vehicles
 18 to be electric by 2030, so within 10 years, with the
 19 ultimate goal of becoming 100 percent electric as
 20 available.
 21 So, right now, we've -- you know, we've
 22 just started. We have between 10 and 20 electric
 23 vehicles within the fleet; they're all light duty.
 24 And we're about to be getting our electric garbage
 25 trucks, which, of course, are heavy duty. So there's

1 through the Volkswagen funds for those, and now the
 2 state is starting to roll out more funding for more
 3 vehicles. So there is an opportunity out now for
 4 light -- I think, like, medium duty vehicles, and
 5 there's -- it's expected to have more; we haven't
 6 applied yet.
 7 I should also say that we got a grant
 8 from Sustainable Jersey to do an implementation plan
 9 for the electric -- for the fleet, and how to make it
 10 electric, while working with Gabel Associates on
 11 that, it should be done by the end of the summer, and
 12 that should give us a good plan for, you know, over
 13 the next 10 years, what do we need to do to reach
 14 that goal that we have.
 15 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. Got you.
 16 Can you tell us what the difference
 17 between an Energy Star certification is versus a LEED
 18 certification, as far as development goes?
 19 MS. LAWRENCE: I sure can.
 20 So Energy Star certification is through
 21 the federal government. It's a program that they
 22 came up with. So there's -- I don't know if you've
 23 ever seen Energy Star certified appliances.
 24 Basically, those they have available, they're more
 25 energy efficient, and they meet the EPA's

1 requirements to be an Energy Star certified
2 appliance. So Energy Star -- Energy Star
3 certification for buildings is basically -- and I
4 don't have the numbers right off the top of my head,
5 but it's making sure that your building is more
6 energy efficient than a certain percentage of the
7 buildings within your area.

8 And, basically, as part of that process,
9 you have to benchmark your building, you have to find
10 out what its energy use is, look at its square
11 footage, and see how it's performing. So that
12 process of actually going through that is a part of
13 what allows you to, sort of, see what savings are
14 available, and then it matches you against other
15 things. It's a free program, it's a free software,
16 you just have to -- sometimes, people have to hire
17 people to help get them the information into it. But
18 it is -- it's a great program that's available to
19 businesses and to property owners.

20 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay.

21 MS. LAWRENCE: LEED certification is
22 through the US Green Building Council, and they've
23 come up with protocols for what is a LEED certified
24 building. There's many different criteria. It can
25 be water use. It can be building materials. It can

1 be siting; energy use.

2 So the thing about LEED certification is
3 you don't have to be energy efficient to be a LEED
4 building, because you could meet all of the other
5 elements -- though they may be changing that, so you
6 have to meet some level of energy efficiency. But it
7 helps you get there.

8 So LEED certification, it costs money to
9 do, and it's, sort of, a bigger hurdle for a lot of
10 people, but it does ensure that you're meeting
11 certain criteria, and that you're, sort of,
12 understanding what the best options that you have for
13 your building.

14 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. Got you.

15 MS. LAWRENCE: And it's certified
16 through a third-party -- independent third party, so
17 they come and make sure that you're actually meeting
18 what you say you're doing.

19 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. Just two
20 more, I swear.

21 I did see, getting back to municipal
22 vehicles, I'm sorry, there's a goal in the plan that
23 says we want all new municipal vehicles to be
24 electric. I forget what the timeline is. Can we
25 commit to that, or is that just a goal?

1 MS. LAWRENCE: The mayor has signed an
2 executive order to that effect.

3 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. Committing to
4 it; not just having it be a goal?

5 MS. LAWRENCE: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. All right. I
7 don't know if we need to change language on it. I
8 don't see why we can't make that commitment tonight,
9 rather than just have it be a goal. But yeah, if
10 it's an executive order, I guess it doesn't come from
11 us.

12 MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah.

13 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: And, last, I don't
14 know where I saw this in the plan, but there is a
15 provision that talks about limited zoning for
16 supermarkets.

17 MS. LAWRENCE: I don't think so. What?

18 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: I don't know.

