



SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL • 525 WASHINGTON STREET • WELLESLEY, MA 02482-5992

Sustainable Energy Director: Marybeth Martello

SEC@wellesleyma.gov

SEC Assistant: Janet Mosley

jmosley@wellesleyma.gov

Laura Olton, Chair

Fred Bungler, Vice Chair

Cindy Mahr

Ellen Korpi

Richard Lee

Susan Morris

Lise Olney

SEC Monthly Meeting

Remote Zoom Meeting

May 1, 2020

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:32 am by Laura Olton. Present were Sustainable Energy Committee (SEC) members: Laura Olton (SEC Chair), Fred Bungler (SEC Vice Chair), Lise Olney, Ellen Korpi, Richard Lee, Cindy Mahr, and Susan Morris. Also present were Marybeth Martello (Sustainable Energy Director), Janet Mosley (SEC Assistant), Pamela Posey, Ellen Watts, and Mary Gard.

Citizen Speak - None

Minutes

Fred Bungler moved to approve the SEC's April 3 meeting minutes. Ellen Korpi seconded the motion *and the Committee voted unanimously to approve the April 3 meeting minutes.*

Project Updates

Lise Olney provided COVID-19 updates.

Fred Bungler discussed ongoing advocacy for Stretch Code updates. MCAN is asking towns to advocate for a broader code that includes Passive House and net zero energy (NZE) elements. Fred provided a draft letter from the SEC to the Board of Building Regulation and Standards (BBRS).

Marybeth Martello and Lise Olney noted that the Town Hall Annex project is on hold. The Town Hall interior renovation will need to consider space configurations related to the current health emergency.

Laura Olton inquired about the Municipal Light Plant's (MLP's) summer demand response program. Ellen Korpi indicated that a new Assistant Director will join the MLP in a month and a short-term summer demand response is on his list of action items. The MLP is investigating automated demand response approaches for the future.

Members also discussed that the MLP's solar incentive program is ongoing and the final date will be extended. Solar installations are considered "essential" during the pandemic. The MLP is still processing applications and the Building Department is processing permits.

Climate Action and Resiliency Plan

Marybeth Martello explained that the State announced a new Municipal Vulnerability and Preparedness (MVP) grant round; the date for submitting an MVP action grant application is June 11. Marybeth, Janet Mosley, and Brandon Schmitt, NRC Director, met with a consultant with extensive MVP experience. This grant round is expected to be highly competitive. Marybeth indicated that the SEC will need to decide whether the Town will provide the required 25% grant match via cash, staff/volunteer time or a mix of both. Brandon and the consultant noted the benefits of matching with cash. The funding issue and more details of the proposed plan will be addressed at the next SEC meeting on May 15.

Opportunities to Support Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) Installations

Ellen Korpi described ASHP installations as a key component of a carbon reduction plan and noted that an ASHP installation program should also recommend tightening of building envelopes. On behalf of the MLP, Janet Mosley attended an ASHP meeting coordinated by Energy New England. Abode, a startup, provided an impressive presentation. Abode administers ASHP programs, provides education and advocacy, and has heat pump specialists on staff.

There was a discussion about where/how incentives should be applied given the total system cost of ASHP installations. Lise Olney mentioned that the Town of Reading, MA is creating a rebate for homeowners who need to upgrade their electrical service for building electrification.

Fred will work with Marybeth and the Planning Department to amend yard setback bylaws and make residential energy efficiency upgrades easier and less costly.

Ellen Watts, a resident and sustainable architect, highlighted the benefits of combining heating and cooling into a single system. Ellen noted that despite concerns, heat pumps are efficient in cold weather.

Rocky Mountain Institute Building Electrification Accelerator Program

Lise Olney discussed background information for potential participation by the SEC in the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) Building Electrification Accelerator Program. RMI is offering an 8-month training program to help towns implement a municipal electrification bylaw, similar to Brookline's. The SEC discussed the level of commitment required and the expectations of RMI if Wellesley participates.

There was discussion about potentially integrating a gas ban/clean heating bylaw as a part of the proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP). The RMI training could prove helpful with community engagement, a key feature of the grant application. Members noted that a bylaw like Brookline's would be just a part of the broader concept of "building electrification" in a CAP.

Ellen Korpi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 am, seconded by Fred Bunger, *and the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.*

Exhibits Used - Minutes for April SEC meeting, Project Updates, Advancing Building Electrification in Wellesley document submitted by Lise Olney (regarding Rocky Mountain Institute program)