



CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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Climate Action Committee Project Updates

February 2, 2024

Green Communities

Progress continued toward a Green Communities Building Decarbonization grant for the Warren Building. ECI and weatherization experts carried out several visits to the Warren Building and provided a revised proposal on January 27. Janet and Marybeth met with Wellesley's Green Communities Coordinator on January 31 to confirm documentation needed for the application due in mid-April.

Climate Leader Communities Application

Janet is working to develop a model to estimate emissions reductions for the building decarbonization roadmap. The Department of Public Works (DPW) is close to completing the municipal vehicle inventory necessary for the fleet electrification plan.

Marybeth presented the Zero Emissions Vehicle First Policy to three boards:

- **Library Trustees** (January 11). The Trustees asked if they could write their own policy. They voiced concern about signing a town-wide policy given the Library has just one van (already an electric vehicle (EV)).
- **Recreation Commission** (January 16). The EV Working Group included the Recreation Commission as signatories to the policy given that they lease vehicles and have considered purchasing vehicles. The Commission didn't think they should sign the policy given that they don't yet own vehicles. After consultation with Lisa Wolf, Dave Cohen, and Meghan Jop, Marybeth let Matt Chin (Recreation Department Head) and Paul Cramer (Recreation Commission Chair) know that the EV Working Group would remove their names from the policy.
- **School Committee** (January 30). The School Committee was receptive and will vote on policy adoption on February 13.
- The **Municipal Light Board** and **Board of Public Works** approved the policy in December.
- The Select Board will most likely consider the policy after the School Committee votes.

CAC FY25 Budget Request

Marybeth attended the Advisory meeting on January 17 where Meghan Jop presented the Select Board's budget. There were no questions concerning the CAC's FY25 budget request.

Outreach

The Climate Action Campaign Working Group meets weekly. The group is:

- Piloting neighborhood-centered outreach for two areas with concentrations of fuel oil customers.
- Getting closer to kicking off a town-wide climate action campaign with a focus on heat pumps. Heat pump outreach will highlight benefits for oil/propane/resistance customers as well as new developments re: natural gas prices and furnace regulations that will make the transition from gas to electric more attractive.

Gas Transition

From Lise Olney

Gas Transitions Allies meeting recap, January 25, 2024

Topics covered:

- **Legislative Update** – The House is likely to release a climate bill in the near future, focusing on electrification and permitting issues. The Senate bill may follow, with a focus on gas transition, Mass Save reform, and transportation. Having the two bills cover somewhat different areas may make it easier when they get to conference committee. Advocacy continues for the **Future of Clean Heat** key provisions. Also, strong advocacy for **Mass Save reform**. Senator Creem's bill S.2103 would significantly upgrade home assessments to cover a broader range of improvements and would require a report to the homeowner on steps to get to zero emissions. See attached for summary of key talking points re. Mass Save reform.
- **Networked geothermal project announced in Boston:** Last week, Mayor Wu announced a new networked geothermal project that will serve 347 units of public housing. The project is a partnership that includes HEET, National Grid, and the Boston Housing Authority. See Boston Globe report attached, "Boston Housing Authority, National Grid team up on geothermal project in Dorchester," Jan. 25, 2024.

Next Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative meeting scheduled for February 29, 11 am to 12:30 pm.

Focus will be on the DPU 20-80 order on the Future of Gas and its implications for the gas transition. If there is a climate bill released by then we will also discuss provisions in the climate bill related to gas and to the DPU 20-80 order. Speakers: Jess Nahigian, Sierra Club; Amy Boyd Rabin, ELM.

Mobility

ZEV Policy

See above under Climate Leader Program.

The EV Working Group discussed uses for a \$100,000 state earmark for EV supply equipment or policy development. Projects supported by the earmark need to be under contract by June 30. The MLP, DPW, Police, and CAC have discussed and are exploring potential projects.

Climate Action and Schools

From Catherine Mirick:

SMMA put together a sustainability brochure describing all the features of the new Hunnewell school. Catherine has seen a hardcopy version and will share the digital version she has requested with the committee once she has received it.