19 MS. LAWRENCE: I'm not sure. If you
20 could find a reference, that would be really hopeful.

21 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: I don't know.

22 Maybe, do we want to open it up for other questions
23 while I look for this? If anybody else has
24 questions.

25 COMMISSIONER TORRES: I have a question.

1 This is Commissioner Torres.

2 MS. LAWRENCE: Hello, Commissioner.

3 COMMISSIONER TORRES: Piggybacking off
4 of Chairman Langston, with the electrical vehicles,
5 and now that you said the mayor signed an executive
6 order, as some of these vehicles are coming to us
7 through grants, are we seeking grants to train the
8 mechanics that work for the city right now, to upkeep
9 these vehicles? Because they're going from one type
10 of engine to something completely maybe out of their
11 field. How would the city handle that part?

12 MS. LAWRENCE: That's a great question.

13 So far, I don't know of any grants that exist for
14 that, but that doesn't mean that the city shouldn't
15 be putting money towards it.

16 One thing about electric vehicles is
17 that the maintenance is much less, so they need less
18 regular upkeep, but when they, obviously, do need
19 maintenance, we're going to need to make sure that we
20 have people who know what they're doing when it comes
21 to electric vehicles.

22 For the time being, the idea is that
23 they're basically going back to the dealer, or going
24 to a specialist, because they're such a small
25 percentage of the fleet, but I hope that, as part of

1 the electric vehicle implementation plan that Gabel
 2 Associates is working on this summer, that they will
 3 be identifying maintenance needs -- I'm sorry,
 4 training needs for our fleet workers and --
 5 COMMISSIONER TORRES: Yeah, because,
 6 otherwise, we'll have city workers that have chances
 7 of losing their jobs because of the changes that are
 8 being made. I think training -- looking for grants
 9 to train them and put that in there, if we're looking
 10 for grants to get these vehicles, it should be
 11 somewhere -- some type of grant to keep them
 12 educated --
 13 MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah, certainly.
 14 COMMISSIONER TORRES: -- and to keep
 15 going forward with this plan.
 16 Like, if you said right now we purchased
 17 10 vehicles, but in 10 years from now you're going to
 18 need -- those 10 vehicles are going to be with a lot
 19 of mileage on them. Right? What do we do then? How
 20 do we upkeep them, to keep that goal -- to keep the
 21 goal. I don't want to go backyards once we start
 22 moving forward, you know? So that's one thing that's
 23 concerning me right now.
 24 There's another thing in the climate
 25 data view that I've noticed -- my tablet shut down.

1 you know, women and children, most vulnerable for the
 2 effects of these forms of high level, water rising,
 3 high heat situation. Is there any precautions that
 4 we can start putting in our plan to relieve them from
 5 that as we move forward?
 6 MS. LAWRENCE: Yes, absolutely. So that
 7 was one of the reasons why we had equity as a
 8 component of this plan, to make sure any actions that
 9 were identified would be equitable in their approach.
 10 So, for example, tree plantings, one of the goals is
 11 to make sure that they're done throughout the city,
 12 especially in areas that have a lack of tree cover
 13 now, which may be in lower-income areas. So trees
 14 are especially beneficial when it comes to the heat
 15 island effect. They help reduce temperatures. They
 16 also improve air quality, and they make people feel
 17 more comfortable during high temperatures.
 18 So, going forward, I know that almost
 19 everything coming from my office and the division of
 20 forestry, we are definitely looking at how to make
 21 sure that all plantings are done throughout the city,
 22 in all neighborhoods. Right now, we're doing an
 23 inventory of all city trees. We have, I think, about
 24 at least 75 percent -- or 60 to 75 percent of all
 25 city trees along city streets, and as we get all this

