



CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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Lise Olney

Climate Action Committee Project Updates

March 7, 2024

Green Communities

Progress continued toward a Green Communities Building Decarbonization grant for the Warren Building. Marybeth continued to work on aligning a weatherization proposal from ECI (a building energy efficiency vendor) with the work Facilities Management and Permanent Building Committee are already planning for the Warren building while also consulting with Wellesley's Green Communities Coordinator to make sure we have the information and documentation needed for the grant application.

Climate Leader Communities Application

Janet completed an initial model estimating emissions reductions for the building decarbonization roadmap. Janet and Marybeth met to discuss the results of the modeling and next steps with Joe McDonough and Allen Hebert. The Department of Public Works (DPW) has completed an updated municipal vehicle inventory and developed a draft model necessary for the fleet electrification plan.

All vehicle-owning boards (except Select Board) have reviewed the Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Policy. MLP, DPW, and Schools approved it. The Recreation Department will not be included in the policy because they don't yet own a vehicle. Library requested to be exempt from the policy. The Select Board will discuss the policy on March 12.

Outreach

The Climate Action Campaign Working Group meets weekly. Programs underway or under development include:

- Heat Pump Webinar, March 21 at 7pm. Publicity starts this week. Martha created flyer and provided valuable feedback on press release and other materials.
- Great discussions with the Library about launching a "Climate Café" or "Climate and Coffee" program. Where Climate Ambassadors hold office hours in the Library's community room on a regular basis. The Library has offered to kick start this initiative by collaborating with some of their existing programs.
- EV Showcase and Test Drive Event on May 9 at MassBay parking lot

- Exploration of partnership with Homeworxs energy involving door to door engagement with residents to encourage home energy audits. Norwood completed a very successful partnership with Homeworxs.
- Neighborhood-centered outreach pilot for two areas with concentrations of fuel oil customers. Marybeth and Martha worked on letter and script for this initiative.

DEI

Marybeth attended 14 hours of Diversity Equity and Inclusion training organized through the Select Board's Office.

Gas Transition

From Lise Olney

Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative meeting, February 29, 2024.

The focus of the meeting was on the [Future of Gas order](#) issued in December by the Department of Public Utilities and what it means for the transition off gas. The meeting was highly informative, and I recommend watching the recording [HERE](#).

Speakers were:

- Ann Berwick, Sustainability Director for the City of Newton (and former Chair of the MA Department of Public Utilities)
- Amy Boyd Rabin, Vice President of Policy, Environmental League of Massachusetts
- Jess Nahigian, State Political Director, Sierra Club

Amy Boyd Rabin wrote a helpful summary of the order [here](#).

Our next meeting will be in April and will focus on the Gas System Enhancement Program (GSEP) and the report from the state's GSEP Working Group, which was issued in January. We will be talking about research on how municipalities can start planning for retirement of the gas system.

Mobility

Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Policy

See update in Climate Leader Communities Application section above.

EV Working Group

EV Working Group met March 4 and discussed the following:

- Progress made towards identifying uses for a \$100,000 state earmark for EV supply equipment or policy development.
- Best locations for the next two public charging stations – likely Waban Lot and Eaton Ct.
- Draft Town of Wellesley EV Policy on municipal fleet transition to EVs and public EV charging infrastructure
- Alternatives to Town ownership of public charging stations – pros, cons, and unknown factors of a 3rd party lease model
- Quarterly meeting schedule moving forward. As needed meetings with a smaller group to advance the projects that will utilize the \$100,000 state earmark.

From Martha Collins:

- Forwarded information on a grant for Regional Transit Authorities to electrify to Colette Aufranc. She explained that Wellesley would not be likely to receive funding as MWRTA was awarded in the last round.
- Posted two graphics from AAA on the breakeven comparison for EVs relative to internal combustion engine cars in the Sustainable Living Wellesley FB group (see Figures 2 and 4 here: <https://www.recurrentauto.com/research/just-how-dirty-is-your-ev>)

Mobility Committee

February meeting canceled.

Regional EV Strategy Meeting

The February meeting focused on on-street EV charging models and highlighted work in Boston and NYC. See the [slide deck](#) and a [Q&A with the City of Boston](#).

Climate Action and Schools

Marybeth drafted summary (including helpful revisions from Fred) of Hunnewell sustainability process and features and shared with Stephanie and Sharon Gray so they could include in their outreach materials.