Potential Municipal Recycling Coordinator staff position

Marybeth shared the part-time Waste Reduction Coordinator position description with the Human Resources Director for review and we're awaiting her feedback.

Buildings

From Fred Bunker:

Building Working Group

The Building Working Group (BWG) is meeting bi-weekly to connect with Planning, work on updating the Municipal Sustainable Building Guidelines update, plan Energy Roundtables and respond to building improvement opportunities.

Building Energy Improvement Houses of Worship

- Met with Wellesley Catholic Church Business Manager and site building managers for St Paul's and St John the Evangelist. They manage over 70,000 sq. ft. in 8 buildings, 5 on gas heat and 3 on oil heat. They are in the quote phase with Nuwave Energy for converting the 20,000 sq. ft. St John the Evangelist school to heat pumps. I suggested they consider ground source heat pump as an alternate. They will contact the archdiocese about scheduling energy audits and will consider filling-out the MIP&L spreadsheet for each building.
- Spoke with Village Church representative about status of planning for energy upgrades. They worked with MIP&L and have been maintaining the spreadsheet for years. Energy tracking is not showing much improvement. Ground source heat pumps considered but found no interested bidders. Still burning oil and considering options within available funds.
- Reached out to Wellesley Baptist, Wellesley Friends, Wellesley First Church of Christ Scientist and St. Andrews Episcopal. Awaiting replies.
- Continuing dialog with Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills and Temple Beth Elohim and awaiting audit plans. 12/14. Isabelle Wohlin following progress at Wellesley Hills Congregational.
- In contact with Deb Cogill of Wellesley Friendly Aid to see how we could help.

DOE Better Buildings webinar 1/9 “Winter heat pump reality check: is yours keeping up?”

DOE National Energy Research Labs webinar showcased 3 energy retrofits projects in an office building, a library, and a school campus.

Middle School Home Unplugged project

- Provided consulting to 4 middle school classes on their science project: House Unplugged.

Wellesley MLP Sustainability Initiatives

From MLP Sustainability Manager Lisa Wolf:

Sustainability Metrics

[Link to Sustainability Metrics spreadsheet](#) (updated through 12/24 – to be updated quarterly)

EV Charging and Telematics

Sagewell has so far enrolled 25 scheduled charging customers in their pilot telematics program. The enrollment target is 50 vehicles. This is a 6-month trial, to collect data from participating customers including state of charge, charging status, and odometer reading. Telematics will make direct power curtailment possible, though this won't happen yet, and telematics will enable the MLP to better gauge compliance in the program.

Audi, GM, Ford, Tesla can be actively managed, but each with their own proprietary API. Sagewell is using API aggregator, Enode in this 6-month pilot.

Energy Coach Program

Currently 26 clients have open cases with an energy coach, most seeking help related to heating and cooling. We are still recruiting coaches and need to expand our capacity before widely broadcasting the program, although a recent articles in [Sustainable Wellesley's newsletter](#) and the [Swellesley Report](#), plus sharing of these articles on Facebook seems to be accelerating the rate of coach requests this week.

Abode Energy and the Center for Ecotechnology are helping promote the energy coach program by directing their referrals to us when appropriate. Abode's WMLP page is being modified to direct clients first to a coach before seeking advanced consulting with Abode. CET auditors are distributing a coaching program flyer to their referrals.

[Link to Shared Google Drive for Coaches](#).

New Solar Incentive

Remaining tasks: 1) Customer Service works with Munis to set up a new wholesale net export rate; 2) ENE sets up portal for submitting customer information; 3) program launch and promotion.

Public EV Charging

Currently Town-owned public EV charging stations are not covering annual operation and maintenance and portal costs with current utilization. A campaign promoting awareness of available charging options will be developed by the EV working group, but first a baseline for utilization of the existing stations (at Calvin, Tailby and Police public lots) and anticipated stations (Hunnewell School and Town Hall) is being established to track increases in use due to awareness-raising activities.

An alternative to Town ownership that other peer communities are employing for expanding public charging infrastructure without incurring ongoing losses is to provide support, including cost-sharing/incentives, to commercial property owners. In exchange, commercial partners are expected to meet MLP recommendations for metering and fees. The MLP is currently evaluating this option.