

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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Climate Action Committee Project Updates

May 1, 2024

Green Communities

Progress continued toward a Green Communities Building Decarbonization competitive grant for the Warren Building.

- Grant submission due May 10th.
- Janet is drafting the grant narrative and tracking all the pieces needed for the application.
- Marybeth is working with National Grid to apply for Mass Save incentives for this project in advance of submitting the Green Communities grant. Memorandum of Understanding received from National Grid.
- Received a weatherization proposal from ECI.
- Received much of the documentation needed for the application from FMD/PBC's construction design engineer. Working to make sure documents include all required information for the grant.
- Memo submitted to Select Board requesting a letter of commitment for at least 25% matching funds for this project.

Climate Leader Communities Application

Janet put together several proposed scenarios of municipal building electrification through 2050 to share with FMD. Janet reached out to resident architect Scott Waddell for assistance with estimating energy use of future all-electric buildings.

DPW developed a new vehicle inventory and analysis tool in Access to assist DPW with an EV transition planning which will also be used for the ZEV transition plan needed for the Climate Leaders application. DPW has received data from all departments and is checking the data for any errors. Last week, Janet developed template tables for documenting the transition plan for the application. Janet shared the template tables with DPW so they can refine the inventory tool to provide the needed input.

Outreach

The Climate Action Campaign Working Group meets weekly. Programs completed and planned include:

- Heat Pump Webinar, March 21 at 7pm. 115 registrations, 48 attendees. Marybeth sent follow-up slides and recording last week.
- Tabling at Public Health Week, April 2, 10:00am – noon, Library Lobb
- Building Energy Roundtable, April 10, 11:00 a.m.– 12:30 p.m., Zoom. (see below)
- Climate Café, April 25, 3-5:00 p.m., Wellesley Free Library Commons. Publicized widely. 17-20 attendees. We connected attendees with energy coaching, provided advice on heat pump water heaters, heard about obstacles for condo owners, received an invite to attend a condo association annual meeting, and received an invite to attend a realtor staff meeting at Advisors Living. Marybeth also received inquiries from residents who were unable to attend the Café but were interested in info.
- Regional Workshop for Landcare Professionals, May 8, 10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m., 1605 Mass. Ave, Lexington, MA (NRC event)
- Electric Vehicle Showcase and Test Drive Event, May 9, 4-7:00 p.m., MassBay Community College Parking Lot, 50 Oakland Street, Wellesley. Publicizing widely. (see below)
- Wellesley Wonderful Weekend, May 18-19 (see below)
- Fred Bunker will offer energy coaching classes at COA starting in September.
- Drafting a proposal for door-to-door canvassing with a non-profit to encourage home energy audits.
- Exploration of a series of Climate Action courses to be offered via a joint Recreation/Library program in the fall.

Possible Partnership with Harvard University STAR Lab

On April 25 Marybeth, Phyllis Theermann, and Mary Gard met with Professor Michael Hiscox; Catherine Nerhing, STAR Lab Coordinator; and graduate student Aleksandra Conevska to discuss a partnership in support of research to advance understanding of factors motivating and hindering climate action by residents. Harvard's STAR Lab investigates this topic in Australia and Ireland. An American case study could focus on climate action efforts in Wellesley. Partnering with the STAR Lab on a door-to-door canvassing project could provide a fruitful opportunity to systematically test and improve our community engagement methods. We are awaiting additional information from Harvard about what a partnership could entail. Marianne Moore, Professor Emeritus of Wellesley College helped to make this STAR Lab connection through Phyllis and Marianne joined us at the meeting.

MassEnergize Conference

On April 3 Marybeth, Phyllis and Mary attended the MassEnergize Conference at Brandeis University. The conference was an excellent networking opportunity.

Supporting Other Communities

Sustainability Directors in MA have an excellent culture of sharing, recognizing we're all in the same boat with limited time and resources! This month Marybeth:

- Met with Brookline to share Wellesley's experiences in developing and implementing a bylaw to allow air source heat pump condensers in yard set back area.
- Met with Weston to talk through our process for planning and running EV Showcase & Test Drive events.

- Received a request from the 350.org node for Sherborn, Holliston and Ashland to reference Wellesley's Be part of it! Climate Action website in their outreach.
- Was asked by Ashland for permission to adapt materials used for outreach advocating for the Specialized building energy code.

Mobility

EV Showcase and Test Drive Event

The next EV Showcase and Test Drive Event is scheduled for May 9th 4-7pm in the Mass Bay parking lot. Martha, Lisa Wolf, Marybeth, and others are working to coordinate and promote the event. 12 test drive EVs and PHEVs confirmed, may add more based on registrations. Attendees can now register for two test drives. Registration here: <http://bit.ly/EVMay2024>.

New Transportation and Mobility Manager Position

The position description for the now-approved Transportation and Mobility Manager is available to read in the Shared Meeting Materials Folder and should be posted very soon. Please DO NOT SHARE the position description until it is posted on the Town website.

MWRTA Expansion Plans

MWRTA is in the process of procuring 3 light duty trolleys to assist with the expansion of ridership. At the end of the slide deck (in the Shared Meeting Materials Folder) it is noted that Wellesley Catch Connect improvements are coming 2024. This will include evening and weekend hours. More to come on that information as MWRTA works on their pilot programs.

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I-90 Corridor Development and Resiliency Plan

The Town is part of a regional initiative known as the I-90 Corridor Development and Resiliency Plan. This plan aims to bring together state agencies, regional planning organizations, and local municipalities to establish a comprehensive framework for guiding land use regulation, zoning, transportation, and infrastructure investment decisions along a 20-mile stretch of I-90 from Watertown to Ashland towards a more socially, environmental, and economically sustainable future. A portion of Wellesley is touched as part of the plan and we have been included. This offers opportunities to improve regional connections, but it will also be looking broader EV charging for buses and fleet locations and development/open space potential. The scope of work on the plan is in the Shared Meeting Materials Folder for review.

