



## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

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### SEC Project Updates

September 11, 2020

#### Green Communities

Wellesley earned a Green Communities competitive grant award of \$137,920 to fund:

- \$25,128, Exterior LED lighting in municipal parking lots
- \$98,500, Interior LED lighting in the High School auditorium and gymnasium
- \$10,000, Two hybrid police cruisers
- \$4,292, Administrative assistance to support LED lighting projects

On September 3, Marybeth met with Joe McDonough and Allen Hebert to discuss the launch of the High School lighting project. Marybeth and Janet are working with Town departments to gather signed contract documents. They notified FMD, Traffic, MLP and Police to refrain from purchases until Wellesley receives an effective date from DOER.

The SEC learned this week that the Green Communities Annual Report is due on November 6, 2020, one month earlier than last year's due date.

#### Climate Action and Resilience Plan

Wellesley did not receive an MVP action grant award. The State informed us that this grant round was the most competitive to date with 142 applications requesting more than \$46 million. The MVP Program awarded \$10 million to 41 out of 142 proposed projects. Over the past two weeks, Marybeth met with a variety of consulting firms to discuss ways to align a revised CARP with SEC funds.

On August 31 Ellen Korpi, Laura Olton, Marybeth Martello and Janet Mosley met with Municipal Light Plant (MLP) Director Don Newell, Assistant Director Francisco Frias and MLP Board Chair, Jeff Wechsler, to discuss the CARP goals and process. On September 2, Marybeth and Janet had follow up meeting with Don and Francisco to discuss MLP goals and priorities re: the CARP and a plan for collaboration going forward.

The CARP Steering Committee (Marybeth, Janet Mosley, Laura Olton, Fred Bunger and Pam Posey) met with Board of Selectmen member Beth Sullivan Woods to discuss CARP outreach to Wellesley's business community. Beth had a number of valuable suggestions re: contacts, strategies and outreach opportunities.

On September 4, Lise Olney, Fred Bunger, Ellen Watts, Mary Gard, Phyllis Theermann, Catherine Johnson and Don McCauley met to discuss Planning-related "levers" for supporting climate mitigation and resilience.

### **Greenhouse Gas Inventory**

Janet continues to refine the choice of methods and identify tools for updating Wellesley's GHG inventory. Recently, she spoke with Megan Aki at MAPC about their GHG inventory tool and chosen methods. Janet carried out an analysis to see how changing the inventory baseline year would affect the overall results of the GHG inventory.

### **Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)**

FEMA's new Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) is a ***pre-disaster mitigation*** grant program <https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/fy2020-nofo>. The Program opens on September 30, 2020 and closes January 29, 2021. Below are eligible projects.

FEMA will fund the following uses of assistance through BRIC:

- **Capability- and Capacity-Building Activities can be submitted under the State/Territory Allocation and Tribal Set-Aside.** These are activities that enhance the knowledge, skills, and expertise of the current workforce to expand or improve the administration of mitigation assistance.
- **Mitigation Projects** can be submitted under the State/Territory Allocation, Tribal Set-Aside, and the national competition. Mitigation projects are cost-effective projects designed to increase resilience and public safety; reduce injuries and loss of life; and reduce damage and destruction to property, critical services, facilities, and infrastructure.
- **Management Costs** can be submitted under the State/Territory Allocation, Tribal Set-Aside, and national competition. Management costs allow FEMA to provide financial assistance to reimburse the recipient and subrecipient for eligible and reasonable indirect costs, direct administrative costs, and other administrative expenses associated with a specific mitigation project or C&CB activity.

FEMA will provide the following assistance through BRIC:

- **Non-Financial Direct Technical Assistance** to communities to build a community's capacity and capability to improve its resiliency to natural hazards and to ensure stakeholders are capable of building and sustaining successful mitigation programs, submitting high-quality applications, and implementing new and innovative projects that reduce risk from a wide range of natural hazards.

## Wa\$teWi\$e Webinar

The webinar “**Wa\$teWi\$e Wellesley**” will take place on September 30, sponsored by the Green Collaborative (SEC, Natural Resources Commission and Department of Public Works). An expert panel including Chris Beling (EPA), Kirstie Pecci (Conservation Law Foundation) and Jamie Manzolini (Wellesley RDF) will highlight what our town and state are doing and what you can do to waste less, save money, and protect your health while reducing Wellesley’s carbon footprint.

