

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

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SEC Project Updates

April 6, 2018

Green Communities

The Department of Energy Resources (DOER) asked Wellesley to host a Green Communities Designation Ceremony for Wellesley, Waltham and Stoneham on Thursday, April 5 from 11:00-11:45 am in the Great Hall of Town Hall. Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary, Matthew A. Beaton, DOER Commissioner, Judith Judson, and town officials from Waltham and Stoneham will join the Wellesley attendees. Marybeth (with Laura's help!) has been making plans for the ceremony, drafted welcoming remarks and is working with Green Schools to make it a "green" event.

We are awaiting DOER feedback on our initial Green Communities grant proposal.

SEC Report to Town Meeting

Marybeth completed greenhouse gas emissions calculations and Katy and Marybeth prepared the Sustainable Energy Committee's (SEC's) Report to Annual Town Meeting (ATM). As discussed at the SEC meeting on March 2, we labeled the emissions table in the report as "preliminary" as the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) electricity emissions factor is questionable and we are awaiting a clarification from the EPA regarding this factor. According to the preliminary table, total emissions increased by 1% between FY16 and FY17. But, that increase may change with a revised emissions factor. In the meantime, Marybeth is looking into why commercial and college natural gas use decreased, while residential and municipal natural gas use increased between 2016 and 2017.

SEC Staffing Changes

ATM approved the SEC's FY19 budget. Marybeth's hours will increase to 25 hours/week starting on July 1 and the SEC will hire a 10 hour/week SEC Assistant to start on or after July 1. Laura and Marybeth met with Cheryl Daebritz in Human Resources to discuss the process for hiring the Assistant. Cheryl will post the job on May 1 with an application due date of May 17.

Transportation Working Group

On April 3, Ellen spoke with Eric Bourassa, Director of the Transportation Division at the Metropolitan Planning Council (MAPC). Ellen asked Eric if he could brief Wellesley on the transportation issues, listed below.

- Collaborative models - We have the #8 MWRTA bus and the colleges in Wellesley (Babson, Mass Bay and Wellesley) plus Olin, right on our border. Each have their own transportation models. All seem to be challenged with low capacity utilization. We work closely with the colleges on other collaborations and believe some joint brainstorming on this might yield a mutually beneficial solution. Besides the goal of accessing public transportation to Boston, we are now aware of the challenges of bringing low wage workers out to Wellesley (e.g. the Babson food vendor must provide a van to and from the Woodland station at shift changes).
- School transportation - While our yellow buses often operate at low capacity, the vehicle pick-up and drop-off lines at our schools are enormous. Some steps have already been taken such as adding a late bus at the High School. We wonder what else could be done to increase participation in the school's transportation program, increase the "bang for the buck" we are getting from our present program and address the state-wide dynamic of only one bidder for the bus contract.
- New technology - We have learned about XL Hybrids and are working toward funding a pilot project through our newly-awarded Green Communities status. We would like to know more about other available technologies that might be beneficial to the Town.
- Town Fuel Efficient Vehicle Purchase Policy - This was established as part of our Green Communities application last fall and is now underway.
- Encouraging More Efficient Private Vehicles - While we doubt if we can get a mass migration from Sport Utility Vehicles to tiny electric vehicles, we wonder if there is a consumer education model (would need to be regional to get the necessary resources) that would encourage more focus on Miles Per Gallon when purchasing a vehicle.
- Emissions Measurement of Transportation Initiatives - We use the ICLEI model to annually estimate our Town emissions. Our estimate of transportation emissions does not reflect local metrics. We are hopeful that we can find a way to use the data from the Registry and/or Excise Taxes to more precisely estimate emissions in Wellesley.

It seems that our request is very timely as MAPC is on the Governor's Implementation Advisory Committee for the Global Warming Solutions Act and they are focusing on ways local communities can contribute to the efforts. Eric is excited to potentially test some of their ideas on pilot projects, possibly in Wellesley. Marybeth has already initiated a conversation about one such project, collaborating on a program to test and evaluate various idling reduction technologies. MAPC provides technical assistance and sometimes that includes grant money.

It is clear from this conversation that we have much to learn from Eric. As an example, Eric can tell us about a Safe Routes to School program that provides technical assistance and funding for programs that promote alternatives to single vehicle drop offs at schools.

Food Recovery

On March 29 Laura, Marybeth and Alison attended a lovely, ribbon-cutting ceremony at MassBay Community College (see pictures, below) to officially kick off their food distribution program with Food For Free, a partnership made possible through Wellesley's 3R Working Group. The President of MassBay student government opened the well-attended gathering by thanking Ellen Korpi for coming up with the idea for this partnership and for bringing people together to make it happen. As much as 50% of MassBay's student body is food insecure. Food For Free collects cooked, unused food from a number of institutions in the Boston area and shares it with food-insecure individuals. Thanks to the 3R Working Group, a local network of Wellesley Public Schools and area colleges donates unused, cooked food to Food for Free. The MassBay connection allows food donated from Wellesley to help MassBay students who go to school in Wellesley.