From Sue Morris:

Wellesley Green Schools

Wellesley Green Schools Meeting was held at the end of January and the following was discussed:

Waste & Food Diversion

- Sue Morris met with Katrina Bressani from Whitsons (who replaced Matt Delaney) a few times and are working on implementing some initiatives to improve sustainability at the schools. Sue has also been working with the WHS Climate Action Club on restarting food waste diversion at WHS. She is also helping some students from the WHS Coding Club on a possible app that would help with the efficiency at the RDF Give & Take area
- Alison Cross, who worked with the town and schools on food waste, talked about Food for Free as she has been in touch with them, and they are interested in working with Wellesley again. Alison explained how their process works, including the food “packaging”
- Hunnewell has some recycling and liquids diversion that started with the opening of the new school
- WMS composting is going well but very much needs volunteers. Compost Volunteers can [sign up here](#)
 - Lunch blocks from 11:20-1:00pm
 - Stand by the composting stations to help kids dispose of their trash properly and monitor
- Schofield is starting a breakfast program that will probably roll out to all elementary schools which could add to the food recovery/waste volume

Margie Bell from Recircable (Reusable containers for restaurants and schools) spoke:

- <https://www.recircable.com/>
- Customers use free app
- Must return container w/in 2 weeks

- Credit Card required
- Containers bar-coded
- Restaurant pays small fee for bar code/tracking capability
- Margie is working with Matt Delaney at Newton High School (1000 meals/day) and would like to work with Wellesley schools and restaurants

Safe Routes To School

- There was a yard sign design contest for students in grades 2-8
- <https://www.mass.gov/doc/bus-stop-safety-contest-guidelines-english/download>
- There was a Walk and Roll held on 2/27/24

Recycling Coordinator position

- On March 4 Human Resources discussed a new, DPW-funded, part-time Waste Reduction Coordinator position. Marybeth will follow up with Dave on the outcome.

Buildings

From Fred Bunger:

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 and Non-profits.

- Initial planning is underway for an April Roundtable concentrating on energy/emissions reductions in Houses of Worship (HoW), non-profits and colleges/schools. The larger land area with parking lots permits these properties to be excellent candidates for ground source heat pump heating and cooling. Sent letter to HoW to save the date and solicited volunteers for 5-minute summary of their decarbonization journey.
- GreenerU, a Waltham based firm, helps institutions navigate the organizational, operational, and infrastructure changes required to reach climate neutrality through planning, engineering, and implementation. They have been hired by the Village Church to develop plans, requests for proposals, and outreach campaign on replacement of oil-fired heating with either ground-source or air-source heat pumps. The Village Church is currently awaiting proposals. A representative from GreenerU has agreed to talk at the Roundtable and provide a decarbonization case study.
- Village Church agreed to provide a summary of their current project for the Roundtable.
- St. Andrews Episcopal contacted, sexton promised to set up an audit, planning to talk with Board member.
- Still awaiting replies from Wellesley Baptist, Wellesley Friends, and Wellesley First Church of Christ Scientist.
- Continuing dialog with Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills and Temple Beth Elohim and awaiting audit plans. Isabelle Wohlin following progress at Wellesley Hills Congregational.
- In contact with Deb Cogill of Wellesley Friendly Aid to see how we could help.

BEA Retrofits group 2/8

Jake Marin of Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC) reviewed the State of Vermont energy efficiency programs. VEIC runs the incentive programs for the State, not the utilities. The incentives are provided to the distributors and installers, so it is a simple point-of purchase incentive with no paperwork by the homeowner. All utilities have a percent energy consumption charge on their bills. The results are striking: 63,000 heat pumps or 18% of homes have heat pumps. They feel the key is educated distributors and a simplified system. VEIC also runs energy efficiency incentive programs in other states.

BEA Municipal Staff Group

On March 4 Marybeth attended the first meeting of a BEA group focused on convening and supporting municipal staff interested in building electrification.

Better Buildings Advocates 2/15

MCAN is retrenching as it lost funding so laid off staff. The group supports the climate bills and is still pushing the embodied carbon bills. There is discussion of the best way of collaborating/integrating work with BEA, ZeroCarbonMA, Mass Power Forward, 350.org, etc.

DOER Town Hall 2/23

Eliazbeth Mahony, DOER commissioner conducted a town hall where each DOER division head spoke on their 2023 accomplishments and 2024 goals.

