

Dear Friends,

The Sustainability & Creation Care newsletter is moving to a 2-month publishing cycle, so this is the September/October issue. The next few issues will focus on local Climate Justice action in underserved greater Boston communities. This issue's focus is on Chelsea and East Boston.

If you know of others who should receive this newsletter, please forward it to them, and let me know who to add to the email list. More up-to-date info can be found on the Sustainable Winchester Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SustainableWinchester. Please like that page and share with others who should know.

In Faith,

Josh

EPIPHANY SUSTAINABILITY AND CREATION CARE GROUP MEETINGS



The Epiphany Sustainability and Creation Care Group Meetings are held the last Monday of each month.

Beginning in October the meetings will be in-person.

The next meeting is **Monday, October 25 at 7:30 pm.**
(Note the new time for in-person meetings)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ecological Conversion: Falling in Love with Earth

Saturday, Oct. 2 from 9:30 a.m.–Noon (on Zoom)
Led by the Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas

As we approach the end of Creation Season and prepare for the feast day of St. Francis on Oct. 4, what is our next step in eco-conversion? How does God want to meet us through the natural world? This half-day online retreat will include silence and guided meditation, presentations and small group conversation, and free time for solitary prayer. Sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts [Register here](#).

Climate Justice Multifaith Service of Prayer, Celebration, and Resolve

Sunday October 3 at 3:00pm



On October 3, Mass Interfaith Power and Light will convene a multi-faith service of prayer, readings, and uplifting music, with an inspiring sermon from [Rev. Traci Blackmon](#), Associate General Minister of Justice Ministries for The United Church of Christ. Worship leaders from many traditions will join us, including Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Yenkuei Chuang, Rabbi Shoshana Meira Friedman, and Swami Tyagananda.

Where: Old South Church Boston, 645 Boylston St, Boston

If you'd like to attend, contact Pam Chester (pgchester@gmail.com).

Faiths 4 Climate Justice Prayer Vigil

Sunday, October 17 Noon



On October 17, the group [GreenFaith.org](https://www.greenfaith.org) will hold a Global Multi-Religious Action called *Faiths 4 Climate Justice* in preparation for the Glasgow Global Climate Change Conference.

Where: Church of the Covenant, 67 Newbury St. Boston

If you'd like to attend, Contact: Josh Reynolds (joshua.reynolds85@gmail.com)

UN Global Climate Change Conference, Glasgow

Oct 31-Nov 12,



The 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (known as COP26) is the 26th UN Climate Change conference and will be held in the city of Glasgow, Scotland. This is the third meeting of the parties to the Paris Agreement. As outlined in the Paris Agreement, nations are required to meet every five years and are expected to commit to enhanced goals. Local and regional organizations will hold a number of events in coordination with the UN Climate Conference.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER SPOTLIGHT – CLIMATE JUSTICE IN CHELSEA

What climate justice means for communities like Chelsea?



Photo by Bill Damon / Creative Commons by Flickr

Massachusetts designates some communities, including Chelsea, as environmental justice populations. Black, Latinx, and low-income communities have historically experienced the worst effects of environmental degradation and pollution: factories were built where property prices were low, toxic waste dumps were zoned where locals lacked the resources to fight back, and entire city blocks were demolished to make room for highways, oil tank farms, and airports.

More than 80,000 vehicles pass over the Tobin Bridge every day, bringing them through the heart of Chelsea. Trucks and trains roll through the city at all hours of the day and night on their way to the largest produce distribution center on the East Coast. Ships bring oil and gas to storage facilities along the Chelsea Creek, while airplane traffic overhead from nearby Logan International Airport roars with every arrival and departure.

These communities have also historically had the fewest parks, trails, pools, green spaces, and other positive environmental features that are commonplace in wealthy towns. Yet climate justice organizations like GreenRoots have had tremendous success in fighting for the city's environment, health, and quality of life. They have restored green space to the city, halted the transport of dangerous fuels, stopped the construction of dirty fossil fuel power plants, created urban gardens and empowered youth and community members to create a more livable city. (Read more in the Appalachian Mountain Club article: <https://bit.ly/AMC-EJ-Chelsea>)

This Newsletter Spotlight focuses on some of the ways in which GreenRoots and other organizations have fought for Climate Justice for Chelsea.

Climate Justice victories: Stopping transport of explosive trains, preventing a dirty power plant



For over 20 years, Chelsea residents have successfully organized to prevent environmental atrocities. In 2007, the Chelsea Green Space committee, the environmental justice arm of the Chelsea Collaborative [successfully let an effort to oppose a diesel-fueled power plant](#) which was planned for the banks of Chelsea Creek. The plant was next to an elementary school in an area already overburdened by air pollution from trucks and airplanes. As Roseann Bongiovanni, *Director of the Chelsea Green Space Committee*, noted:

“The withdrawal of the power plant proposal sends a strong message to polluters who want to make Chelsea their home — that they are not welcome here. Residents in this community are working hard to improve Chelsea’s environment and public health and I congratulate all who participated in opposing the plant. Every little bit of energy was well spent!”

