



SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

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SEC Project Updates

January 8, 2021

Green Communities

Work began on the following Green Communities-funded projects. Janet submitted a quarterly report to Department of Energy Resources (DOER) on the status of each project.

- \$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

Janet Mosley met with Dave Cohen and Jeff Azano-Brown from the Department of Public Works (DPW) on December 22 to discuss follow-up actions on projects identified for Green Communities 2021 grant funding. Potential DPW projects include replacement pumps for finished drinking water and electric vehicle purchases.

Green Communities recently posted projected dates for 2021 grants and reports due to DOER

- Feb. 12- Expend all prior grant funds and Final Grant Report due (for Spring Block eligibility)
- Mid-March – Regional Energy Planning Assistance (REPA) PON posted on CommBuys
- April 9 – Competitive Grant Spring Block applications due
- Mid-May – REPA applications due
- Mid-June – Municipal Energy Technical Assistance (META) PON posted on CommBuys
- July 1 – Start accepting Designation applications (rolling decision)
- Mid-August – META applications due
- Sept 3 – Expend all prior grant funds and Final Grant Report due (for Fall Block eligibility)
- Oct. 8 – Competitive Grant Fall Block applications due
- Nov. 5 – FY21 Annual Reports due

Climate Action Plan

- December 7 – Meeting with Kate Hanley of Concord (Marybeth Martello, Janet Mosley, Roopa Chandrasekaran)

- December 8 – Meeting with Hannah Payne of Somerville (Marybeth)
- December 10 – Meeting with Sustainable Wellesley (Marybeth)
- Frequent meetings among Marybeth, Roopa, Martha and Pam to discuss the two-pager, website and CAP process. The group also met with Stephanie Hawkinson and Michael Thompson to discuss the CAP website.
- December 15 – Pamela Posey and Marybeth met with Beth Sullivan Woods to discuss commercial outreach for the CAP
- January 7 – CAP Steering met to discuss two-pager and CAP Development Plan
- January 7 – Marybeth met with Don Newell (Municipal Light Plant) and Francisco Frias (Municipal Light Plant) to discuss two-pager and CAP Development Plan
- Janet met with Don Newell and Francisco to discuss the viability of using an electricity emissions factor specific to Wellesley MLP that is calculated annually by Massachusetts Dept. of Environmental Protection (MA DEP). Janet hopes the factor can be used by both SEC and MLP in their work moving forward for consistency in communicating GHG emissions from Wellesley electricity consumption.

Town Budget

Marybeth finalized the SEC’s FY22 budget and submitted it along with a budget narrative.

Marybeth worked with Finance to understand a shortfall in the SEC’s FY21 budget and requested that Human Resources help to address the shortfall.

Advisory

Marybeth and Laura Olton presented to Advisory Committee on December 9. The next SEC presentation to Advisory has been moved from January 13 to February 3.

Gas Leaks

From Lise Olney:

The Gas Leaks and Trees Group (renamed) of the Gas Leaks Allies has been meeting to develop a proposed bill (draft outline in meeting materials) for the upcoming legislative session which focuses on restoring and protecting the urban tree canopy as a climate mitigation and energy reduction strategy and addressing issues of environmental justice. Protecting trees from gas leaks is included in the draft outline as an important but not a primary measure. The draft outline is modeled in part on two bi-partisan Congressional bills: [H.R. 5615](#) proposed by Rep. Doris Matsui, and [S. 4038](#) proposed by Sen. Cory Booker and Sen. Shelley Capito. The Wellesley Natural Resources Commission plans to discuss the draft outline at their January 7 meeting.

The last Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative meeting took place on December 3, 2020, featuring a presentation from Audrey Schulman of HEET on geothermal micro-districts and plans for pilots and a report from Amy Smith of National Grid on quarterly gas leak data submitted to the Department of Public Utilities (DPU). A summary of the Dec. 3 meeting is provided in meeting materials; link to recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJCEs8O7nSI>. HEET provided a one-page handout “Get a Networked Geothermal System for Your Whole Street,” (see meeting materials) with details on how to help HEET identify a location for a pilot in Eversource gas territory (deadline Feb. 1). We also circulated a

new report from the Conservation Law Foundation, [“Getting Off Gas: Transforming Home Heating in Massachusetts.”](#) The next meeting is on January 28, 11 am to 12:30 pm, with featured topics:

- How HEET is helping municipalities tell the story of gas leaks: HEET is working on an initiative to help cities and towns use gas leak data to create easily accessible maps and graphics on municipal websites. Dom Nicholas of HEET will demo Salem’s exciting new web-based hub, “Understanding Natural Gas Leaks,” which tells the story of gas leaks in Salem and explains the broader issue.
- What’s next for Our Work? We’ll have an update on our work with National Grid and then discuss options for our focus in the months ahead.

