



CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL • 525 WASHINGTON STREET • WELLESLEY, MA 02482-5992

Sustainability Director: Marybeth Martello

ClimateAction@wellesleyma.gov

Sustainability Analyst: Janet Mosley

jmosley@wellesleyma.gov

Susan Morris, Chair

Laura Olton, Vice Chair

Catherine Mirick

Ellen Korpi

Martha Collins

Fred Bunger

Lise Olney

Climate Action Committee Project Updates

May 5, 2023

Green Communities

Janet is working with the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Facilities Management Department (FMD) to request quotes for the LED lighting project in the Water and Sewer garage.

FMD has identified LED lighting upgrades at the Sprague School as a potential project for the next round of Green Communities grant funding.

Governance and Outreach

- The CAC position announcement was distributed
- The Wellesley Wonderful Weekend (WWW) planning group meets weekly. This new group works to make WWW events more sustainable while also showcasing the sustainability programs of town departments. Recent developments:
 - Catch Connect will provide free bus service to WWW open houses and other events.
 - The RDF will support multi-stream recycling and food waste diversion at the picnic and reception for town officials.
 - We are launching a Climate Action Passport program to highlight sustainability-related events and offer a raffle prize for visiting these events.
 - Press releases will advertise the CatchConnect service and passport programs

Buildings

From Fred Bunger

Buildings Working Group (BWG) of CAP

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

B1 Regulatory:

- Specialized Energy code adopted at 4/24/2023 Town Meeting by a vote of 141 to 33, 3 abstained.

- Adding sustainability language to Site Plan Review or Project of Significant Impact on hold. Perhaps integrate with Town response to Multifamily zoning requirements for MBTA communities.

B2 Promote net zero

- Continuing work

B3 Municipal Action

- HVAC system retrofit in Warren Building approved at Town Meeting will improve EUI from 86 to 34 kBtu/sq.ft.yr when completed in 2025.

B4 Residential Action

- Energy Coach program development continues with Lisa Wolf and Mary Gard signed up for Heat Smart energy coach training. Online intake forms for energy coaching requests and potential energy coaches developed. Marybeth and Janet working with Mike Thompson on a CAC website redesign with elements to support energy coaching program. (See more in MLP updates.)
- Continued development of QuitCarbon template. Analyzing proposals from 4 HVAC contractors. Wide difference in proposals from \$23,000 to \$41,000 for a range of solutions. Limited 100 amp circuit sparking a search for work-around solutions.

B5 Commercial/Institutional

- Reviewed commercial/institutional building lists in preparation for dialog with Assessor's Office on building data update.
- BETR 2022 building emissions reports due from < 20,000 sq.ft. building managers due July 1.

MCAN Better Buildings Advocates

- Monthly meeting on April 20 covered community progress on Opt-in Code, dialog on how to get information from assessors and town departments and advocacy for embodied carbon legislation.

Embodied Carbon

- Viewed 4/25 MCAN/RMI webinar on embodied carbon. 21% of worldwide carbon emissions are from production of steel and concrete. Massachusetts legislature considering requirements for measuring life cycle analysis of carbon as well as use of low embodied carbon concrete and steel in MA State projects. MCAN provided excellent embodied carbon toolkit:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1svmhZfsRmKP_O5HQFjvC7y2G0vcrX8KIgZKJpN046T0/edit
- Two page primer on embodied carbon:
https://assets.nationbuilder.com/massclimateaction/pages/2322/attachments/original/1676547980/Reducing_Embodied_Carbon_in_Massachusetts_%281%29.pdf?1676547980
- An embodied carbon expert and Wellesley resident will attend the next BWG meeting.

Babson Project

From Marybeth:

Marybeth, Janet, and Lisa Wolf worked with a group of Babson graduate students to develop strategies to improve the heat pump customer journey. Students conducted research, identified heat pump installation hurdles, and recommended ways to eliminate some of these hurdles.

Gas Transition

From Lise Olney:

Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative met on April 26 ([recording here](#)).

Members of the Gas Transitions Allies Hydrogen & Biomethane Working Group provided a summary of their recent report on ["The Impact of Green Hydrogen on the Availability of Clean Energy for the Grid,"](#)

and their responses to National Grid's comments concerning hydrogen and the future of the gas system (responses [here](#)).

