



CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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Climate Action Committee Project Updates

June 5, 2023

Green Communities

Facilities Management Department (FMD) reached out to three contractors to request quotes for the LED lighting project in the Department of Public Works (DPW) Water and Sewer garage. Responses are due June 7.

Janet continues to work with FMD, DPW, and Municipal Light Plant staff to identify potential projects for the next round of Green Communities grant funding.

Governance and Outreach

- The CAC position announcement was distributed
- Marybeth and a number of volunteers worked to make Wellesley Wonderful Weekend (WWW) events more sustainable while also showcasing the sustainability programs of town departments.
 - Catch Connect provided free bus service to WWW open houses and other events.
 - We launched a Climate Action Passport program to highlight sustainability-related events and offer a raffle prize for visiting these events.
 - The RDF supported multi-stream recycling and food waste diversion at the pancake breakfast, reception for town officials, and picnic (see more in the Waste section).
- Janet continues to finalize CAP dashboard formatting with Marybeth, Sue, and Laura and to collect data from several of Town departments.
- MBTA Communities – Sustainability changes to Site Plan Review may be possible as part of the MBTA Communities process. Marybeth is looking into what these changes might look like. She will connect with Fred on this recent development.

Buildings

From Fred Bunger

Buildings Working Group (BWG) update

B1 Regulatory: Participating in public comment on Embodied Carbon legislation.

B2 Promote net zero

- Continuing work

B3 Municipal Action

- Continuing work

B4 Residential Action

- Two early contacts with homeowners looking for help
- Energy Coach program development continues

B5 Commercial/Institutional

- Deferring BETR Roundtable until Fall

156 Weston Road *(from Marybeth)*

Marybeth met with Lisa Wolf and checked in with Meghan Jop about 156 Weston Road to revisit the benefits of making this property a net zero demonstration project and to offer to connect with high performance architects and builders. Mike Tartamella from Ahearn Architects is on the job. Meghan said Mike is very knowledgeable and Ahern is providing services for free. An existing conditions plan was scheduled for June 1. They are at an early scoping stage. Lisa Wolf and Marybeth offered to be part of the next discussions.

Morse's Pond Bathhouse design

Fred discussed Municipal Sustainable Buildings Design criteria with NRC Director Jay McHale. Fred recommended making bathhouse developers aware of MSBG and provide best effort to meet LEED v4 certifiable and EUI under 30 kBtu/sq.ft/yr. with the understanding that limited options for pre-fabricated buildings could make that challenging to achieve.

MCAN Better Buildings Advocates

- Monthly meeting on May 18 covered community progress on Opt-in Code. 18+ communities have adopted.
- Continuing dialog on advocacy for embodied carbon legislation.

Embodied Carbon

Scott Waddell joined the Building Working Group and is providing expert help on embodied carbon. Providing testimony to May 17th hearing of House Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on proposed embodied carbon legislation.

Gas Transition

From Lise Olney:

Gas Leaks Working Group Update, May 15, 2023 meeting

(Mary Gard, Dave Hickey, Brandon Schmitt, Lise Olney, with Marybeth Martello who is not a WG member)

This was our first meeting so we discussed overall goals and possible avenues to pursue, including

- Legislative advocacy for H.3137/S.2603
- Gas leaks resolutions (examples from other towns)
- Gas leaks safari (Arlington hosting a "safari" on Friday, June 9 9:30-11:30, [more here](#))
- Gas leaks signage
- Public education

Dave provided a lot of helpful background information on working with the gas utility. Some interesting facts:

- Roughly 30 homes are torn down each year in Wellesley and the new homes all rely on gas.
- There are currently about 20 active permits for gas work in the town.
- A grade one hazardous leak is reported about once every 7 to 10 days in Wellesley. The gas company currently planning major pipe replacement on 4 or 5 streets (Westgate and Route 9 underway; Linden, Seaver, Fairbanks, Prospect in various stages of design.)