## Buildings

*From Fred Bunger:*

### **Municipal Sustainable Building Guidelines**

Approval of the Municipal Sustainable Building Guidelines is awaiting a Board of Selectmen meeting.

### **Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) Building Electrification Accelerator (BEA)**

At the RMI seminar August 27th, it was decided future seminars would work on developing and passing well-designed local resolutions to catalyze state legislation. In parallel, Towns were encouraged to pursue any of the other pathways and RMI would provide support. The Wellesley BEA team will be working on building sustainability into future zoning. On September 4, the BEA team, SEC Director, and a Sustainable Wellesley representative met with Planning Director and Chair of the Planning Board. The SEC Director and Planning Director will set up the next meeting to determine what actions to take. Also, the BEA team will be considering how to leverage the Green Communities Act to drive building electrification. Meanwhile, a survey of sustainable zoning examples in MA Towns is under development.

## Transportation

*From Richard Lee:*

The Clock Tower Parklet on Rt 16 in Wellesley Hills (across from Comella's/Magus Restaurant) was installed last week. The pilot project was funded by \$60K from Shared Streets and was intended to help restaurants in the vicinity with capacity for outdoor dining/pick up locations. It is also intended to improve connections between Fuller Brook and Cross Town Trail. A [Boston Globe article](#) provided coverage of the pocket park installation. The water filled barriers and other infrastructure in the parklet could be used in other parts of Town after this pilot is complete. Usage data is not yet available, but anecdotes suggest that so far, the parklet is under-utilized. There is some concern that biking in this area is now less safe, but hopefully the barriers can stay post-pilot to help protect bikers.

The Mobility Committee re-convened since being on hiatus from COVID with an RFP to be issued for consultant help on researching, planning, and/or funding sources for sustainable transportation. The short-term focus will be to improve bike and pedestrian options given the impact of COVID on transportation behavior. However, we will maintain a longer-term focus on reducing need for single occupancy vehicles (gas powered) and improving mass transit options for Wellesley residents. Next meeting to discuss the RFP is 9/10/20.

Richard met with a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) representative to brainstorm ideas for school transportation. The first goal is to engage with school principals and school operations to understand arrival and dismissal plans. Especially in light of COVID, we expect fewer bus riders and more car drop offs. SRTS can help with organizing bike and walk trains, mapping out ideal routes for each household, planning bike rodeos to teach about riding safely, and mapping out pickup/drop off zones to limit at-school traffic. SRTS recommends setting up a School Transport Task Force with parents from each school. Richard reached out to a few school principals and Cindy Mahr this week to inquire about school arrival and dismissal plans.

The Swellesley Report noted that [WPD can now fine people \\$15 for idling](#) which could be very helpful in curbing increased GHG emissions from the greater number of students that will be dropped-off and picked-up in cars.

### **SEC Intern**

Colin Braun, Wellesley native and Dartmouth student, has joined the SEC team as an intern! Colin will work on a variety of projects including the Climate Action and Resilience Plan, Wellesley's greenhouse gas inventory, and research to support our initiatives. Welcome Colin!

### **Municipal Light Plant Update**

*From Francisco Frias:*

#### **Voluntary Renewable Energy Program (VREP):**

The VREP working group continues to meet, at least once a month, to discuss projects, initiatives, and strategies. During August, as a result of having three MLP Board members being part of the VREP Working Group ("Group"), after Scott Bender was elected to the MLP Board, Ellen Korpi decided to leave her position with the Group. She is now working with other volunteers and MLP staff, in a separate group analyzing the MLP's Appliance Rebate Incentive program, to come up with recommendations on how the program can be more effective towards emissions reduction.

The existing Group participants include MLP Board members Jack Stewart and Scott Bender, SEC Chair Laura Olson, and from the MLP we have Don Newell, Joanne Scannell, Terry Connolly, and Francisco Frias.

#### **Electric Vehicles (EV) Program:**

The MLP is working with Energy New England (ENE) on the EV Education and Awareness program. They continue to target EV owners that are not signed up for the BYOC program to encourage off-peak charging of the vehicles. During September, Wellesley residents will be asked to complete an online survey, "Your Future Vehicle Choice". From the results of the survey, some residents will be asked to join a roundtable discussion called "Electric Car Insights: Your Local Dealer Roundtable". This roundtable will take place in mid-October. It will include a strong panel of local dealership representatives, as well as EV interested customers to discuss EV purchasing and ownership. The web page "Wellesley Drives Electric" is continually updated with various informational blogs, the most recent being **Back to School (EV Style!)**.