The primary focus of the meeting was our discussion with **Representative Jennifer Armini**, lead sponsor of [H. 3137](#), *An Act Relative to Intervenors and Utility Work*, known as the "Empowering Municipal Voices" bill (fact sheet [here](#)). Municipalities shared stories with Rep. Armini about why this bill is so important and we discussed the need for advocacy to state representatives.

Rep. Armini suggested that participants invite their representatives to the legislative briefing on **Wednesday, May 10, 1 to 2 pm, State House Room 428, and to attend themselves**. In addition to H.3137, the briefing will also feature two important related bills: *The Future of Clean Heat Act* [S.2105/H.3203](#), Sen. Creem, Rep. Owens, and Rep. Armini (fact sheet [here](#)); and *The MATH Act: An Act Relative to Making Methane Accounting Truthful Helps* [S.2092/H.873](#), Sen. Comerford and Rep. Owens (fact sheet [here](#)).

Mobility

Go Idle Free in 2023!

The idling awareness event, "[Go Idle Free in 2023!](#)" sponsored by Wellesley Green Schools, Sustainable Wellesley, NRC, CAC and Wellesley Police Department went well. Drivers at all the WPS elementary schools, Wellesley Middle School, and Wellesley High School were asked to sign a pledge not to idle and were given a car magnet or phone wallet with the Be Idle Free logo. There are also lawn signs placed in different locations in Wellesley with the logo and QR code.

From Martha Collins:

Wellesley EV Showcase & Test Drive Event: Thursday May 11, 2023, 4 to 7 p.m.

Once again the Wellesley EV Showcase and Test Drive event will take place in the parking lot at MassBay Community College at 50 Oakland Street in Wellesley. Over 13 dealers will be at the event with over 25 different makes and models, both EVs and PHEVs, available to test drive. Promotions have been sent through multiple online, print and social media channels in Town. There are 81 registrants as of May 2. Space is still available - please register at bit.ly/WellesleyEV. The event team includes Lisa Wolf (project lead), Marybeth Martello, Philippa Biggers, Phyllis Theermann, Terry Connolly, Martha Collins, and several ENE Wellesley Drives Electric employees. The rain date is Wednesday May 17.

Martha sent a draft EV supply equipment (EVSE) infrastructure plan for the Town of Wellesley to David Cohen and Marybeth Martello for further development.

Waste

From Sue Morris:

WMS food waste/compost pilot program is going well. It is still only the 6th grade and is sponsored and monitored by WMS teachers and staff. The compost is being picked up by the RDF twice a week. The kitchen scraps at WMS are also being included in the food compost. Although the RDF is taking the compostable trays they are being screened out before going to anaerobic digester. They then get landfilled but compostable materials decompose fairly efficiently in landfills. Lexington and Needham, who have composting programs, have noticed a very slight increase in PFAS with compostable

flatware/plates/etc materials in the mix but there is not enough data at this point to know if the trays are the actual source of PFAS increase.

WHS food waste pilot program has not been successful because of lack of monitors and too much contamination of the compost. WHS has been working with CERO to take the compost but if there is too much contamination CERO charges a \$75 contamination fee. We are working on a new iteration of the WHS food waste diversion program where we would use funds to pay people to work as monitors in hopes of preventing the contamination. We have had discussions with Matt Delaney about WHS kitchen food scraps being included in the CERO compost. This should happen very soon. Matt also noted that WHS has decreased sales of disposable water bottles by 75% over the last few years. We hope this trend continues to even further reduce the sales of disposable water bottles at WHS.

Wellesley Green Schools is working on starting/restarting food waste diversion programs at some of the elementary schools.

The RDF reusables area is now open with limited hours. The DPW has ordered new recycling containers for the Hunnewell Fields as well as Sprague field. The hope is that the new containers, which are metal mesh so that the contents are visible, will make it easier for people to see what that the recycling is for disposable bottles only. This will hopefully prevent much of the contamination that is currently happening.