1 That would happen when I wanted to ask --
 2 MS. LAWRENCE: Commissioner Torres, no
 3 city employees would be losing their jobs as part of
 4 this. We will be making sure that they have training
 5 going forward. I will look out for grants; there
 6 aren't any available at the moment. But we'll make
 7 sure that the city administration is aware of the
 8 needs of the automotive department.
 9 COMMISSIONER TORRES: Okay. There was
 10 something else, as I was reading into this grant, and
 11 it's in the climate data review area, and what I've
 12 noticed was, as I was looking through it and reading
 13 through it -- and this is the most vulnerable
 14 population that -- any time there's an extreme cold,
 15 storms, you know, medium, high, or whatever happens
 16 in the climate part, the population that I notice
 17 most effected was the elderly and the poorest
 18 communities, you know, vulnerable populations.
 19 So as we move forward in other parts of
 20 our plans in developing, are we going to implement
 21 guidelines that make that percentage less -- that
 22 they're less vulnerable, that population? Because as
 23 I looked through it, a consistence was the elderly,
 24 the poorer communities, and the -- and it does
 25 switch, it switches to the young and children too,

1 data, we can better analyze areas where people may
 2 not be requesting trees to be planted, but that --
 3 but they still need to have trees planted there. So
 4 we can coordinate our efforts to make sure that they
 5 get what they need.
 6 I do know that part of the
 7 recommendation to work with the Diversity and
 8 Inclusion Board on creating an equity, sort of,
 9 matrix, and looking at projects, was to make sure
 10 that city projects, whether they be directly related
 11 to climate or not, are done so that they have an
 12 equitable distribution throughout the city.
 13 COMMISSIONER TORRES: Thank you.
 14 That's all I have. The tablet went
 15 again, so that's all I have.
 16 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Thanks, Eddie.
 17 Anybody else, any questions?
 18 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: I have one
 19 question.
 20 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Yeah, go ahead,
 21 Geoffrey.
 22 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Good evening, Kate.
 23 MS. LAWRENCE: Good evening,
 24 Commissioner Allen.
 25 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Just one question,

1 because the chairman stole every single one of my
2 questions. So my question is for the CO2 emissions
3 from buildings, obviously, the new buildings, being
4 built, they're LEED certified and everything. They
5 have solar panels -- most, I'm not saying all, but
6 most. For the older buildings, if you say an owner
7 has an older building, he has a building from the
8 1970s, as long as it's producing heat for his
9 tenants, he's not changing anything. How do we go
10 about convincing him that his building is, like, a
11 lead offender of emitting too much CO2?

12 MS. LAWRENCE: Right. That's a great
13 question. So as, Commissioner, I'm sure you're
14 aware, the limitations of the regulations that the
15 city can put on building owners of existing
16 buildings, so we did look at this as part of the
17 action recommendations. So, obviously, we said that,
18 for new buildings going forward, that they need to be
19 more energy efficient; that, based on their size,
20 they might have to put in a cool roof or solar
21 panels.

22 So if a building is undergoing
23 renovations to the point that is seen as, you know,
24 going through planning board review, then that would
25 meet the same requirements; however, the state's

1 property owners make changes to their buildings.

2 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Okay. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: All right. Thanks,
4 Geoffrey.

5 Anybody else, anything?

6 Kate, I have no idea where I saw that,
7 about the supermarket.

8 MS. LAWRENCE: I don't think -- the only
9 thing we talked about supermarkets was to make sure
10 that we wanted to improve walkability.

11 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: That's what I'm
12 thinking of, in looking --

13 MS. LAWRENCE: Yeah, and to ensure that
14 people have access to supermarkets. But the tool
15 that was being recommended for that was just, you
16 know, basically, through density, and zoning, and
17 transit-oriented development, which, of course, the
18 planning department is looking at as part of the
19 master planning process.

20 I don't know -- other than that, when it
21 comes to supermarkets --

22 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Oh, there it is.

23 MS. LAWRENCE: What page are you on?

24 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: I am on page 72. It
25 is the implementation schedule, transportation and

1 requirements for benchmarking, I believe, will extend
2 to existing -- or they hope to have it extend to
3 existing buildings at some point, and the reason why
4 that's important is because if it's coming from the
5 state it's possible to address existing buildings in
6 a way that we can't at the city level.

