



CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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Climate Action Committee Project Updates

September 8, 2023

Proposed CAC meeting dates for FY24

Friday, October 6

Friday, November 3

Friday, December 1

Friday, January 12

Friday, February 2

Friday, March 1

Friday, April 5

Friday, May 3

Friday, June 14

Green Communities

The Department of Public Works (DPW) Water and Sewer garage LED project was completed on September 5. Janet is working with DPW to complete the final report to send to Green Communities to close out the grant.

Marybeth and Janet are working with Mark Rabinsky, Wellesley's Green Communities Coordinator as well as with Joe McDonough, Steve Gagosian, and Allen Hebert (Facilities Management Department) and Meghan Jop to determine the steps necessary to apply for a Green Communities \$500,000 building decarbonization grant to support the Warren Recreation Building renovations.

Governance and Outreach

- CAP Dashboard: Janet is drafting the action status tables for the remaining five CAP pathways and filling in metrics data for each Pathway with help from various CAC members, Town staff, and other sources.
- Embodied carbon considerations for Municipal Sustainable Buildings Guidelines, Site Plan Review, Design Review Board Design Guidelines Handbook - see under buildings (below)
- On August 9, Marybeth sent a memo to Town departments, boards, and committees. The memo reminded recipients of Wellesley's 2020 climate resolution and encouraged them to initiate/continue climate action by identifying a climate action champion and connecting with

the CAC. The memo provided examples of past and future projects.

Department/boards/committees did not respond, other than to thank Marybeth for the memo.

- Marybeth drafted the CAC's Annual Report.
- Marybeth spoke with Newton and consulted with the Energy Coaching Working Group and a few CAC members about the design of a Climate Action (Sustainable Six) campaign website. Marybeth is continuing to work with Mike Thompson to fully design and populate the site.
- A Welcome-to-Wellesley Working Group took shape at the 3R meeting (see below). This group includes Ellen Korpi, Mary Gard, Sharon Kirby, Marybeth Martello, Phyllis Theermann, Lisa Wolf, Dave Cohen, and Jamie Manzolini. The group met on 8/25 and 9/5 to discuss new resident engagement. The group is developing a welcome packet for home owners and renters.

Gas Transition

From Lise Olney

Legislative Update: State House hearings on S.2105/H.3203 "The Future of Clean Heat" (An Act Relative to the Future of Clean Heat in the Commonwealth). Bill fact sheet [here](#). Video summary of the bill [here](#). I testified in support of the bill on behalf of the CAC (testimony in meeting materials folder) at these two hearings:

- July 12, 2023, [Decarbonization Legislation Senate Hearing](#) of the Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy Committee, convened by Senate Chair Mike Barrett.
- July 13, 2023, [Decarbonization Legislation House Hearing](#) of the Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy Committee, convened by House Chair Jeff Roy.

Gas Leaks Working Group meeting, July 24, 2023 Mary Gard, Dave Hickey, Brandon Schmitt, Lise Olney
Possible Wellesley gas leaks safari: We discussed the Arlington gas leaks safari that Lise attended on June 9 (see previous CAC update) and considered proposing such an event to the CAC. We discussed including a representative from National Grid. We agreed to continue to explore this idea. Possible ideas for topics to include in a safari:

- Educate Wellesley community about the leak issue
- Significant Environmental Impact leaks and why it is critical to fix
- Impact of gas leaks on trees
- Leak repair often not effective –can new technologies be used in Wellesley?
- How electrification efforts are related to gas transition
- Current legislative options for accelerating the transition off gas
- Pipe replacement (under current state GSEP) is extremely expensive, creates stranded assets, and does not align with climate goals

Snap shot of current conditions from DPW:

- 108 open permits with National Grid
- 20-25% are leak repair related
- 40% are gas main relays
- 20-30% are new house or teardown/rebuild

Waste

From Sue Morris:

The 3R Working Group met in August. Dave Cohen and Jamie Manzolini gave updates on progress at the RDF and DPW. Sharon Kirby was on the call and she had been at the RDF promoting the food waste program. The RDF has been giving new food waste customers an average of 10 new food waste kits per

week. We discussed ways to promote the food waste program further as well as promote the RDF. We discussed the welcome packet that would have information about the RDF services. A working group was formed to strategize on this (see Governance section for more info on this working group).

