



## CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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### Climate Action Committee Project Updates

October 3, 2025

#### Green Communities

*See the "Buildings" section, below, for discussion of the Hardy and Hunnewell School solar projects.*

Janet is wrapping up data collection for the Fiscal Year 2025 Green Communities Annual Report due in early November.

#### Outreach

##### **Swellesley Report Climate Action Series**

The Swellesley Report Climate Action blog post series kicked off during the week of September 15-21 with this [post](#) on Home Energy Assessments, funded by HomeWorks Energy. During that week, the site saw 19,000 active users. 62 readers were inspired to get more information by clicking on the story. This heat pump [post](#) (sponsored by the MLP) is running from September 29 through October 5.

##### **HomeWorks**

Marybeth drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the Climate Action Committee (CAC) to review at its October 3 meeting. Please see the draft MoU in the shared folder.

##### **Municipal Light Plant – Climate Action**

Marybeth with David Wood, Chris Chan, and Tess Ruderman of the Municipal Light Plant on September 16. Topics discussed included: Hardy and Hunnewell Solar, the Energy Transition and Climate Resilience Working Group, Energy Coaching, Sustainability Summit, blog posts in the Swellesley Report, and the Heat Pump Forum and Pizza Party.

##### **Flood Preparedness Event**

A performance of [Flood Sensor Aunty](#) took place at Wellesley College on Saturday, Sept. 27 at 5:00 p.m. and on Sunday, September 28 at 3:00 p.m. Marybeth and Susan Zelenko tabled at this event and Marybeth spoke to the audience about climate action following the show.

### **Sustainability Summit**

Babson, Wellesley, and Olin Colleges plan a Sustainability Summit for Wednesday, October 8. The Summit will include a 2.5-hour workshop followed by a dinner and reception. Under the guidance of a Babson faculty facilitator, attendees will identify interconnections, build a shared one-year vision, and develop concrete implementation steps for realizing that vision.

### **Heat Pump Forum and Pizza Party**

The MLP plans a Heat Pump Forum and Pizza Party on October 16 at the Wellesley Free Library (see flyer in Supplement folder). Pizza and networking will occur from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. followed by a program from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Audience members will learn from heat pump experts, installers, Town staff, and neighbors about heat pump benefits, the contracting and installation process, and financial incentives. Climate Action is co-sponsoring this event. Marybeth is helping Tess Ruderman to publicize this event.

### **All Board Meeting**

At its October 3 meeting the CAC will discuss plans for the All board Meeting

**All board Meeting** – Monday, October 6, 7:00 p.m., Great Hall, Town Hall.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide:

- Input from departments and boards/committees on anticipated cost drivers and program changes
- An update on the economic forecast and key financial indicators
- A status report on major projects

Department and board/committee members will provide brief input on current and anticipated pressures. These may include staffing and service demands, regulatory changes or mandates, operating or capital cost drivers, revenue constraints, or other notable issues that may affect FY27 budget planning.

Capital budget requests are due on November 21. Operating budget requests are due on November 26. Please see the Project Update Attachments folder for an All board Meeting agenda and budget calendar.

### **Mobility**

#### **EV2X**

Program Managers for the MassCEC EV-to-Grid demonstration project reached out to let Wellesley know they were not selected for the program in the first or second cohort but expressed interest in evaluating DPW and MLP electrical in case funding becomes available. Unfortunately, the three-phase electric service at the DPW and MLP are not compatible with MassCEC's equipment.

#### **ZEV Policy Implementation**

Janet created a spreadsheet that departments will use to show compliance with the ZEV Policy. DPW and Finance Departments reviewed the spreadsheet. Marybeth will work with Finance to educate departments about this new tool.

## **Community Charge Program**

Community Charge is a new [MassCEC](#)-funded initiative in partnership with [LISC](#), [PowerOptions](#) and [Green Energy Consumers Alliance](#). This program helps public and nonprofit organizations bring electric vehicle (EV) charging stations to their neighborhoods, cutting through red tape and reducing costs.

- Tap into pre-negotiated contracts with vetted vendors to save time, money, and complexity
- Public and nonprofit entities that own or control sites where EV charging stations can be installed for community use are eligible

Two ways to participate:

- Charging as a Service – A Community Charge provider installs, owns, operates, and maintains the station on your property. You pay nothing upfront and have no maintenance responsibilities.
- Host-Owned – You own the station, while Community Charge helps you procure hardware, software, and installation. Choose à la carte services or a bundled turnkey package.

