



## 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

October 6, 2023

Remote Zoom Meeting

#### Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Sue Morris. Present were Climate Action Committee (CAC) members: Sue Morris (CAC Chair), Martha Collins, Mary Gard, Ellen Korpi, and Lise Olney. Also present were Marybeth Martello (Sustainability Director), Janet Mosley (Sustainability Analyst), Lisa Wolf (MLP Sustainability Coordinator), Hanna Bonin (Advisory Liaison), and Phyllis Theermann. Absent: Fred Bungler and Catherine Mirick.

**Citizen's Speak:** None

#### **Minutes**

Ellen Korpi moved to approve the September 8, 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Martha Collins, *and the committee voted to approve the September 8, 2023 meeting minutes.*

#### **Design Review Board Design Guidelines Handbook Comments**

The committee discussed CAC member comments on the Design Review Board (DRB) Design Guidelines Handbook and associated memo to DRB. Comments focused on better defining sustainable building design and highlighting areas for improvement, such as:

- Accessibility to alternative transportation modes such as walking, biking, and public transit
- Electric vehicle charging
- Greater density in our commercial centers and around commuter rail stations
- Sustainable lighting design
- Open space protection including trees and wetlands
- Encouragement of small-scale retailers
- Support for outdoor activity and placemaking opportunities

The committee agreed that further revision of the memo and comments was warranted. Marybeth asked committee members to send her any further comments on the Design Guidelines Handbook by October 10. Lise Olney moved to authorize Sue and Marybeth to incorporate additional comments and finalize the memo to send to DRB. Ellen seconded the motion, *and the committee voted unanimously to*

*have Marybeth and Sue finalize the comments and memo to send to DRB regarding the Design Guidelines Handbook.*

Lise also shared that the Select Board planned to reconsider a mobility manager position under the Select Board and would like the support of the CAC. Martha moved to reaffirm CAC support for a mobility manager position reporting to Select Board. Ellen seconded the motion, *and the committee voted unanimously to support a mobility manager position under the Select Board.*

### **Zero Emissions First Fleet Policy**

Marybeth presented on the key components of the draft Zero Emissions First Fleet Policy and answered questions from the committee on the process for finalizing and sharing this policy publicly. Marybeth will send the draft policy to Town department heads and request they put it on the agendas of their boards and committees to get feedback.

Martha asked about the status of an EV charging infrastructure policy and when one could be shared with the public. Marybeth will work with Lisa Wolf, Municipal Light Plant Sustainability Manager, to determine how to turn the EV Working Group's work on prioritizing locations for EV chargers into a policy that can be shared publicly.

### **EV School Bus sign on letter from Cynthia Creem**

Sue and Lise asked CAC members if they would like the committee to sign a letter from the Sierra Club asking Maura Healy to commit to all-electric school buses and set aside funding to support them.

After discussion, the committee agreed they would like to support the Sierra Club letter and write an additional letter from Wellesley asking for support in funding electric bus purchases by third-party bus companies.

Lise moved to support letter from the Sierra Club to Maura Healey regarding school bus electrification. Ellen seconded the motion, *and the committee voted unanimously to support the Sierra Club letter asking Maura Healey for state funding for electric buses.* Sue will also explain to Sierra Club that third party busing companies need financial support to purchase electric buses.

### **Municipal Reforestation Bill**

Lise presented a summary of An Act Establishing the Municipal Reforestation Program S452/H869 and asked to testify in support of this bill on behalf of the CAC. The bill would:

- Require some towns to create a reforestation plan
- Create an Urban Forestry Council
- Promote workforce development
- Provide funding through public appropriations and grants, including private grants
- Prioritize reforestation of EJ communities and heat island communities.

Members expressed support for the principles of this bill, but requested Lise check with the Natural Resources Commission Chair to ensure NRC has no objections to her testimony.

Martha moved to approve Lise testifying on behalf of the CAC supporting the Municipal Reforestation Bill after conferring with the Natural Resources Commission Chair. Ellen seconded the motion, *and the committee voted unanimously to approve Lise testifying in support of the Municipal Reforestation Bill.*

### **CAC FY25 Budget Request**

Marybeth shared the CAC's fiscal year (FY) 2024 budget and asked the committee to reflect on any changes they would like to see in the FY 2025 budget. The committee discussed possible sources for funds to complement a potential HEET grant for a networked geothermal feasibility study including the current \$50,000 in the capital budget or whether the CAC should request capital funds in the FY 2025 for this purpose.

### **Plans for Nov 1 CAC presentation to Advisory**

Marybeth shared an outline of the presentation she plans to give to the Advisory Committee on November 1. The presentation would highlight projects underway and financial aspects of Climate Action, such as cost savings to the Town. Martha would like to see an EV charging infrastructure policy natural gas leaks emissions added to the outline. Marybeth will reach out to Hanna Bonin, the CAC-Advisory liaison, to get her input on what Advisory would like to have included in the presentation.

### **Questions about Project Updates:**

- The focus in the last Multi-town Gas Leaks Initiative meeting was on the effectiveness of gas leak repair methods and on organizing a Gas Leak Safari (something Wellesley Gas Leaks Working Group has considered). Lise will send out a link to the meeting recording.
- The Gas Transition Allies meeting on October 5 focused on Mass Save reform, especially developing a list of Mass Save program elements that must be transformed so Mass Save becomes a zero emissions program that supports the state's GHG emissions reductions goals.
- Mary and Fred also wrote a letter on behalf of the CAC to the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council (the oversight committee for Mass Save) listing suggested improvements.
- Lise mentioned she was surprised to learn that there is not enough room on the new Hunnewell and Hardy school roofs to make them fully net zero and asked about the possibility of solar canopies over the parking lots. Ellen explained that it was known early in the design process that there would not be enough solar on the roof to make the schools net zero and that solar canopies are currently significantly more expensive than rooftop solar.

**Additional Business:** None

### **Adjourn**

Ellen moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m., seconded by Lise, *and the committee voted to adjourn.*

**Exhibits used:** September 2023 Meeting Minutes, October 6 Project Updates, Presentation on Zero Emissions First Vehicle Policy, Letter from Sierra Club to Maura Healey asking for state funding for electric buses, Outline of topics for the November 1 presentation to Advisory, Presentation on Municipal Reforestation Bill, Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Spreadsheet