### **Solar Rebate Program:**

Our solar rebate program has been in effect for approximately 15 months. We have 14 completed installations. We have four more that are in progress, and one that is in "Draft" status, totaling 19, which adds up to 148.96 kW DC allocation against the 192 kW DC approved by the WMLP Board. After 15 months we are at 79%.

The deadline for program approval is December 30, 2020. That leaves roughly another four months. We're at "mile marker" 15 out of 19 months. That's ~79% along and we've allocated ~78% of the funds. We are on target to using 100% of the funds if the trend continues as it has been for the first 15 months.

### **Rebate Programs:**

The MLP's Appliance Rebate program, in FY2021 and through August 25, has accounted for a total of \$2,425 paid out in rebates, for a total of 37 rebates.

As mentioned at the last MLP Board meeting, a new working group has been established to assist with redesigning the Incentive Program of the MLP. They held their first meeting on July 8 to discuss the Action Plan for the group. The group continues to work on taking a closer look at the existing rebate program and preparing recommendations for a revised incentive program that aligns with the values of the community and have a greater impact on emission reduction.

The working group participants are: Ellen Korpi, Mary Gard, Judson Jaffe, Fred Bunger, and Joanne Scannell

### **Home Energy Audits:**

Remote Home Energy Audits were started in April, and since then we have had nine (9) completed. We are working with ENE to advertise the program along with the EnergyXpert Self-Service Home Energy Assessment program. This online platform will be available to WMLP customers, during the first week of September. Through the platform, customers will be able to perform an online home energy assessment by answering a handful of simple questions. The platform will provide individualized insights about their homes' energy use to improve their overall performance. Additionally, the tool is integrated with a marketplace giving real-time suggestions and processes rebates that are available to them. This tool optimizes the customer journey and generates industry-leading conversion rates. Some initial information on this program has been sent out via email already, and as an informational flyer will go out with the September's utility bills.

### **Voluntary Demand Response Program:**

The **Shave the Peak** summer voluntary demand response program launched on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, was successful in starting to get residents interested in contributing to the reduction of the system's peak. This program is a step forward, towards the reduction of CO2 in the environment. The program is an entirely voluntary program that aims to reduce the energy usage of the Town during system-wide electricity peaks in the summer. We sent out 4 Shave the Peak notifications since the program started. For Monday, July 27th, the peak event for July and most likely the summer, the New England Independent System Operator (ISO-NE) was expecting to reach a peak of 25.5 Giga Watts, but it only got to 24.907 Giga Watts. That's still a lot of power (24,907,000,000 Watts); however, that was almost a 2.4% reduction for all of New England. In Wellesley, we were expecting the coincident system peak to be over 61 MW, but it only got to about 59.67 MW. We believe participation in this program helped to keep the system and local peaks down. Since the program's launch, 380 residents have joined. The MLP continues to promote the program through social media, by reaching out to different groups, and by word of mouth. Thus far the program has been well received, and the MLP staff continues to work to increase the number of participants and their engagement. Having this program in our arsenal of carbon-

reducing program, and increasing the number of participants, will help us have a greater impact next summer.

**Large Scale Solar and & Battery Storage Projects:**

***Wellesley Sports Center:***

As a result of multiple requests from prospective solar developers, the Wellesley Sports Center's solar RFP opening date was moved from August 14<sup>th</sup> to August 28<sup>th</sup>. The MLP will receive and analyze all the responses for the installation of approximately 1 MW of solar power on the roof of 900 Worcester Street.

***Municipal Way:***

The MLP staff has also been working on an RFP for a battery storage system next to Station 41 and recently decided to include an option for solar at the MLP/DPW site, on Municipal Way. Multiple conversations with the DPW Director and other members of the DPW have been held, and they have shown a lot of interest. The Director of Facilities has been pulled into these conversations to make sure efforts are well-coordinated.

***Other Locations:***

The MLP staff is also holding discussions with MassBay Community College ("College") for the possibility of using their large parking lot on Oakland Street, for the installation of a canopy-based solar system. Their parking lot is large enough to accommodate a large solar installation. The Director of Facilities at the College is very interested, and more discussions are scheduled to take place during the first week of September, which will include representatives of the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and a solar developer under contract with the DOER.