Update on [H.3137/SD.2603](#) "Empowering Municipal Voices" (An Act Relative to Intervenors and Utility Work)

- **June 5 Legislative Hearing** was just announced on May 31 for H.3137/SD.2603 (and 27 other bills) by Sen. Mike Barrett, chair of the Joint Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy Committee. I have been asked to testify. [More here.](#)
- **May 10 Legislative Briefing** (which included two other major bills) was extremely well attended. Rep. Alice Peisch and her staff members came. Rep. Armini described the bill and I provided some brief remarks.
- **Senator Creem filed Senate version of the bill** – temporary docket number SD.2603.
- **The Gas Transition Allies created a [brief video](#) to promote H.3137**, using excerpts from the April 27 meeting of the Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative: <https://youtu.be/k5nICnco78w>

Sustainable Middlesex Carbon Countdown, May 20, 2023 Featuring MA Climate Chief Melissa Hoffer and Sen. Mike Barrett

Some of highlights from Climate Chief Hoffer's remarks are below, but I recommend listening to her full remarks at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKnclbRvQNM>

- Healey Administration taking a **whole government approach** to climate - all secretariats have to submit reports on their climate efforts.
- Emphasized the **critical role of natural resources for carbon sequestration** - we won't make our goals without this sector – preserving trees, open space is essential to meeting climate goals.
- Building sector electrification intertwined with **acceleration in housing development and the need for more trained workers**. We can't decarbonize housing without more trained workers. We need to define the building trades as "climate jobs" – and provide both training and job placement.
- Looking at different ways to finance retrofits, heat pumps. Expecting an announcement soon on **"green banks"** (see Connecticut example) which can make investment in low and moderate income housing more attractive to investors by lowering the risk.
- **What should our local climate efforts should look like?** The conversations we are having about climate change are different now because people are seeing heat waves, fires, etc. But what hasn't settled in for folks is the speed — we have to reduce emissions in the next 7 years. People don't seem to understand the need for adapting and resilience to deal with more power outages, more extreme weather events. **Tell that story** — help people make changes but also help them adapt and get ready. **Every local government needs to have someone thinking about this.** Every dollar that local governments are spending should not be undermining our climate goals. We need to inject climate change into ALL our local decision making. We need someone sitting in on every conversation to inject climate thinking in every spending decision. We are out of time and we have already lost our stable climate. We need resilience in place - get to know your neighbors again. **Keep pushing us - that's how we got a climate chief.**
- Links for the other four sessions that were part of this event:

- Biodiversity: Protecting ecosystems, in our backyard and beyond with David Morgan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAVpDuE-mA4>
- Building Electrification: A future without fossil fuels with Anne Wright and Bob Zogg: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uexJMhOMn6k>
- Networked Geothermal: Neighborhood scale heating and cooling with Zeyneb Magavi: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SeuzWz-o_U8
- Affordable Housing: Healthy, Efficient, Resilient with Neal Mongold: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAEiszZV3I>

Waste

Waste diversion at several Wellesley Wonderful Weekend events are described below.

- Pancake breakfast: Marybeth and Janet spoke with guests about recycling and food waste diversion while busing tables to divert recyclables (bottles, cans, and coffee cups), compostable materials (food waste, napkins, and paper straws), and liquids from the trash
- Reception for Town Officials: The Village Church used their china and silverware and volunteer Tristan Martello diverted food waste from the trash. Village Church members said they saved money since they did not purchase disposable dishes and silverware.
- Picnic: DPW set up four stations across the field at the Picnic. Each station collected aluminum cans, plastic bottles, food waste, and compostable cups. Teams of two manned the stations until the fireworks started. Marybeth and Janet worked with a number of volunteers: Lisa Gieger, Mike Gieger, Mary Gard, Jen Frank, Tristan Martello, Rob Martello, Teddy dePeyster, Madison Prowda, Mary Gard, Bob Salzman, and Phyllis Theermann.

Mobility

From Martha Collins:

Wellesley EV Showcase & Test Drive Event

At the EV test drive and showcase event Thursday May 11, we had 120+ test drives, with 12 dealers bringing 20 cars and 15 EV owners showcasing cars. Attendees were given the opportunity to test drive a second car. We had additional test drive capacity.