EPA Food Recovery Challenge (FRC)

On December 10 Marybeth met with Janet Bowen of the USEPA to report on 2019 food waste diversion, food recovery and recycling at Bates Elementary School. Marybeth is preparing reports to submit to USEPA to maintain Bates School’s Food Recovery Challenge (FRC) status and Wellesley’s FRC endorser status.

3R Working Group project update

From Sue Morris:

The volume of recycled cardboard was much higher last month partly due to the promotion we ran to encourage recycling but mostly due to a large volume of boxes from online holiday shopping. We will continue to promote recycling of cardboard and newspaper due to the continued favorable economics in the recycling markets. We are also working on the Catalog Choice promotion to try to reduce the volume of catalog and junk mail residents are receiving and taking to the RDF. This also increases in December because retailers send a higher volume of catalogs and marketing materials for the holidays.

Ellen Korpi has been encouraging Jamie Manzolini and the RDF to start accepting plastic film (like plastic bags used by retailers) again. Other communities like Natick and Newton are doing this successfully as they are collaborating with other communities to get larger volumes to make it more feasible. Jamie has been in touch with the Natick DPW to get more information.

We are starting the planning process for the 50th anniversary and promotion of the RDF this year. 2021 is the 50th anniversary of the RDF and therefore a good opportunity to do a large scale marketing campaign for the RDF and highlight the benefits to both the Town’s economics and to the environment.

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

Zoning Change Proposals: As requested by the Planning Department, the BEA Team provided recommendations for sustainability into the Zoning Bylaws. Red-line drafts sent on 11/23 were revised by the Planning Department, presented initially at the December 7 Planning Board meeting and with follow-up at the December 21 Planning Board Meeting. The status of this work at the end of December is as follows:

- Yard Regulations (Section 19) and Definitions (Section 1A) were modified to allow adding heat pumps to existing residence set back areas. The Board asked questions on noise, the number of heat pumps affected and other Towns’ experience. Fred and Mary Gard provided responses at the December 21 Planning Board meeting. The Planning Board felt that the Yard Regulation changes should be put off to a later Town Meeting so as not to detract from adding sustainability language into the other areas of zoning.
- Project Approval (Section 16A) modifications proposed to Municipal Systems Impact Analysis included ambient noise and reduction of greenhouse gases. Sustainable Energy Committee was

added as a review department in the Planning Board Special Permit Granting Authority. Greenhouse Gas Emissions were added to the minimum service standards. Planning will propose the article for Town Meeting.

- Design Review (Section 22) proposed adding criteria 6. Relation of Project Development to Environment. Proposed development shall incorporate sustainable building materials, methods and practices and shall provide an analysis of the efficacy of the ongoing sustainability of the development. Planning will propose the article for Town Meeting.
- Large House (Section 16D) modifications were proposed, but Planning Department and Planning Board felt that LHR changes should be put off to a subsequent Town Meeting.

Resolution on Net Zero Building: The Wellesley BEA team has prepared a draft resolution urging the State Legislature to approve legislation that would address the challenge of GHG emissions in the building sector and to allow municipalities greater latitude in establishing energy efficiency standards. The Town cannot meet its climate change goals without emissions reductions in the building sector. The 15 towns in the RMI program are all considering proposing similar resolutions to their Town Meetings. It is proposed that SEC work with the SB to forward this resolution to the State Legislature at a time that integrates with other RMI BEA teams resolutions.

RMI Seminar: The December 17th RMI seminar focused on outreach with presentations by Brookline and Arlington on their strategies and tactics. They stressed the importance of starting with the climate goals, understanding the building stock, then engaging the sources of power. Community feedback meeting invitations were sent to the “usual suspects” plus invitation letters to people who had pulled Town permits. The final RMI seminar is scheduled for January 28. Each team will present a 5 minute summary of their progress.

Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS)

Fred Bunger is working on further testimony urging adoption of a net zero stretch building energy code such as the EZ code proposed by NEEP, MCAN and others.

