



## CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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

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Laura Olton, Chair

Susan Morris, Vice Chair

Cynthia Mahr

Ellen Korpi

Martha Collins

Fred Bunger

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### Climate Action Committee Project Updates

February 4, 2022

#### Climate Action Plan

- Marybeth Martello:
  - Made minor revisions to the Climate Action Plan (CAP)
  - Met with Mike Thompson and Stephanie Hawkinson to discuss the CAP launch and Climate Action Committee (CAC) website
  - Made preliminary revisions to CAC website
  - Worked with Phyllis Theermann and Martha Collins who drafted a CAP press release and summary
  - Consulted with the Wellesley Municipal Light Plant (MLP), Department of Public Works, and Natural Resources Commission re: development of CAP implementation blueprints. See meeting materials for draft blueprints.
  - Contacted KLA about CAP graphics
- With help from Marybeth, Fred Bunger, and Martha Collins, Janet Mosley developed Scenario B, a second greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction model that assumes slower adoption rates for CAP strategies than outlined in Scenario A in the main CAP report. Scenario B will appear in an appendix to the CAP and is included in the meeting materials.

#### Green Communities

On January 31, Wellesley received notice that the town will be awarded a \$200,000 Green Communities grant from the Department of Energy Resources. The projects and amounts covered by this grant are listed below.

- \$60,000 – Air source heat pumps at Wellesley Ave. water treatment plant (WTP)
- \$60,000 – Air source heat pumps at Morses WTP
- \$60,000 – Air source heat pumps at Longfellow WTP
- \$10,000 – LED lighting in the Department of Public Works' Water and Sewer garage

- \$10,000 – Two hybrid electric police cruisers

Please note the Director of the Green Communities Division requests that the Town *hold off on publicly announcing the award until after the official announcement by Green Communities later this winter.*

Janet and Marybeth notified key departments about the award and Marybeth began the conversation about Wellesley's next Green Communities grant application with Meghan Jop.

### **Buildings**

*From Fred Bunger:*

#### **Buildings Working Group (BWG) of Climate Action Plan**

- Fred continues to contact commercial & institutional building owners and managers.
- Building Energy Tracking and Reporting (BETR) program outline and letter to owners and managers drafted. Will request voluntary reporting of 2021 energy data through Energy Star Portfolio Manager.
- Request to National Grid and MLP for building energy aggregation and electronic energy bill data for BETR program drafted.
- Attended Energy Star Portfolio Manager training on preparing reports for state/local building energy ordinances.

#### **Commercial Building Energy Roundtable**

CAP priorities are pushing the next Roundtable out to late March at earliest.

#### **Housing Task Force**

Marybeth presented a CAP summary to Housing Task Force on January 19. All-electric, net zero ready construction for affordable housing was discussed. There are several MA examples of passive house net zero ready affordable housing projects being built with no cost premium.

#### **Sustainability Articles for Town Meeting**

Planning Department and Planning Board proposed amendments to PSI, Design Review, and Definitions and Yard Regulations. Fred prepared a letter of CAC support to Advisory with clarifications on the background and purpose of the changes. Laura Olton, Ellen Korpi, and Marybeth Martello contributed to this memo and submitted to Advisory. Marybeth discussed Article 38 and the CAC's memo with Don McCauley and Meghan Jop.

#### **Dana Hall Sustainability Committee**

- Fred provided a Municipal Sustainable Design summary to the Dana Hall Sustainability Committee.
- Marybeth and Fred participated in a Zoom meeting with Dana Hall COO Charles Breslin and Dario Engineers to review the design for renewal of the Upper School building. The 75,000 sq.ft. building will replace a 54,000 sq.ft building. It will be all-electric HVAC and LEED certifiable.
- Fred sent a follow up note to the Dana Hall Sustainability Committee.

#### **RMI Building Electrification Accelerator (BEA)**

- The BEA group is quite active in accumulating information on zero energy municipal projects, comparing fossil fuel free ordinances, and advocacy for State energy legislation and a zero net energy code. Currently, the group is sharing strategies for Town Meetings.