Jamie Manzolini reported that Federal Realty, the owner of Linden Square, has begun diverting food waste through a 3rd party hauler. They have several totes on both sides of Linden for trash, recycling and food waste. This is progress as we have been pushing for this for a number of years.

We are working on an initiative to strategize about construction waste. Construction waste is a large source of landfill waste and a difficult problem to solve. We are looking into deconstruction initiatives and hoping to work with an intern and/or put some resources into ways to deal with this issue.

We are hoping to meet with some School Committee members to discuss a comprehensive approach to waste management at Wellesley Public Schools. Currently Wellesley Green Schools has a working group focused on food waste diversion and waste reduction at Wellesley Public Schools.

Marybeth, Phyllis, and Dave Cohen met with Lenny Izzo and two Health Department staff members to discuss waste reduction/management outreach to food service providers. Marybeth is drafting a best practices guide and Phyllis is assisting the Health Department with an educational forum for food service providers.

Buildings

From Fred Bunger

Buildings Working Group (BWG) update

B1 Regulatory:

- Reviewing Planning Department Design Review Board Design Guidelines Handbook update to incorporate sustainability. Received suggestion from Ellen Watts and Scott Waddell.
- Reviewing Site Plan Review process and forms to determine how data on fuel usage, energy modeling and analysis of impact on emissions could be added for projects requiring Site Plan Review.

B3 Municipal Action

- Scott Waddell provided a draft update of Municipal Sustainable Building Guidelines (MSBG) that includes embodied carbon, improved building enclosures, updates EV charging and other items. Will set up reviews with FMD and others.
- Offered heat load analysis calculation for all WHA buildings once WHA provides recent natural gas utility bills
- FMD is finishing its online portal to share municipal energy use. The intent is to share this information with departments, and eventually, the public

B4 Residential Action

- Energy Coach program development continues

B5 Commercial/Institutional

- BETR Roundtable scheduled for September 13th at 11 am.
- Intern completed work on expanding building owner/manager contact list.

MIT – Wentworth Report for Home Builders

A report completed by MIT, Public Policy for Net Zero Homes and Affordability, was used by the Home Builders and Remodelers of Massachusetts (HBRAMA) to claim the Opt-in Specialized Energy code was responsible for lack of affordable housing. The inaccuracies, misstatements and errors in the report raised a storm of protest among the climate action community. Ellen Watts, working with other BEA-Zero Carbon members met with the MIT-Wentworth study team to clarify the objections and understand the basis for the report. The study team stood by their work (paid for by HBRAMA) but understood that many of the main points were overshadowed by the HBRAMA press release which stressed the Opt-in Code. Contact with MIT-Wentworth will be maintained for future work.

BEA Retrofits Meeting August 17

- Meeting was dedicated to collecting public input to the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council (EEAC) for the Mass Save 3 year planning cycle. Mass Save is regulated by the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) and legislature, overseen by the EEAC and administered by the utilities (National Grid, Eversource, etc). Several pages of comments were gathered and will be collated and sent to the DPU (link here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U8oTzvOjLWLPh-iL47gF80hyQ3joNUcJRRQ4MvSrCNo/edit>)
- Public comment welcome at EEAC here: <https://ma-eeac.org/public-comment/>

From Marybeth

Wellesley Housing Authority

Marybeth, Phyllis Theermann, Mary Gard, and Janet Mosley met with Jackie Sullivan and Odessa Sanchez of the Wellesley Housing Authority (WHA). The meeting was helpful in understanding WHA operations, the WHA's limited budget, and the many barriers that stand between the WHA and funding to assist with sustainability-related building upgrades.