Wellesley Housing Authority (WHA)

Fred Bunger requested MLP data to calculate baseline energy efficiency calculations for all 234 WHA housing units.

Sustainable Buildings

On December 19 Marybeth met with members of the League of Women Voters to discuss sustainable buildings.

Mobility Committee

From Martha Collins:

Environmental Partners was hired to conduct the Sustainable Mobility study, which is underway. The hope is to integrate the community engagement and subsequent report recommendations into the transportation/mobility section of the Climate Action Plan.

MWRTA presented a new proposed on-demand transportation service (think Uber, but largely local) that can be booked via the [MWRTA Catch App](#). This service is intended to replace MWRTA route 8,

which has had little to no ridership. Capacity would be limited initially due to COVID-19 regulations. Service would be offered during the days/times that route 8 ran (no weekends.) You must book from within Wellesley within half hour of when you want the service—no prebooking. Service coverage will extend to NWH, Woodland T, and Stop & Shop @ route 27. Some discussion about possible overlap with The Ride and whether other town-owned vehicles could be rolled into the program. Details here: <https://theswellesleyreport.com/2020/12/wellesley-to-test-out-uber-like-bus-service/>

The Town applied for the winter round of Complete Streets funding for RRFB lights (flashing pedestrian lights) to be installed at three locations listed below. The committee hopes these lights will be approved in the January 29 round of funding so that we can apply for additional funding in a February 26 round.

- State St. @ Fuller Brook
 - Intended to improve the safety for students and walkers/runners in light of expansion of Whole Foods parking lot and move of entrance/exit driveway.
- Washington Street @ Church Street
- Denton Road at Washington Street near Saint Andrew’s church/Montessori school.

Town of Wellesley submitted for a community connections grant for covered bike racks at the middle school. A decision on grant awards is expected in February. Funds available in October 2021.

From Marybeth:

December 16 – Marybeth participated in an interview for Mobility Study consultants. Greenhouse gas emissions reduction is a primary goal of the study.

Municipal Light Plant Update

From Francisco Frias:

Voluntary Renewable Energy Program (VREP):

The VREP working group (“Group”) continues to meet at least once a month to discuss projects, initiatives, and strategies. During December, the working group had the opportunity to meet once, on December 30. The focus of the discussion was the details surrounding the launching of the Wellesley Electric Customers Accelerated Reduction of Emissions (“WECARE”) program. The WECARE program will start on July 1, 2021, and it seems to be the consensus of the group to recommend a 4% starting rate. Discussion of which customer class to include in the program is still ongoing. The group will put together a program recommendation with specific details and plans to discuss it at the next Board Meeting. The group also considered some of the information discussed during the initial meeting with some Town officials regarding municipal buildings solar strategic plan. The update on the response of existing VREP participants to the program rate changes approved at the last Board Meeting, which will take effect January 1, 2021, was of great interest to the working group. There was a substantial gap between the cost at which the MLP was purchasing RECs and what customers in the VREP program were paying for those RECs. Furthermore, updates were given on the status of the 900 Worcester Street Solar project and the Solar and Battery storage RFP.

Current Group participants include MLP Board members Jack Stewart and Scott Bender, SEC Chair Laura Olton, and representing the MLP: 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. In November, they had a webinar to preview the improved EV selection experience tool offered to ENE EV programs in partnership with Cleanpower. With this tool, rebranded as the Drive & Save Wizard,

residents can easily find and compare the EVs best suited to their lifestyle and preferences through a more intuitive and seamless experience. Staff is reviewing the costs associated with this tool to assess its cost/benefit. The EV survey finished as of December 31, 2020, with over 600 Wellesley participants and over 300 willing to have open discussions with EV ambassadors from the Education and Awareness program. The web page Wellesley Drives Electric is continually updated with current information regarding EVs and applicable rebates.

Solar Rebate Program:

Our solar rebate program has been in effect for approximately 19 months. We have 21 completed installations. We have seven (7) more that are in progress. These 28 installations add up to 237.945 kW DC allocation against the 192 kW DC initially approved by the WMLP Board. After 19 months, we are at 124%. The Massachusetts DOER has extended the program until June 30, 2021, and the MLP pledged \$50k to be allocated for the Solar Rebate Program extension. Currently, the “overrun” in rebate dollars stands at \$55,530, of which the WMLP is responsible for half or \$27,765.

