



CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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Climate Action Committee Project Updates

February 3, 2023

Green Communities

Janet and Marybeth drafted a letter to DOER requesting to withdraw the heat pump projects at the three water treatment plants from the Town's Green Communities grant award. Due to concerns raised about PFAS in Wellesley and the status of the water treatment plants going forward, DPW and CAC (after consultation with DOER) determined that it would be best to forfeit the Green Communities grant money intended for heat pumps at the three plants.

The LED lighting project in the Water and Sewer garage is on hold until staff are available to assist with the project.

Governance and Outreach

- On January 11 Marybeth presented the CAC's FY24 Budget Request to the Advisory Committee.
- Mike Thompson continues to revise the design of the CAP dashboard elements based on feedback from Janet, Marybeth, Sue, and Laura.
- On January 25 Marybeth presented on climate action in Wellesley to Temple Beth Elohim.
- Marybeth formed a working group with Carl Nelson (Celebrations Committee), Lisa Moore, Phyllis, and Lisa Gieger to integrate sustainability more prominently into Wellesley Wonderful Weekend. The group met on Feb. 1 and will meet regularly.
- Marybeth met with Weston's Sustainability Coordinator to discuss projects of mutual interest.

Buildings

From Fred Bunger, Janet Mosley, Marybeth:

Buildings Working Group (BWG) of CAP

Update of BWG activity using CAP action items as a guide:

B1 Regulatory:

- Specialized Opt-in code Warrant article (#36) prepared for Annual Town Meeting (ATM) 2023. A plan is in place for outreach, including a public forum.
 - Marybeth, Fred, and Janet continue to attend webinars and refine outreach materials for the Opt-in Specialized Energy Code.
 - Marybeth is working on webpage to house Opt-in Code resources.
 - Gail Sullivan is working with Marybeth and Sue to develop CAC and Opt-in Code text for the Advisory Book for Town Meeting Members.
 - Marybeth is meeting with building professionals (builders/developers, architects, attorneys, and realtors) to discuss their views and questions regarding the Opt-in Code.
 - On January 19 Marybeth provided an update to the Building Electrification Accelerator group on Wellesley's building-related programs and progress re: the Opt-in Code.
 - Marybeth will present the Opt-in Code warrant article to the Housing Task Force on February 8.
 - Public Hearing by Advisory Committee on the Warrant for ATM 2023 will be held February 9 at 7 pm.
 - Marybeth and Phyllis met with the Charles River Chamber of Commerce Environment Committee. Among other topics, they discussed a joint Opt-in Code webinar. Marybeth drafted an event summary and Phyllis researched potential speakers.
- Meghan Jop convened a staff working group to explore the multi-family zoning requirement for MBTA communities (see info at this [link](#)). This requirement may provide opportunities to add sustainability to Wellesley's zoning processes and/or bylaws. Marybeth is on the working group to help explore this possibility. The group met three times and will continue to meet weekly going forward. On Tuesday, Meghan submitted an MBTA Communities Action Plan for Wellesley that the group reviewed.

B2 Promote net zero

- Using building permit data, Janet developed lists of builders and developers who do the highest volume of work in Wellesley. These lists can be used for future outreach and communication, including for the Opt-in Code.

B3 Municipal Action

- Marybeth and Janet met with FMD to review the sustainability elements in the new Hunnewell and Hardy schools.
- Police Station audit: Janet is reaching out to various contacts to get recommendations for companies that carry out ASHRAE Level 2 audits.

B4 Residential conversion

- Mary Gard of Sustainable Wellesley and Lisa Wolf of WMLP worked with Abode and Green Energy Consumers Alliance to deliver the 1/18 Save Big on Home Heating and Cooling webinar. Over 300 people registered for this event.

- Fred is preparing a QuitCarbon template for helping homeowners plan for conversion to all-electric homes.
- Collaboration across MLP, CAC, and Sustainable Wellesley to develop an energy coach program.
- Marybeth, Lisa Wolf, and other MLP staff take a weekly home energy course through Abode in preparation for the energy coaching program.
- On January 30, Marybeth, Janet, Lisa Wolf, and Dave Cohen met with Babson Professor Miguel Rivera-Santos to discuss projects for a graduate level strategy course. Students in this course will choose from a project list that includes Wellesley initiatives to:
 - Develop a strategy to improve the heat pump customer journey for Wellesley residents;
 - Develop a strategy to increase food waste drop-off at the RDF; and
 - Assess the need for electric vehicle (EV) charging at multi-family dwellings in the next five to ten years and develop a plan for ensuring this need is met.

B5 Commercial/Institutional

- Marybeth presented the Commercial PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) program to the Select Board on January 24. Rob Dolan from MassDevelopment will meet with the Select Board in February before members consider opting into the program. Fred reviewed the proposal to include new construction in the PACE program.
- Planning in progress for February 8 Building Energy Tracking and Reporting (BETR) Roundtable. Mark Scribner and Eric Desrosiers from ENE will present on electric vehicle charging infrastructure for commercial buildings and transitioning commercial fleets to EVs.

NEEP webinar on Building Benchmarking

NEEP (Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership) conducted a webinar 1/10/23 providing background on the benefits of measuring and benchmarking building energy. The BEAM commercial program for collection and presentation of Portfolio Manager data was demonstrated.