Figure 1 Fiona of Food for Free with the MassBay Student Government President and College President



Figure 2 Prize Table - Students in an Event Planning Class Organized the Celebration



Figures 3 and 4 Food For Free Info and Meals for the MassBay Community

Alison and Marybeth are continuing to work with Matt Delaney, elementary school principals and parent volunteers to rollout pre and post-consumer food donation at Bates, Fiske and Sprague. Alison and Marybeth met last month with parent volunteers and will meet again on April 6 to finalize details.

Ellen, Alison and Marybeth prepared a presentation and other logistics for a March 13 visit by the CEO of Whitsons Corporation. Unfortunately, a snow day caused the cancellation of that visit. Ellen and Michael are working on a new date.

Marybeth submitted annual Food Recovery Challenge (FRC) and WasteWise reports for Bates School (an FRC and WasteWise participant) and for the Town of Wellesley (an FRC Endorser) to the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Marybeth measured cafeteria waste at Bates School and extrapolated to estimate 2017 values and 2018 goals for recycling, food waste diversion and food donation. The Town of Wellesley FRC report includes a summary of 2017 WasteWise Wellesley initiatives and a list of 2018 goals.

Marybeth is in contact with Jeff Azano-Brown about a possible organic waste pick-up pilot at the Middle School. Jeff is reaching out to the Health Department.

Marybeth shared advice and Standard Operating Procedures with a Marblehead resident interested in launching share tables in Marblehead Schools. The EPA referred this resident to Wellesley.

Hardy, Hunnewell, Upham (HHU)

Marybeth attended a School Building Committee (SBC) meeting on March 29. The SBC discussed four swing space options as described in the excerpt, below, from a March 19 memo from Joe McDonough to Sharon Gray.

Scenario 1 - Existing Hunnewell School Used as Swing Space: Assumes a new school can creatively be designed to be built on the site, while the existing school is used during construction. Part of the Cameron Street parking lot may be needed on a permanent and/or temporary basis for this option, and part of the Library lot could be needed on a temporary basis. *This approach would not allow building in the footprint of the existing school, with the possible exception of the "1995 Wing".*

- New School Would Open in **2022**
- Cost escalation = \$0 (2022 is earliest date)

Scenario 2 – Leased Swing Space: This option assumes that the Town would lease (under MGL 30B) and “fit-up” or otherwise modify (under MGL 149) an existing commercial building(s) to provide off-site swing space during construction. *This approach would allow demolition of the existing school and reconstruction in its footprint if desired.*

- New School Would Open in **2024**
- Cost escalation = \$5.6M (2 years)

Scenario 3 – Wait Until MSBA Project Complete: Once the new MSBA school is completed, either the “old” Upham, or “old” Hardy school would be used as swing space for Hunnewell students. *This approach would allow demolition of the existing school and reconstruction in its footprint if desired.*

- New School Would Open in **2026**
- Cost escalation = \$11.9M (4 years)

Scenario 4 – Redistrict and MODS Use: This option assumes that some combination of temporary modular classrooms (MODS) located at up to four other elementary schools and limited/strategic redistricting could be used to distribute the Hunnewell enrollment to other schools during construction in a thoughtful manner that minimizes impacts to staff, students and their families. *This approach would allow demolition of the existing school and reconstruction in its footprint if desired.*

- New School Would Open in **2023**
- Cost escalation = \$2.8M (1 year)

The SBC voted to approve \$2.5M for the Hardy/Upham Feasibility Study and \$1M Hunnewell Feasibility Study.

Home Energy Improvements for Seniors

A Home Energy Saving Seminar at the Tolles-Parsons Center will take place on April 5th. The March 8th seminar was cancelled due to snow. The seminar aims to increase participation in the home energy assessments offered by the Wellesley Municipal Light Plan (WMLP) and National Grid. Seminar participants are encouraged to bring their home energy bills so they can compare their costs against a range of costs for very efficient to very inefficient homes. To make it easy to sign up for the home energy assessments, volunteers who have previously experienced audits and home energy improvements will be available as mentors to help seniors with the process.

The home energy saving seminar can be modified and adapted for use by other town organizations such as churches, civic clubs, etc. The WMLP prefers to move slowly on a broader outreach because the current lead time on home assessments is 10 weeks.

SEC Website

Marybeth is building the SEC website! The website now houses project updates, annual reports, Green Communities documents, and a section on SEC Initiatives (still in the works). Marybeth and Laura have big plans for further website development (including more photos and sections for press/news, the Green Collaborative, and a front-page “spotlight”). Marybeth is continuing to chip away at the plan.

Unified Plan

Katy, Laura and Marybeth submitted comments on the Unified Plan. May 1 is the extended due date for comments on the Unified Plan.

Wellesley Municipal Light Plant

- About half of the new, LED streetlights have been installed to date.
- The WMLP has an agreement to purchase 3 MW of electricity from Granite Wind in New Hampshire.
- The Alliance Group report on options for further reductions in electricity emissions is planned for the May WMLP Board meeting.