The DPW is working with the Wellesley Celebrations Committee, the CAC and Sustainable Wellesley to make Wellesley Wonderful Weekend as low a waste event as possible. DPW will provide different containers for discarding items including trash, recycling, and compost. We hope the event will also serve to educate attendees about sustainability. This will be a pilot year to determine ways to reduce waste even further in future years.

Babson Project

Marybeth, Janet, Dave Cohen, Jeff Azano-Brown, and Jamie Manzolini worked with a group of Babson graduate students developing a strategy to increase participation in the RDF's food waste drop-off program. The Babson students presented their final project on April 27 and provided new outreach ideas and materials.

Wellesley MLP Sustainability Initiatives

From MLP Staff:

EV Demand Management

On March 1, WMLP sent reminders to 750 EV owners not participating in Sagewell's BYOC program. Since then there have been over 75 inquiries and 40 new enrollments bringing the total to 340 enrollees (~31% of total EV ownership).

For customers who are already enrolled and for new enrollments, Sagewell now has the capacity to use charger telematics to monitor or control OEM-equipped devices. Existing and new customers may elect to enroll in telematics monitoring. Telematics data will be used to monitor compliance with the scheduled charging program and has the capacity to manage charging during peak demand. Starting in 2023, enrollment in BYOC is now required to get the MLP charger rebate (50% up to \$350). Meanwhile

new charger registrants will be alerted to BYOC and emailed information about enrolling with a link to sign up.

Energy Coach Program Development

WMLP is coordinating with the Climate Action department and Sustainable Wellesley to develop an Energy Coach program. An Energy Coach webpage is under construction on the Climate Action website. Through this webpage, residents will find answers to FAQs and be able to schedule a consultation with volunteer experts on a range of topics.

Five MLP staff members have completed Abode's 10-hour heat pump technical training and will be able to provide support to the Energy Coach program. A core group of 6 volunteers has also been recruited to complement MLP staff and advise residents on lowering the carbon impacts of their homes and activities, and answer questions about electrification and other energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.

Pilot Large General Commercial Energy Assistance Program

WMLP sent letters to the first cohort of 50 Large General Commercial customers (those with a monthly metered demand greater than 5.0 kW) who saw a larger rate increase than the average 10% due to a disproportionate demand charge. WMLP offers assistance to help identify ways to manage electricity use during the day.

The WMLP's Energy Assistance program offers the following options:

1. Review customer account for obvious change in usage or other unusual patterns;
2. Schedule a site walk-through with a WMLP staff electrician to identify current electricity usage patterns and opportunities to flatten demand;
3. WMLP will install a SENSE energy monitor on customer's main circuit to identify individual loads and their cycles over a 3-month period;
4. WMLP will review the energy monitor data and an establishment's load profile and make suggestions for demand reduction.

So far there has been 1 response. The next batch of letters will be sent by end of month.

Large Scale Solar, Battery Storage & Other Projects:

Municipal Way Battery Storage System:

This project, awarded to Citizens Energy, now has the Energy Service Agreement, Site Lease, and Interconnection Agreement signed. Citizens Energy provided information about the cost of the project, answers to questions asked by Town Counsel, and at this point are close to finalizing the pilot project with the Town. The Town is proposing to define the personal property value for the term of the project and the pilot will be based on the property value multiplied by the tax rate. The proposed pilot will result in larger payments in the earlier years of the project and then falls off over the term of the project (due to depreciation).

Solar on Municipal Buildings:

Town Counsel has informed the MLP that as a department under Chapter 164, it has different bidding procedures from other municipal departments. Town Counsel believes that the MLP cannot put out a Request for Proposals, in this case for solar, on roofs that it does not have care, custody, and control. More importantly, Town Counsel indicated that a lease, not a site license, would be needed between the developer and the department that has care, custody, and control of the roof to be used for solar. The MLP asked KP Law to review Town Counsel's comments and provide feedback. After meeting with Chris Pollard from KP Law and discussing this subject, it was determined that it would be better to go

with the lease option. Town Counsel reached out to Meghan Jop, the Town's Executive Director, and Cindy Mahr, the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations with the schools to bring this project in front of their boards. The goal is to get their vote so the different departments can work with WMLP on issuing a joint RFP for solar on different municipal buildings, including the Hunnewell and the Hardy schools.