



CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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Susan Morris, Chair
Fred Bungler, Vice Chair
Martha Collins
Mary Gard
Ellen Korpi
Catherine Mirick
Lise Olney

Climate Action Committee Meeting

September 8, 2023

Remote Zoom Meeting

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m. by Sue Morris. Present were Climate Action Committee (CAC) members: Sue Morris (CAC Chair), Fred Bungler (CAC Vice Chair), Martha Collins, Mary Gard, Ellen Korpi, Catherine Mirick, and Lise Olney. Also present were Marybeth Martello (Sustainability Director), Janet Mosley (Sustainability Analyst), Lisa Wolf (MLP Sustainability Coordinator), Gail Sullivan, and Hanna Bonin (Advisory Liaisons).

Citizen's Speak:

Leslie Hanrahan of 5 Putney Rd. spoke about the importance of protecting Wellesley's wetlands and tree canopy. In particular, Leslie asked the CAC to use its influence to help ensure any zoning amendment changes for the property owned by the Sisters of Charity specify that future uses should continue to provide a buffer for Centennial Park.

Minutes

Martha Collins requested to add language to the July 7 meeting minutes summarizing the CAC's conversation about engagement with Wellesley Public Schools to reflect the Committee's desire to advocate for periodic and on-going training on energy savings operations in schools. Janet proposed to change "...list of best practices the CAC would like to champion and ask Catherine Mirick to promote these..." to "...list of best practices the CAC would like to champion, including periodic and ongoing trainings, and ask Catherine Mirick to promote these..." Ellen Korpi moved to approve the July 7, 2023 meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Fred Bungler, *and the Committee voted to approve the July 7, 2023 meeting minutes as amended.*

Fall Schedule

The CAC discussed potential changes to the proposed CAC meeting dates for October 2023 through June 2024.

Marybeth presented the list of major projects she plans to have the Climate Action Office focus on for fall 2023 in preparation for outreach activities in 2024.

FY23 CAC Annual Report

Marybeth requested feedback on the draft fiscal year (FY) 2023 CAC Annual Report. Committee members suggested the following edits:

- Add a short paragraph describing the transitions in membership that have occurred during the fiscal year.
- Edit the introduction to better reflect the CAC's advisory, advocacy, and reporting roles.
- Edits to the greenhouse gas inventory summary to note that despite improvements, urgent action is still needed, and emissions from sources, such as natural gas leaks, have not decreased.

Fred moved that the CAC approves the FY2023 CAC Annual Report with edits made by Marybeth and Sue based on comments made by committee. Lise seconded the motion, *and the committee voted unanimously to approve the FY2023 CAC Annual Report with edits.*

Municipal Sustainable Building Guidelines update

Marybeth shared an update on recent Building Working Group (BWG) discussions about updating the Municipal Sustainable Building Guidelines (MSBG). Potential updates include recommendations that account for embodied carbon in construction, increasing the number of EV-ready parking spots beyond Stretch Code requirements, recognition of adoption of the Specialized Code, and planning for electrification of fossil fuel using equipment in existing buildings. Scott Waddell, an architect and Wellesley resident, provided valuable expertise on how Wellesley might incorporate embodied carbon considerations in the MSBG.

Marybeth will incorporate the proposed changes into the MSBG, send the draft revisions to the Facilities Management Department (FMD) for feedback, and share FMD input with the CAC.

CAC Input on Design Review Handbook

The Planning Department invited CAC comments on the Design Review Board's revised Design Guidelines Handbook. Comments from the committee so far include:

- Edits to the definition of Green Building
- Refer to the MSBG
- Request a narrative on how the project would achieve net-zero emissions
- Where transportation is discussed, include recommendations for a greater percentage of EV-ready parking spots and design that encourages non-car mobility options
- Tie tree canopy references to the Climate Action Plan and Natural Resources Commission goals
- Include recommendations for lighting and noise best practices and wetland protection
- Prioritize recommendations for net-zero ready/Passive House construction and onsite renewable energy generation with energy storage
- Committee members would like to see more specificity in the Guidelines Handbook recommendations and point to examples of best practices.

Marybeth requested committee members send any additional comments to her by September 22. Marybeth will also make sure the Planning Department has invited the Natural Resources Commission and Wetlands Protection Committee to provide comments.

Sue noted that she had an email exchange with Planning Board Chair Tim Taylor recently and identified two liaisons from the Planning Board – Kathleen Woodward and Patricia Mallett.

Integrating Sustainability in Site Plan Review

The Building Working Group has discussed interest in adding sustainability related questions to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) application for Site Plan Review. The first step is to finish drafting proposed additional questions. The next step is to determine if the proposed edits to the application would require a Zoning Bylaw change. Meghan Jop indicated a bylaw change may not be necessary.

Potential questions to add to the application:

- What type of heating system will be used in the building?
- What is the building's expected energy consumption by fuel type?
- Embodied carbon?
- Transportation for building occupants?
- How many parking spots will be EV-ready?
- What measures will the developers take to encourage and enhance alternatives to car use?

Marybeth will work with BWG and Meghan Jop to develop the proposed questions and will send an update to the CAC on progress before bringing the proposal to ZBA staff.

Engagement with Wellesley Public Schools

Sue shared a summary of her meeting with Catherine Mirick about CAC engagement with Wellesley Public Schools (WPS). Topics included:

- A comprehensive approach to waste management at WPS
- Food waste collection in cafeterias. The WPS business office is soliciting bids from food waste collection companies.
- Ongoing discussion on occupant and custodian trainings for new and existing buildings

Marybeth noted that she would like an update from Joe McDonough on the status of the steps FMD plans to carry out for occupant and custodian trainings for the new Hunnewell and Hardy schools.

Catherine would like input on what training should be for students. What are effective ways to engage children in making sure the building runs well? She also requested help from the CAC to persuade parents to bike, bus, and walk their children to the new schools. Martha volunteered to help.

Questions about Project Updates:

- Members discussed the opportunity to apply to a new HEET grant that would fund site evaluation for networked geothermal projects in Wellesley. More information is needed to determine if the Town should apply.
- Gas Transitions Allies (GTA) held a meeting on September 5. GTA is forming a Mass Save working group to work on issues surrounding the 3-year planning process to revise the Mass Save program. GTA members feel that the Mass Save program requires some fundamental changes for long-term success. GTA plans to meet with Senator Creem. The following link allows individuals to show their support for networked geothermal in their neighborhood: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/2b55787e45bf4dec94b54e41c188d0f7>
- The Municipal Light Board (MLB) voted to reinstate solar subsidies for Wellesley homeowners. MLB allocated \$0.25 million to start the program. Funding will come from WECARE surcharges. If there's enough demand, the board will likely approve more funding. Since the end of the last

subsidy, installation of solar has dropped significantly. In the next phase of this program, MLB hopes to require battery storage installation in order to receive the solar subsidy.

Additional Business

- Mary has attended several recent MA Energy Efficiency Advisory Council (EEAC) meetings regarding revision of the Mass Save 3-Year Plan. Mary would like CAC approval to speak on behalf of the committee at upcoming EEAC workshops, especially about the need for Mass Save to address pre-weatherization barriers.

Adjourn

Fred moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m., seconded by Martha, *and the Committee voted to adjourn.*

Exhibits used: July 2023 meeting minutes, September 8 Project Updates, FY23 CAC Annual Report, Presentation from Marybeth on fall 2023 Climate Action Office projects