7 Other than that, the -- basically, the
8 tools that a city has at its disposal is education
9 campaigns and incentives. So one of the
10 recommendations was to make sure that building owners
11 are aware of the opportunities that exist already,
12 and what they can do, like how upgrading their system
13 could, you know, improve the comfort of their
14 occupants, as well as stake money after the capital
15 expenses are paid out. There are incentives
16 available, again, at the state level, with the Clean
17 Energy Program, that are available and that are
18 underutilized. And so what I'd like to see is the
19 city getting information out more consistently to
20 property owners, and maybe having some sort of
21 program where we help them through the process, so
22 that they can take advantage of those.

23 But, yeah, that will need to definitely
24 have some coordination and some funding, I think,
25 allocated to that, to make sure that existing

1 land use actions, implementation. It's under next
2 steps, T&LU item 4, rezone for a mix of uses so as to
3 encourage walkable neighborhoods throughout the city.

4 MS. LAWRENCE: I think that's a typo.

5 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay.

6 MS. LAWRENCE: I mean, because we
7 wouldn't say -- I think that must be a typo, because
8 it says "Create limited zoning for quality
9 supermarkets/restaurants to reduce driving for
10 grocery shopping and reduce food waste."

11 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Yeah.

12 MS. LAWRENCE: I think it should say
13 create zoning to promote the quality supermarkets and
14 restaurants. I don't know, there's something
15 definitely missing, either a comma, or a space, or a
16 word got mixed up. The general intent is there, but
17 it definitely doesn't make a sense as a sentence. I
18 apologize for that. I went over this so carefully,
19 and so you found --

20 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: So did I.

21 MS. LAWRENCE: -- the one typo.

22 But, yeah, the intent is to make sure
23 that the zoning promotes supermarkets within walking
24 distance, and -- you know, so that people don't need
25 to drive.

1 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay.

2 MS. LAWRENCE: And so they have access

3 to healthy food.

4 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. No, it makes

5 sense.

6 And maybe we can get metal straws for

7 our attorney, I know he's jealous of my metal straw.

8 MS. LAWRENCE: I feel like that's maybe

9 a Christmas present sort of thing.

10 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: All right. That's

11 it for me. No other questions. Anybody else? We

12 all good?

13 MS. LAWRENCE: I would also like to say

14 that this has, you know, been shared with the

15 planning division, and they've been involved in the

16 process, so they are aware of the projects, and the

17 actions, and as -- you know, when it makes sense,

18 they're incorporating these actions as part of the

19 master plan.

20 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Got you.

21 MS. LAWRENCE: And the idea behind these

22 plans, as you know, planning commissioners, is to

23 pull everything -- a lot of these are recommendations

24 from other plans, as well as best practices from

25 around the country, to pull everything together, so

1 anything. Sorry, I'll give you back my five minutes,

2 I'll take it later on, then.

3 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. We'll see you

4 in a bit. Thank you.

5 Anybody else from public, if you'd like

6 to comment on this application, please raise your

7 hand. And, again, if you're calling in, you can

8 press star 9 to raise your hand.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ: Mr. Chair, I

10 don't see public. I'll move to close the public.

11 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Second.

12 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. We have a

13 motion and a second to close public.

14 (Whereupon, a voice vote is taken; a

15 chorus of "ayes" heard.)

16 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: We are closed.

17 MR. BLACK: Okay. Before we -- before

18 the motion, I've been informed by Matt that this is

19 actually a vote to approve, not a vote to recommend

20 to council.

21 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Yes, that was my

22 next question, that this has already gone to city

23 council, so we're actually approving this tonight.

24 So with that, I'll entertain a motion.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ: Mr. Chair, I'd

1 that we can easily reference and look back to a

2 document as we go forward.

3 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. Thanks, Kate.

4 Appreciate it.

5 So, at this time, let's open it up for

6 public comment. If anybody from the public wants to

7 comment, please raise your hand; if you are calling

8 in, you can press star 9 to raise your hand. Anybody

9 from the public?