- BEA monitored testimony before the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy regarding home rule petition for all-electric construction from Arlington, Lexington, Concord, Brookline, and Action.

### **Wellesley Middle School House Unplugged Project**

Participated in judging 8th grader team “house unplugged” projects at Wellesley Middle School.

### **Infrastructure Opportunities**

The meeting materials folder contains a file listing competitive infrastructure opportunities under President Biden’s Building a Better America program.

### **3R Working/Waste Group**

*From Sue Morris:*

We are working with Sustainable Wellesley on a new waste reduction campaign, Zero Waste Wellesley 2022. We had previously been gaining traction in January 2020 with the Zero Waste Wellesley Challenge to reduce plastic use by 50% in 2020 but that was put on hold due to Covid. Zero Waste Wellesley 2022 is a focused, year-long effort to reduce single use disposable plastic water bottles by 2023. “Let’s make Wellesley disposable water bottle free in 2023”. We plan to market the challenge and will also have an online sign-up process for Wellesley residents and businesses to commit to the challenge.

We are also still marketing the food waste diversion starter kits available at the RDF. The program continues to gain new participants each month.

The Wellesley High School food waste diversion pilot program is making good progress. We have had a number of calls and meetings with various people involved with different aspects of the proposed food waste diversion program and are working on finalizing the details of the pilot which we hope to launch in March of 2022. We have \$2,500 in funding from WEF and are seeking funding from other sources to try to assure the program will be funded and sustainable on an ongoing basis.

### **Climate Action Committee FY23 Budget**

*From Marybeth Martello:*

Marybeth, Laura Olton, and Lise Olney attended the Select Board’s budget presentation to Advisory on January 26. Meghan Jop fielded questions, including a question about the need for a CAC after the CAC Director begins reporting to the Executive Director of General Government Services.

### **Gas Leaks**

#### **Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative**

The meeting on February 1 covered the following topics:

- *Hydrogen and “Renewable Natural Gas”:* Sarah Griffith and Cathy Kristofferson of the Gas Leaks Allies gave a presentation on the suitability of hydrogen and RNG as replacement fuels for natural gas, highlighting the concerns over increased safety risks and increased GHG emissions.
- *GeoGrid Demonstration Pilots:* The DPU has approved National Grid’s installation of four GeoGrid (networked geothermal) demonstration projects in their gas territory. HEET will be holding charrettes in April for interested municipalities
- *Next Meeting:* March 2, 12 – 1:15 pm, with National Grid on their plans for hydrogen and their quarterly gas leak report.

## **DPU 20-80 Stakeholder Process on “The Future of Gas”**

The final report to the DPU is due from the utility companies and their consultants on March 1, 2022. There is likely to be significant follow-up regarding their recommendations. Recent stakeholder meetings were held on Jan. 25 and Feb. 1. Recordings are available on <https://thefutureofgas.com/>

## **A New Study Shows Methane Leaks from Gas Stoves**

Good summary from NPR: “Your natural gas cooking stove may leak climate-warming methane even when it is turned off, warns a new Stanford University [study](#). That's important because methane is a much [more potent greenhouse gas](#) than even carbon dioxide, though it doesn't linger in the atmosphere nearly as long.”

<https://www.npr.org/2022/01/27/1075874473/gas-stoves-climate-change-leak-methane>

## **Mobility**

*From Martha Collins:*

### **Boston Region Microtransit Forum**

On January 18, 2022, Martha Collins attended the Boston Region Microtransit Forum (Zoom) hosted by MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) and MBTA Advisory Board. Several panelists presented their experiences with micro-transit and last mile services connecting to MBTA.