Green Schools

Fred presented a CAP overview and sustainability elements in new Hunnewell and Hardy schools at 1/19 Green Schools Committee meeting.

Gas Transition

From Lise Olney:

Legislation: Several important gas-related bills were filed last week, just in time for the Friday deadline for the new legislative session. There are three bills of particular note, supported by the Gas Transitions Allies:

1. [**SD. 2330/HD.3954**](#) “An Act Relative to the Future of Clean Heat in the Commonwealth,” filed by Sen. Cynthia Creem and Rep. Steve Owens. Overall purpose of this very comprehensive bill is to support the transition off gas and onto sources of non-combusting renewable thermal energy, including transition by gas companies, customers, and workers. The bill incorporates provisions from legislation supported by the Gas Transitions Allies in the past several sessions.
2. [**HD.4047**](#) “An Act Relative to Intervenors and Utility Work,” filed by Rep. Jennifer Armini (no Senate sponsor yet although Sen. Creem is considering it). Overall purpose of this short bill is to give municipalities more information about the condition of the gas system in their jurisdictions. This bill was drafted to reflect long-time feedback from municipalities in the Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative, which I co-lead.

3. [**SD.1979/HD.3595**](#) “An Act Relative to Making Methane Accounting Truthful Helps,” filed by Sen. Joanne Comerford and Rep. Steve Owens. Overall purpose of this short bill is to increase the accuracy and comprehensiveness of estimates for methane emissions in the Commonwealth.

Feb. 16 Meeting of the Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative: We'll be hearing from municipal officials and advocates about their latest efforts to pressure National Grid to address gas leaks. We will also be discussing plans to advocate for gas-related legislation. [Please click here to register for the meeting.](#)

Speakers to include:

- *Waltham resident Michelle Streetman-Carpenter* – Update on resolution passed by the Waltham City Council in 2021 requiring National Grid to repair the city's large volume (SEI) leaks.
- *Arlington Environmental Planner & Conservation Agent David Morgan* – Update on resolution being considered by the Arlington Select Board similar to Waltham, as well as plans for public education, possible signage for gas leaks, and notification to residents near SEI leaks.
- *Newton City Councilor Alison Leary* – Councilor Leary chairs the Public Facilities Committee and has recently attempted to get more information from National Grid regarding their requests for street construction related to gas work. Newton has more than 600 unrepairs gas leaks.

Mobility

From Sue Morris:

Wellesley Green Schools is working with Chief Pilecki on an idling awareness initiative which will happen the week of April 24th at all the Wellesley Public Schools. We will have banners, lawn signs, students out at the schools with information and materials about the harmful effects of car emissions, QR codes with links, a pledge for people to sign not to idle and some other anti-idling promotions. We will promote this through social media, the Town of Wellesley, the Wellesley Police Department, Climate Action Committee, NRC, Sustainable Wellesley, etc.

See Babson multi-family ev charging project under buildings.

3R Working/Waste Group

From Sue Morris:

We will have another 3R Working Group meeting to continue the planning for the Hunnewell Fields trash & recycling pilot program that we started this fall. We hope to tweak and expand the program for spring. We also want to discuss and focus some attention on construction waste and ways to reduce landfill waste from construction which is a big problem as large amounts of these materials are being landfilled.

Wellesley Middle School is starting the food waste pilot program. It is being organized by Jonathan Rabinowitz, a teacher at WMS and Ana Hurley, a WMS assistant principal. It will start with the 6th graders and then roll out to 7th & 8th graders once the program is running successfully. Wellesley High School is starting the disposable water bottle collection pilot program and hopes to expand the program once the concept is proven. We are also working on restarting the food waste diversion/compost pilot program in a scaled down format.

Wellesley Green Schools had a meeting on January 19th. Fred Bunger did a presentation on the sustainable features of the new Hunnewell School and there was a good question and answer period

following the presentation. Kate Morton who runs the science & technology department for Wellesley Middle School talked about some of the interesting things happening at WMS with regard to science initiatives. Lisa Moore, Natural Resources Commission Education and Outreach Coordinator, also mentioned some programs she is doing at some of the Wellesley Public Schools and offered her services/programs.

See Babson food waste project under buildings.

Wellesley MLP Sustainability Initiatives

From MLP Staff:

Heat Pump Promotions

MLP, Abode, Sustainable Wellesley and Green Energy Consumers collaborated to deliver the January 18 *Save Big on Home Heating and Cooling* webinar. Topics included current technology and summary of utility, State and IRA benefits. [Link for slides, webinar recording, and Q&A](#).

The number of consulting events completed by Abode increased since the webinar – 9 consultations in December, 26 in January, and 6 completed on the first day of February alone.

Director's Message

The message for MLP Director Don Newell to customers addressing growing concerns about rising energy prices, planning to electrify everything, decarbonizing the power portfolio, peak management, and transmission capacity is now available and has been shared via multiple networks. [Link to recording](#).

Energy Coach Program Development

MLP is coordinating with the Climate Action department and Sustainable Wellesley to develop an energy coach program. The group will convene on February 2 to discuss next steps.