Networked Geothermal

Lise Olney, Marybeth, Dave Cohen, and Meghan Jop discussed the networked geothermal opportunity from HEET/MassCEC: a Request for Applications for funding to support a feasibility study for networked geothermal. We expected the RFA on 9/1, but it does not seem to be available yet.

Solar for All – DOER's Application to the USEPA

[Solar For All](#) is one of the three competitions being run by the EPA out of the [Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund](#) – a \$27 Billion dollar program enabled by the Inflation Reduction Act to support states, territories, Tribal and municipal governments, and non-profits to expand access to solar for low-income and disadvantaged communities by priming markets for investment/creating new programs/expanding existing programs. DOER and MassCEC are preparing an application to the USEPA (due Sept. 26). DOER's Straw Proposal is in the folder "Supplemental Reading for Project Updates." The proposal covers housing authorities and MLPs.

Lisa Wolf and Marybeth reviewed the Straw Proposal and didn't see a need to submit comments. However, DOER's Solar for All web page also has a simple form stakeholders, like Wellesley, can complete:

- Check a box to indicate "Interest in submitting a letter of support."
- Check a box to indicate "Interest in discussing a particular opportunity for collaboration."
- One sentence re: how your organization is interested in supporting Solar for All

Mobility

MAPC Regional EV Working Group

Martha Collins and Lisa Wolf attended the August 17 meeting which included discussions on:

- Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Coordinating Council (EVICC)
- Municipal updates
- Next steps for MAPC Regional EV Working Group

See slide deck in meeting materials folder for more information.

Zoe Lister, a CAC intern from McGill University, drafted a Public Transportation guide covering public transit, rideshare, trails, etc. Marybeth will work with Martha to develop a one-to-two page version of this Guide. Both versions will live on the Town website and flow through our usual distribution channels. We will also distribute hard copies at Tolles Parsons, Housing Authority properties, the Food Pantry, etc. Marybeth will look into options for translating the Guide.

The EV Working Group made progress on development of an EV First Policy. The text of the draft policy is near-final. The Working Group will discuss process at its next meeting. DPW is working on a fleet inventory to be required by the policy.

Stephanie Hawkinson issued a News and Announcements about new electric vehicle rebates.

Wellesley MLP Sustainability Initiatives

From MLP Staff:

Sustainability Metrics

[Link to Sustainability Metrics spreadsheet.](#)

Updates on Metrics being tracked:

- **Carbon Offsets:** for EVs, BYOC, solar
- **Heat pumps:** National Grid heat pump installs data added
- **Batteries:** # and total kWh
- **AMI** meters installed

EV Strategy Working Group Update

The inter-departmental EV Strategy Working Group reconvened in March 2023 and since then, with MLP input, has:

- Revised the public charging rate structure to maximize use and minimize confusion, and to allow peak load management through peak pricing
- Developed a set of criteria for optimizing public charger locations
- Created a map of all public parking/potential charging locations in town, showing proximity to multi-unit housing, municipal workplaces and public transportation
- Ranked all potential charging locations according to established criteria
- Identified top locations for adding charging stations

The group is now working toward an Wellesley EV First Policy to set a process and goals for fleet vehicle transition, adding public chargers, and partnering with commercial entities.

Energy Coach Program Development

The planning team is making progress on all fronts of this project. This includes planning a webinar as part of a comprehensive marketing campaign targeting late fall for a hard launch. 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.

An orientation for coaches is planned for October to set expectations, review procedures and policies, and introduce available resources, before the program launch later in the fall.

Decarbonization Audit

CET is performing an evaluation of the impact of the program by following up with each audit recipient to see what steps they have taken or plan to take to decarbonize their homes since receiving the audit.

Preliminary results:

- 14 customers surveyed
- 10 participants have already installed upgrades of some kind (heat pumps being the most popular measure, followed by weatherization)
- All but two participants said they are planning to install additional upgrades in the next 12 months

The launch of the Energy Coach program will open up opportunities for exchanges between the auditor and Coach to follow up with potential coaching clients.

Solar Policy

WMLP proposes a new solar subsidy program for residential and small commercial customers for Board review and adoption. Details will be presented based on [the document linked here](#).