### **Mobility Committee**

Highlights from the January 20 meeting:

- *Sustainable Mobility Plan* – A final draft of the Sustainable Mobility Plan (SMP) for the Town of Wellesley SMP was shared, with a request for any final comments by February 4. *A copy of the draft SMP is included in the meeting materials.*
- *Safe Routes To School* – The Town received a \$50,000 ARPA earmark to create a Safe Routes to School Master Plan. Colette Aufranc of the Select Board and Catherine Mirick of the School Committee will be presenting to the PTOs. Marybeth will join them to present on the CAP.
- *ADA Access* – Colette Aufranc and Meghan Jop met with Bill Henning of Boston Center for Independent Living, a non-profit organization that provides services to people with disabilities, regarding the Town’s efforts to make the three commuter rail stations ADA accessible. Colette and Meghan are awaiting thoughts for advocacy. Congressman Auchincloss’s office is also pursuing this issue through their legislative team working with the Federal Transit Authority and the Secretary of Transportation Buttigieg’s office.
- *MWRTA* – Colette Aufranc continues to work with MWRTA on service parameters, required app updates, and more effective geo-fencing with respect to Needham. Fares will be discussed at the end of January with the Advisory Committee.
- *MPO Micro transit meeting* – The meeting was well attended. The full meeting recording can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TZxe4okoPg>
- *MBTA Advisory Board* – [Calendar for 2022](#) - Wellesley is represented on the Commuter Rail and Green Committee

## **Proposed electric vehicle (EV) legislation supported by state Senator Cynthia Creem**

- [An Act incentivizing the adoption of zero-emission vehicles and the early retirement of high-emission vehicles](#), which would create additional incentives for individuals to transition to zero-

emission vehicles, including a Cash for Cumbustors program that encourages residents to retire their gas guzzlers and replace them with ZEVs;

- [An Act reducing the emissions of transportation network companies and private vehicle fleets](#), which would create regulations to require transportation network companies (TNCs) like Uber and Lyft to provide 90 percent of vehicle miles traveled in zero-emission vehicles by 2030;
- [An Act promoting access to zero-emission school buses](#), which would create a program to assist municipalities and regional school districts in purchasing or leasing zero-emission school buses, giving priority going to low-income communities and communities with high levels of childhood asthma;
- [An Act establishing guidelines for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations by condominium owners](#), which would prohibit a homeowners association or other similar association from unreasonably restricting an owner from installing an electric vehicle charging station; and
- [An Act promoting the recovery and recycling of electric vehicle batteries](#), which would create a commission to recommend policies that will promote the recovery and recycling of lithium-ion vehicle batteries.

### **MAPC Regional EV Strategy**

On January 27, Martha Collins attended the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) regional EV strategy meeting via Zoom. This meeting was attended by 24 employees and stakeholders from peer communities (such as: Ashland, Beverly, Cambridge, Holliston, Medford, Melrose, Newton, Sherborn, Weston, Winchester) and state non-profit organizations (such as: ENE, MAPC, NSORS). The agenda included updates from each community, with many sharing details on EV charging installations completed or underway, and a few sharing hybrid or full EV police vehicles and/or EV school buses procured or planned.

Presentation topics are summarized below:

- *Federal Funding Opportunities* – Kasia Hart of MAPC presented an update on federal funding opportunities. This included a description of the role regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations, or MPOs, such as MassDOT, MBTAS and RTAs play in federal funding allocation for transportation. The greatest opportunity for additional funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) which contains the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act, is through new discretionary grant programs that regions, states, and municipalities will compete for. MAPC created a website page for resources related to this topic: <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/iija/>. Two additional resources around federal funding for EVs and EV infrastructure:
  - a webpage put together by the Electrification Coalition that provides federal funding guidance for cities <https://www.electrificationcoalition.org/work/federal-ev-policy/federal-funding-guidance-for-cities/>, and
  - an upcoming webinar by Forth titled “What to Expect With Federal Funding for EVs”: <https://forthmobility.org/events/what-to-expect-with-federal-funding-for-evs>
- *Regional EV School Bus Procurement* – Jesse Way presented a conceptual plan for regional EV school bus procurement. Several attendees noted that because their municipalities use third-party transportation providers, the effort must include these organizations. As many as 60% of municipalities used third-party transportation service providers.
- *Regional Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Procurement* – Jesse Way presented a conceptual plan for regional EVSE procurement. Several attendees noted that their communities are municipal light plant (MLP) communities, so any plans would need to consider the cost

structure and grant availability to MLP communities. Jesse asked for the interested and applicable town representatives to contact him directly to stay informed on this process.