In 2013, they successfully rallied community support [stop a plan for trains to carry flammable and explosive ethanol](#) through heavily populated Chelsea to a bulk storage terminal in Revere.

Green Space (now GreenRoot) is continuing that fight, expanding the movement (with allied supporters like the Episcopal Diocese) to oppose the unneeded electrical power substation in East Boston which increases burdens on an already overburdened environmental justice population.

For more depth on this movement see: www.greenrootschelsea.org/victories,
www.greenrootschelsea.org/2020-accomplishments

With extreme heat increasingly in forecast, Chelsea works to adapt



When extreme heat comes, much of Chelsea becomes an urban heat island. Daytime temperatures can be much as 7 degrees hotter in a heat island than in neighboring areas thanks to buildings and pavement that absorb heat and a lack of greenery to help cool it down. Between 2004 and 2018, heat caused at least 10,500 deaths in the US -- that's more than hurricanes, tornadoes, or floods.

Chelsea is experimenting to significantly reduce extreme heat with some carefully selected low-tech strategies. Buildings with black roofs are being converted to a "cool roof" — painted white to reflect the sun rather than absorbing it and lower the temperature up to 9 degrees.

Vacant lots are being converted to green space with misting stations and fountains for drinking and refilling bottles, and shady spots. And the city is piloting changing building to require a 10-foot setback from the sidewalk and landscaping plans that include lots of trees.

Read the Boston Globe article at: https://bit.ly/Globe-Chelsea_heat-island

Urban gardening- an “oasis in the city”



Low-income, ethnically diverse communities like Chelsea often find less access to healthy, local foods than wealthier communities. To combat this, community gardens and local farms provide opportunities for residents to have access to fruits, vegetables and herbs. They also provide pockets of open space and respite in an urban environment.

The Chelsea Community Garden was inaugurated in 1997 on a vacant corner lot. Today 45 Chelsea families garden in this "Oasis in the City," raising healthy vegetables and children. GreenRoots manages this and three other successful community gardens. They also work with *Gaining Ground Farm* in Concord to provide its fresh produce to the food pantries in Chelsea and East Boston, and they are implementing a plan to maximize urban agricultural opportunities on vacant and underutilized land.

To learn more about Chelsea Community Garden, visit <http://chelseacommunitygarden.weebly.com>

Chelsea Residents fighting for green space and protection from rising seas



Fifteen years ago, Chelsea residents won the fight for public access to the Island End River through walkways and boardwalks to connect what became Island End Park. Today, the fight continues to connect the entirety of Chelsea’s waterfront through parks, open spaces and walkways, while preventing more toxic industrial threats from making their home on the water’s edge.

But climate change threatens these hard-fought outcomes. The Boston Harbor flood risk model predicts that 36% of the Chelsea is within a flood risk area today and that jumps to 42% in 10 years. Rising waters would flood the New England Produce Center (which employs over 1,000 local people); Market Basket (where hundreds of Chelsea residents work); the MGH Chelsea Health Center; and major industries like the large petroleum storage terminals along Chelsea Creek.

And when extreme weather comes, Chelsea families (without stable incomes, extensive savings and home insurance) will be far less likely than wealthier communities to rebound from major damage to their homes and work. The Cities of Chelsea and Everett and organizations like Mystic River Watershed Association and GreenRoots, are working diligently to develop climate adaptation strategies that will cost millions of dollars to implement, but will protect critical infrastructure and prevent our residents from being displaced through climate migration.

Read the WBUR Cognoscenti article: <https://bit.ly/Chelsea-sea-level>

OTHER NEWS

Boston's largest buildings will see substantial emissions cuts



In a major step to address climate change, Boston's City Council approved a landmark ordinance that will require the city's large buildings to significantly cut emissions of greenhouse gases. This ordinance is a few of its kind in the country. It which is expected to be signed by Acting Mayor Kim Janey in the next few days.

The ordinance mandates that some 2,200 buildings that are 35,000 square feet or larger will have to start meeting emissions caps in 2025. Another 1,300 buildings that are 20,000 square feet or larger will have to start meeting emissions caps by 2030. Those buildings' emissions but be cut in half by 2030 and completely by 2050. Although the cuts apply to about 4% of the city's buildings, these buildings are responsible for 60% of Boston's building emissions. And building emissions account for about 66% of all the city's carbon emissions.

Read the Globe article at: <https://bit.ly/boston-building>

OTHER RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONS & GROUPS

Here are some additional organizations committed to climate change. This is only a small sample of the many environmental groups. If you have other groups that should be included on this list, please email joshua.reynolds85@gmail.com

350 Mass (Part of the Better Future Project group) www.betterfutureproject.org

Green Car Reports <https://www.greencarreports.com/>

Green Energy Consumers Alliance <https://www.greenenergyconsumers.org/>

Mass Clean Energy Center <https://www.masscec.com/>

MassSave <https://www.masssave.com/en>

Mothers Out Front.org <https://www.mothersoutfront.org/>

Sustainable Winchester www.facebook.com/SustainableWinchester

WinPower Community Choice Electricity www.winpowerma.org

Wright Locke Farm <https://www.wlfarm.org>