Incentive/Rebate Programs:

The MLP’s Appliance Rebate program in FY2021, through December 2020, has processed a total of 137 rebates with \$12,525 paid out.

The new working group has been meeting to discuss redesigning incentives for Wellesley residents. 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 will have a greater impact on emissions reduction. After a lot of research and analysis done by the members of the Incentive Redesign Working Group (“IRWG”), it was decided to direct the focus to residential heat pumps. To that end, the IRWG met with ABODE Energy Management in November regarding their heat pump program for MLPs. Residential cooling and heating has a significant impact on usage of resources and the efficiency of heat pumps can help in the reduction of emissions and systematic electrification. Since that meeting, the staff has met with Reading MLP and Belmont MLP regarding their participation in the program. Staff is getting as much information as possible from the references, to be discussed at the next IRWG meeting, so the MLP can make a sound decision on whether or not it makes sense to join the program based on a cost-benefit analysis of the program.

Home Energy Audits:

Remote Home Energy Audits were started in April. Since then we have had fourteen (14) total done. We are working with ENE to advertise the program along with the EnergyXpert Self-Service Home Energy Assessment program. This online platform was launched the second week of September. As of December 31, we had 62 residents that had signed up for the online audits. The MLP’s YTD savings in kWh is 22,101 for the CY20. Through the platform, customers can 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. We will continually work on promoting this tool through email promotions and include the information in the new resident package for new MLP customers.

Large Scale Solar and & Battery Storage Projects:

Wellesley Sports Center: After much negotiations, the MLP staff submitted final versions of the Power Purchase Power Agreement (PPA), Interconnection Agreement (IA), and the Assignment

and Assumption of Sublease (AAS) for this project to the counterparty for final review. Documents are due to be signed any day now.

Municipal Way: Responses for the RFP for a battery storage system next to Station 41 (Building next to the MLP Office) and for the installation of solar panels at various locations within the MLP/DPW sites were opened on November 17. There were eight responses submitted, which are currently under review by the staff. The first RFP clarifications are due on January 6 from all the responders. These responses will help the MLP staff create a shortlist for further evaluation.

Other Locations: In January, the MLP's Director and Assistant Director will have a second meeting with some Town officials. The purpose of this is to continue discussions on how a strategic plan for solar installations on municipal properties can be crafted and how the financial burden of installing solar on Town-owned property can be effectively allocated.

Webinar Summaries and Other Sustainability News

Act Creating a Next Generation Roadmap for Climate Policy

The Massachusetts State Senate and House passed a compromise climate change bill (S. 2995) on January 4 and is now pending a signature from Governor Baker. See a summary of the bill here: <https://www.wbur.org/commonhealth/2021/01/04/massachusetts-climate-roadmap-bill-baker>.

MA 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap Report and the 2030 Interim Clean Energy and Climate Plan (CECP)

The Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs recently published the [MA 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap report](#), which lays out a pathway for the state to reach net-zero GHG emissions by 2050, and the [Interim Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2030](#), which provides details on the actions the Commonwealth will undertake through the 2020s to ensure the [2030 emissions limit](#) set by the Baker administration is met.

US DOE Save Energy and Money with the Building Envelope Campaign Webinar

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Better Buildings Campaign webinar held their [Building Envelope Campaign webinar](#) on December 8 to encourage participation of building managers in the program.

- Hayley McLoed of the National Lab described the Building Envelope Campaign which currently has 39 full participants and 52 supporters representing 250 buildings with 18 million square feet.
- Simon Pallin of the Oak Ridge Lake went through the steps of completing the application for participating in the program.
- Christine Gibney of the American Geophysical Union described the retrofit of their 1994 72,000 sq.ft. Washington DC headquarters going from EUI of 63 to meet a target of 21.7 kBtu/sq.ft./yr and net zero energy including a full solar array above the roof. They showed the results of their participation in the Building Envelope Campaign and were complimentary on the advice they received. The strategies they used to meet their goals were shown on slide 48 in the link to webinar visuals.

Webinar recording: <https://betterbuildingsolutioncenter.energy.gov/webinars/save-energy-and-money-building-envelope-campaign>

Webinar visuals:

<https://betterbuildingsolutioncenter.energy.gov/sites/default/files/slides/Save%20Energy%20and%20Money%20-%20Slide%20Deck.pdf>