Special thanks to Lisa Wolf, sustainability coordinator for the WMLP, who led the effort, Marybeth Martello, Sustainability Director, Terry Connolly of WMLP, volunteers such as Phyllis Theerman, Mary Gard, Philippa Biggers, Bob Collins, Ric Ripley, Ute Smith Howard Xu, Lisa Gieger, Bob Salzman, Tim Maul, Larry St.Clair, and Madison Prowda; and showcase participants Chuck Pierce, Sheryl Goodridge, Tom Rosenbloom, Jan Jurgelon, Mark Allen, Lucienne Ronco, Paul Cramer, John Fitzmaurice, Michelle Jacobs, James Landry, Jennifer Sydney Goldman, Alexander Hannenberg, William Kramer, and Sharon Kirby; and ENE employees Ray Stetkiewicz, Mark Scribner, Eric Derosiers, Kayla Tavares.

A post-mortem meeting on the event took place Thursday, May 18. See MLP updates below for potential changes for future EV test drive events.

From Marybeth:

Wellesley Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

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

The EV Working Group meets every two weeks. The group is working on the EV First Policy, a fleet transition plan, and planning for EV infrastructure.

Wellesley MLP Sustainability Initiatives

From MLP Staff:

Sustainability Metrics

Moving forward metrics related to sustainability initiatives will be summarized in a table and updated monthly to more easily track change.

Metrics to be tracked:

- Solar Installations (# and total kWh for residential, municipal and commercial)
- EV ownership (# cars, households, BYOC enrollees)
- Heat pumps (Rebate \$'s, #)
- Batteries (# and total kWh for residential, municipal)
- WECARE expenditures
- AMI progress (meters installed, customer portals)
- Carbon offset for each category

Energy Coach Program Development

Making progress on all fronts of this project, and targeting late summer/early fall for a hard launch. We are developing a New Coach Apprenticeship program and are recruiting homeowners who would allow apprentices to 'practice' evaluating their homes. 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.

Wellesley Drives EV Event – May 11, 4-7 PM

The event was a success, with 120 test drives, 12 dealers, 20 test drive vehicles and 15 showcase volunteers participating. The next event is tentatively planned for May 9, 2024. Since only half of all available test drives were scheduled despite extensive communications through all available channels, the Team agreed that Wellesley may be nearing saturation for test drive opportunities, and scaling back to a once-a-year event is sufficient. We will look for other opportunities to address EV driver questions through webinars or individual consultations with EV Ambassadors.

Wellesley Wonderful Weekend

In addition to Touch-a-Truck, the MLP staffed tables providing information about Home Electrification rebates and incentives, and an induction stove demo, as well as a Safety station, where kids donned hats and gloves and pulled the cutout switch to turn on a streetlight. ENE provided staff for an EV table and the MLP's Bolt was stationed adjacent.

Large Scale Solar, Battery Storage & Other Projects

Municipal Way Battery Storage System:

This project, awarded to Citizens Energy ("Citizens"), now has the Energy Service Agreement, Site Lease, and Interconnection Agreement signed. Citizens and the Town, working through the Board of Assessors and Town Counsel, are on the last item for the PILOT, related to when payments should start. Based on conversations with both parties, the PILOT agreement should be executed any day now. Citizens is

scheduled to meet at a ZBA meeting on June 1 to discuss an improvement made to the project design, which is believed to be a minor change; however, approval from ZBA is still needed for this improvement. Financing the project is going as planned and should be finalized in the next few weeks, according to Citizens. Mobilization to the site is expected around July or August, and Citizens has ordered all their equipment for the project.

Solar on Municipal Buildings:

Town Counsel 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, management, and control. Typically when a Town wishes to work with a solar provider to install solar on a roof they will issue an RFP to lease a rooftop and then execute a lease and a power purchase agreement with that solar provider. Since Wellesley has a municipal light plant, all power purchase agreements must be made with the WMLP. However, WMLP does not have the ability to lease all town buildings. The buildings the WMLP is considering for solar to be installed on are controlled by three different boards (the School Committee, the Select Board, and the Library Trustees). Town Counsel reached out to Meghan Jop, the Town's Executive Director, Cindy Mahr, the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations with the schools, and Jamie Jurgensen, the Library Director, to have the Select Board, School Committee, and the Library Trustees, bring and vote on the necessary steps to move forward these projects. The Board of Selectmen will be meeting on June 1 to discuss and vote on the steps necessary for things to move forward for the DPW project. The Library Trustees are expected to meet on June 14 and will be discussing and voting on this as well. Town Counsel and the MLP staff are still trying to get movement with the schools. Recently, Catherine Mirick, from the school committee, was contacted regarding this process too.