- Joanna Troy: IRA – DOE federal funding, HER & HEAR will be coordinated by DOER. Planned March 18 public input forum
- Joanne Bissetta: Green Communities Climate Leader program: July 19 deadline for #1 and December 31 for #2
- Eric Friedman: Lead by Example; state EV use and embodied carbon in state projects.
- Samantha Meserve: Renewable Energy Division streamlining SMART (Solar MA Renewable Target) program
- Joann Bodemar: Energy Efficiency; building energy efficiency reporting program for >20,000 sq.ft. bldgs.; MassSave 3yr plan post April 1 for public input in April, May & June

Wellesley MLP Sustainability Initiatives

From MLP Sustainability Manager Lisa Wolf:

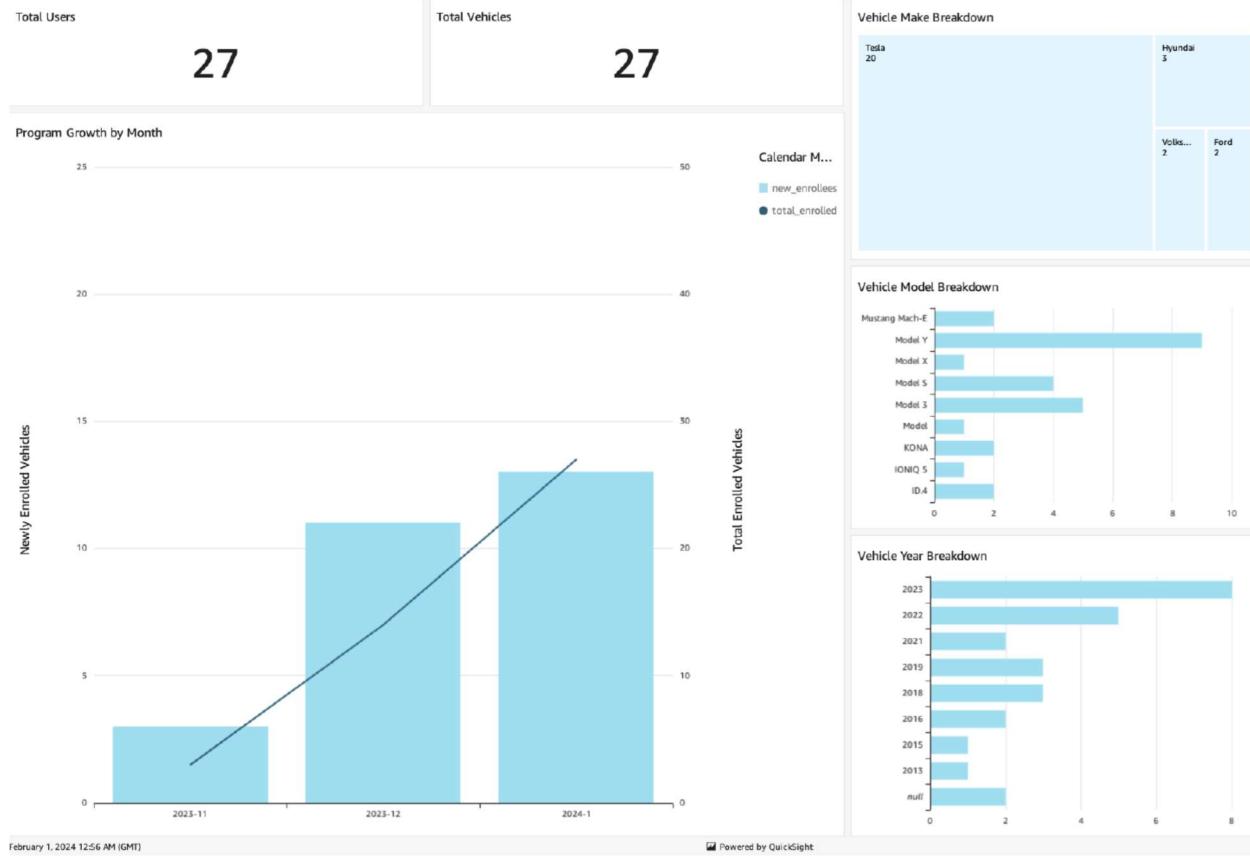
Sustainability Metrics

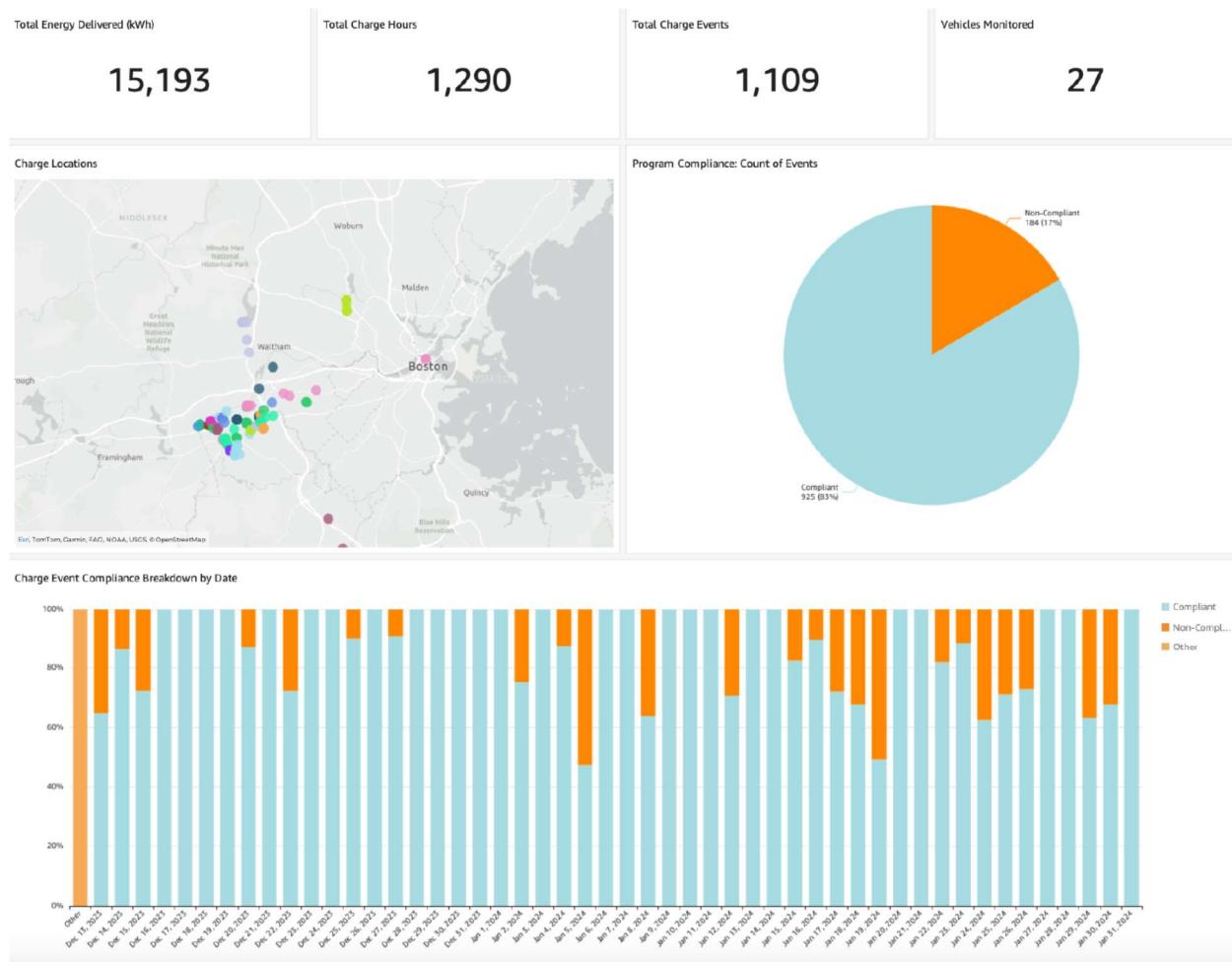
[Link to Sustainability Metrics spreadsheet](#) (updated through 12/24 – to be updated quarterly)

EV Charging and Telematics

Sagewell is midway through a 6 month trial to collect data from participating customers including state of charge, charging status, and odometer reading. They currently have 45 customers enrolled.

Telematics will make direct power curtailment possible, and enable the MLP to better gauge compliance in the program. Preliminary results show 83% compliance with charging during off-peak hours. This does not distinguish between 'at home' and 'away' charging, so may not reflect actual compliance at home.





Energy Coach Program

Currently 36 clients have open cases with an energy coach, most seeking help related to heating and cooling, but also with solar, EVs, hot water systems, and electric appliances.

The program has three new coaches who are preparing to begin coaching this spring and going through HeatSmart Alliance training in March. Meanwhile the Coach Working Group is planning a webinar for March 21 with the latest information about heat pump technologies, incentives and benefits. Abode Energy will partner with us in this presentation. We will also introduce the energy coach program and hope to recruit new clients and possibly new coaches at this event. This will accompany a broad promotion through multiple town channels: schools, town news and announcements, NRC newsletter, and through MLP bill inserts. The Climate Action office is planning a separate campaign targeting specific neighborhoods with primarily oil heat for fossil heat conversions and energy coach services.