10 VICE CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ: Mr. Chair,

11 seeing no -- oh, I see somebody.

12 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: I saw one.

13 J U A N S A L A M A N C A, having been

14 duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 MR. SALAMANCA: Juan Salamanca

16 S-A-L-A-M-A-N-C-A.

17 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Mr. Salamanca, good

18 evening. We have five minutes for you.

19 MR. SALAMANCA: No, real fast. I don't

20 know if you -- unfortunately, I came out really late,

21 I just got home from work. I'm talking about the

22 property at 273-279 Columbia Avenue.

23 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: That'll be up --

24 that'll be up in a little bit.

25 MR. SALAMANCA: Okay. So I didn't miss

1 like to make a motion to accept and approve the

2 discussion of adoption of Jersey City Climate and

3 Energy Action Plan as an element of the Jersey City

4 Master Plan, as presented to the board here tonight.

5 COMMISSIONER THAKUR: Second.

6 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Okay. We have a

8 motion and a second for approval.

9 MR. BLACK: All right. Dr. Gonzalez?

10 VICE CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ: I think this is

11 great. I vote aye. Good job, Katherine.

12 MR. BLACK: Commissioner Gangadin?

13 COMMISSIONER GANGADIN: Katherine, very

14 good job. Well put together. Great start. Aye.

15 MR. BLACK: Commissioner Allen?

16 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: So anything to make

17 the environment and the climate better, I'm for it.

18 Thank you, Kate. I'm an aye.

19 MR. BLACK: Dr. Desai?

20 COMMISSIONER DESAI: Yeah, this is a

21 great job. Everybody likes it. I will say aye.

22 MR. BLACK: Commissioner Thakur?

23 COMMISSIONER THAKUR: Yes, great work,

24 Kate. I vote aye.

25 MR. BLACK: Commissioner Torres?

1 COMMISSIONER TORRES: Katherine, you did
 2 a great job. I also want to thank -- I was very
 3 impressed with the 200 people that have been involved
 4 from our community, and the leaders that have been
 5 taking it on for the last couple years, and their
 6 dedication on this project. That kind of floored me,
 7 when I started seeing all the names of people that
 8 were involved in this, and different groups, and it
 9 proves that this is very, very good for the city, and
 10 for this whole world moving forward. This is where
 11 we need to go.

12 So with that, I vote a great big aye,
 13 and thank you for your work. Thank you.

14 MR. BLACK: All right. And Chairman
 15 Langston?

16 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: Yeah, I agree with
 17 everybody else. Kate, great job on this. So happy
 18 you're the -- you're running with this. And
 19 everybody else involved, it is a long list of people.

20 It's certainly ambitious, and I think
 21 it's -- it's attainable. It's -- you know, it's
 22 definitely ambitious, but, yeah, it's attainable, and
 23 I think this is definitely the way we should be
 24 moving forward as a city, and I happily vote aye on
 25 this.

1 MR. BLACK: Motion carries, all in
 2 favor, to approve.

3 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: All right. Thank
 4 you, everybody.

5 Thanks, Kate. Thanks for stopping by.

6 MS. LAWRENCE: Thank you all. Have a
 7 wonderful evening.

8 CHAIRMAN LANGSTON: You too.
 9 (Whereupon, the hearing concluded at
 10 6:40 p.m.)

CERTIFICATE

1
 2
 3
 4
 5 I, Michael Lombardozi, a Notary Public
 6 and Certified Court Reporter of the State of New
 7 Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a
 8 true and accurate transcript of the testimony as
 9 taken stenographically by and before me at the time,
 10 place, and on the date hereinbefore set forth.

11 I do further certify that I am neither a
 12 relative nor employee nor attorney nor counsel of any
 13 of the parties to this action, and that I am neither
 14 a relative nor employee of such attorney or counsel
 15 and that I am not financially interested in this
 16 action.

17
 18
 19 Michael Lombardozi,
 20 Certified Court Reporter, State of New Jersey
 CERT #: 30X100239700
 Date: 30 Jul 2021

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