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MAPC Regional EV Working Group Meeting

Martha Collins and Dave Cohen attended this meeting focused on collective purchasing and incentives available for medium and heavy-duty vehicles. Slides will be available.

Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Policy

See update in Climate Leader Communities Application section above.

Climate Action in Schools

Wellesley Green Schools

From Sue Morris:

The Wellesley Middle School composting program continues to evolve. Jonathan Rabinowitz is discussing changes with the WMS administration like having a mandatory student rotation to monitor the trash, recycling, and compost disposal. Monitoring continues to be the biggest challenge. There are also difficulties getting cooperation from the custodians. Food recovery at the elementary schools through Whitsons Cares is going well.

Wellesley Green Schools is working with some PTOs on making events like the WMS Mini Marathon more sustainable. There are challenges in making big school and town events sustainable, but we believe this is necessary from a waste standpoint.

We hope to have the CAC and DPW cosponsor a waste reduction article similar to one in Newton and Needham. This will be discussed with the 3R Working Group and Climate Action Committee.

Waste

Wellesley Wonderful Weekend Picnic Waste Diversion

Marybeth, Janet, Phyllis, and Dave Cohen continue to meet with Carl Nelson (Celebrations Committee Treasurer) to plan waste diversion efforts for the WWW picnic. Carl has reached out to organizations to sign up volunteers to monitor the four waste diversion stations. Carl will ask vendors to use BPI certified containers for food served. Phyllis and Marybeth are working to recruit experienced volunteers to support volunteers monitoring the bins. We welcome volunteers to help! Please contact Marybeth if you can volunteer for an hour to staff the CAC table or monitor bins at the picnic. Janet and Marybeth are working on coordinating bins with DPW, developing signage and labels for the bins, and other logistics. Janet will attend the picnic to coordinate and help where needed.

Waste Coordinator Position

Job posting was published April 24. Dave and Marybeth hope to interview candidates in late May. Please share the job posting with your networks. See the following link for the job posting:
<https://wellesleyma.gov/Jobs.aspx?UniqueId=101&From=All&CommunityJobs=False&JobID=Waste-Reduction-Coordinator-up-to-19-hou-450>

DPW-Black Earth Curbside Compost Pilot

As of early April, 80 residences were pre-registered for the program and 26 were confirmed. Black Earth will start picking up food waste compost in Wellesley once there are 50 confirmed registrations.

Buildings

From Fred Bunker:

Building Working Group

Meeting bi-weekly to connect with Planning, work on MSBG update, plan BWG Roundtables and respond to building improvement opportunities. On April 16, the group discussed the potential extra costs for some of the proposed Municipal Sustainable Building Guideline updates and how to communicate certain proposed MSBG updates should be explored, but would likely be adopted on a case-by-case basis, not considered a default for all projects.

Building Energy Improvement Houses of Worship and Non-profits.

- A Roundtable webinar for Houses of Worship, non-profits and colleges/schools was held via zoom April 10th. Rob Durning of GreenerU presented on long-term planning for getting off fossil

fuels. The “Direct Pay” 30% federal incentives in the IRA for renewable energy projects, PACE, and other financing options were reviewed. Representatives from Village Church and Wellesley College reported on their geothermal conversion and other active energy conservation/conversion projects. Twenty-eight attendees included representatives from 7 Wellesley Houses of Worship, 3 schools and colleges, and a church in Bedford.

- Roundtable follow-up included review of electrical rates for HoW properties, requests for MLP incentives matching MassSave and request for help in assessing geothermal potential.
- Slides [here](#). Recording [here](#).

BEA Retrofits group 4/11

Andy Winslow of NEEP (Northeast Energy Partnerships) reviewed Total Building Performance certificate of knowledge program. The intent is to train and qualify personnel to handle the total conversion scope of weatherization/electrification/renewable energy generation. The intent is to develop Whole House contractor knowledge base. Zero Energy Now in Vermont has run two pilots on the concept. The training modules may be made available to Energy Coaches.

Better Buildings Advocates 4/18

- Jodi Smits Anderson, Assoc. Dir. Codes and Policy, [New Buildings Institute](#) presented [Embodied Carbon: latest developments](#). This excellent presentation and the following Q&A provided a good basis for establishing embodied carbon requirements and many links to data sources.
- Two points to consider the pushback on cost:
 - The lifecycle costs rarely include the cost of carbon to the environment.
 - It would be helpful to establish for MA to establish a common baseline.

ACEEE 4/18

- Steve Nadel of ACEEE (American Council for Energy Efficient Economy) introduced their new report on Decarbonization of Residential Space Heating in Cold Climates: <https://www.aceee.org/research-report/b2404>
- The report was based on 2020 data from 3000 US homes and included 15-year life cycle costs for cold climate heat pumps. Cold Climate heat pumps can achieve 100% capacity at 5 degrees Fahrenheit. Cold climates are locations of greater than 6000 heating degree days. Comparison of fossil fuel, all electric and “hybrid” (electric/fossil backup) at differing gas price assumptions showed heat pumps to be the lowest cost option in all areas 7000 or fewer degree days heating season (all of MA).

Wellesley MLP Sustainability Initiatives

From MLP Sustainability Manager Lisa Wolf:

- Level II charging stations in the MLP garage have been installed and commissioned.
- Level III public FLO charging stations have been delivered and will be installed in the next two weeks in the parking lot adjacent to the MLP.
- A second charger (2 ports) was installed at the Waban lot.