- *Regional EVSE Permitting* – Jesse Way presented a conceptual plan for regional EVSE permitting. Jesse asked for the interested and applicable town representatives to contact him directly to stay informed on this process.

Martha Collins contacted Jesse Way to indicate that the Town of Wellesley would like to remain informed on all three regional EV initiatives and provided the contact email address for MLP and Planning Board representatives.

### **Wellesley Municipal Light Plant (MLP) Sustainability Initiatives**

*From MLP Staff:*

#### **Wellesley Electric Customers Accelerated Reduction of Emissions (WECARE):**

Total Opt Outs: 667 (6.6%) Total Customers: 10,065, WECARE as of January 11: \$453,161, 100%: \$84,464

#### **Electric Vehicles Program:**

The MLP was awarded an ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) grant of \$100,000 to accelerate the electrification of the municipal fleet. The process for funds allocation is in the planning stage and will include money towards first cost premiums for EV purchases and installation of charging infrastructure. *(A copy of the grant program description is included in the meeting materials.)*

ENE provided direct support to residents for various EV support inquiries and BYOC enrollments. The January 2022 EV newsletter was sent out to participating residents. The end of 2021 EV survey closed with 573 responses and 365 additions to our mailing list (now at 521). We continue to collaborate with Sagewell to increase BYOC participation level, including marketing of BYOC to the list of MOR-EV rebate awardees (31 total rebates in 2021).

ENE is re-connecting with Wellesley Toyota and Wellesley Volkswagen for participation in events and support to customers. VW has a demo ID.4 vehicle for test drives. Bernardi Nissan (new dealer) does not expect the Ariya to arrive until at least 2023.

#### **Clean Comfort Air Source Heat Pump Program:**

246 Resident Consultations

| <b>Budget:</b> | <b>Admin Costs:</b> | <b>Rebates paid:</b> | <b>Rebates in process</b> | <b>Balance</b> | <b>Installs in progress</b> |
|----------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| \$125,000      | \$13,350            | \$23,342 (19)        | \$7,317 (5)               | \$80,991       | 22                          |

The Air Source Heat Pump pilot program has been extended through June 2022 and the budget has been approved up to \$125,000. The Wellesley Planning Board submitted an article for Annual Town Meeting to amend Yard Regulations concerning ASHP. The new zoning regulation, if passed, will allow heat pumps to be in setback areas with certain space restrictions.

#### **Appliance Rebate Program:**

The MLP staff met with a consultant from the Center for EcoTechnology, Inc. to review their final report on the state of the MLP Rebate Program. This project has been assigned to a management team to put together the findings of the report and make recommendations that will be presented to the MLB.

The current Appliance Rebate Program has continued, and, as of December 31, 2021, there have been 112 applications totaling \$9,950.

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

***Wellesley Library:***

Don Newell and Ellen Korpi met with representatives of the State Library Commission on January 5 to learn about solar and energy storage at other libraries in Massachusetts, in preparation for a scheduled meeting with the Wellesley Free Library Director and Chair of the Trustees on January 12. The goal of this meeting was to discuss with them their interest in the possibility of installing solar and a battery storage/micro grid at the Library. The Library was very excited about moving forward with this.

***Wellesley Sports Center:***

This project is moving forward with most of the system components installed. As in many industries, equipment availability and delivery has been a big challenge. As a result of a delay on solar wiring connectors and how labor-intensive the installation of those connectors is, the project completion date is now expected to be the end of February. Consolidated Edison Development (ConEd) has been scheduling meetings every other week, but those meetings will now be weekly until the project ends.

***Municipal Way Battery Storage System:***

Negotiations for the Energy Services Agreement and Site Lease Agreement are progressing and near completion. Due to some unknowns related to equipment costs, behind-the-meter assets reconstitution, and other factors, these agreements are now more convoluted than before due to the risks the current market presents.

**Climate Action Plan Energy Working Group:**

The Municipal Light Plant drafted implementation blueprints for three actions in the CAP energy pathway.