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

New Solar Incentive

Remaining tasks:

- 1) Customer Service works with Munis to test new wholesale net export rate;
- 2) Confirm that current billing practice of applying any credit to the water/sewer bill makes WMLP whole;
- 3) Execute contract with ENE; ENE sets up portal for submitting customer information;

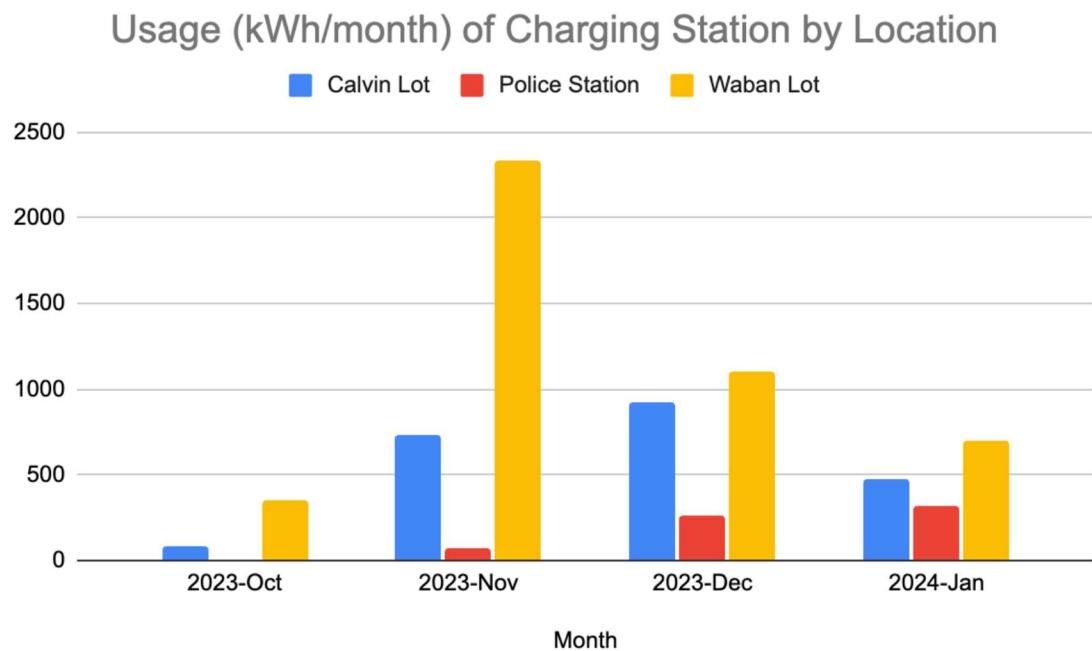
4) Program launch and promotion.

Public EV Charging

[This draft document](#) summarizes the work of the EV Working Group to develop a process for addressing Wellesley's GHG emissions from the transportation sector by 1) planning for a municipal fleet transition to electric vehicles (EVs), and 2) increasing public charging locations to facilitate EV ownership for residents and municipal employees.

Regarding utilization of the existing Town-owned public charging stations (at Calvin Rd/Sprague Field, Waban and Police public lots), shown below, the Police Lot is underutilized, with average daily use less than 5 kWh/day per port during the period of record. The Calvin and Waban Street lots saw about 13 kWh/day and 25 kWh/day per port, respectively. A minimum daily usage of 6 kWh per port is required to cover annual costs. The Police public charger currently is not covering annual costs. A contributing factor is the high demand fee assessed by the MLP on some meters.

Promoting awareness and utilization of all public charging stations is recommended; also the MLP should explore an alternate demand charge structure to avoid disincentivizing charging installations.



Municipal fleet inventory

In support of the ZEV policy approved by this board in December, the MLP has provided a fleet inventory to the DPW to add to a town-wide vehicle inventory.

The MLP is also expecting an estimate from EVSE installer Voltrek by March 1, for installing a 2-port, level 2 charger in the Garage. Anticipated completion before the end of FY24, and this project should be fully funded through a State earmark.

Other action items for MLP

1. Evaluate engineering required for potential new Eaton Court and Waban Lot installations (goal: operational by year-end 2024)
2. Develop model for commercial property owners to install public EV chargers at their workplaces

and privately-owned property, including possible incentives.