To learn more, register for the free informational webinar on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, noon–1:00pm at the following link: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

## **Buildings and Development**

### **Hardy and Hunnewell Solar**

Marybeth and Janet continue to work toward maximizing outside funding for solar installations on the Hardy and Hunnewell Schools. Rooftop photovoltaic (PV) arrays were integral to these building projects from their inception. Marybeth drafted a draft Rationale for Municipal Solar.

- September 5: Marybeth and Janet met with Alliant to discuss Direct Pay filing for the Hardy and Hunnewell Schools solar projects.
- September 9: Marybeth organized a meeting with Select Board, Wellesley Public Schools (WPS), Facilities Management Department (FMD), Municipal Light Plant (MLP), and Climate Action. The group discussed Climate Leader grant and federal clean energy Elective Pay funding opportunities, necessary board approvals, a timeline, and roles and responsibilities for implementing and operating PV arrays on these buildings.
- September 16: Marybeth presented to the School Committee about the Hardy and Hunnewell Schools solar projects.
- September 17: The Municipal Light Board (MLB) unanimously approved the following motions that the:
  - WMLP commission and fund (using WE CARE) the preliminary design and structural review, Owner's Project Management, and design of the solar systems at both the Hardy and Hunnewell schools, conditional on the designation of a qualified, experienced project lead/manager from the Town's Facilities Management Department (FMD) and the execution of a Site License and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town.
  - WMLP fund (using WE CARE) the construction, commissioning, and O&M of the solar systems at both the Hardy and Hunnewell schools up to a maximum of \$2.5 million, which includes an advance on the expected federal tax credit, conditional on the designation of a qualified, experienced project lead/manager from the Facilities Management Department (FMD), successful award of the \$1 million Climate Leader Communities Decarbonization Accelerator grant to the Town, FMD assuming administrative responsibility for system O&M after commissioning, execution of a Site

License and MOU with the Town, and the Town granting to the WMLP the rights to the Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs).

- Marybeth plans to present to the Select Board in October
- See WMLP update, below, for additional info.

Key funding information:

- A Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Climate leader grant application is due on February 6, 2026.
  - A Notice of Intent is due to DOER by November 6 if Wellesley plans to go forward with a Climate Leader grant application.
  - The Climate Leader program offers up to \$1 million total and requires the Town to contribute a minimum of 10%. MLB is expected to vote on providing the 10% match.
- A federal Elective Pay/tax credit is available for up to 30% of the total project cost. Because the expected start date of the projects falls after July 4, 2026, the projects must be complete by December 31, 2027, to be eligible for Elective Pay. The MLB is expected to vote on providing an advance on the expected Elective Pay credit.

### **Wellesley Public Schools AC Supplemental Study**

*From Sharon Clarke:*

The School Committee will receive a report and recommendations from the consultant in December.

Additional information and specifications of the window units used for the interim pilot over the summer:

- **Bates/Fiske/WMS:** 18,000 BTU Friedrich window unit, Chill Premier Inverter Series - 2 units per classroom
- **Schofield:** Daiken 3-ton heat pump outside + 2 Daiken 1.5 ton wall-mounted fan coil units in classroom. The mini split at Schofield was piloted due to the narrow width of the windows (they couldn't accommodate the 18,000 BTU Friedrich window unit). The specific mini-split model was recommended by the consultant.

The window units were chosen based on their efficiency, noise level, size and recommendation by our consultant. Additionally, the units (window or mini-split) must be able to satisfy the "3 or equal" procurement provision, meaning there needs to be at least three versions of the units available from different manufacturers.

The School Committee does not believe the consultant is collecting energy use data for the pilot.

### **Sustainable Development**

The Building Working Group met on September 12 to discuss the large projects on the horizon, the Sustainable Development Guide, and strategies for encouraging sustainable private development. Marybeth, Janet, Mary Gard, Fred Bunger, Michael McManus, and Eric Arbeene attended.

On September 16, Lise Olney and Marybeth convened a meeting with representatives from Needham and Newton to share experiences and strategies for encouraging sustainable private development.

**MassBay Development Proposal Community Meeting** – Wednesday, October 8, 6:00 p.m., MassBay Community College Library Atrium (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 50 Oakland Street)

This meeting concerns a [proposal to develop housing on part of the MassBay Community College campus](#). The proposal is coming forward under the Massachusetts Affordable Homes Act, which allows the Commonwealth to dispose of state-owned land to build housing at a minimum density of four units per acre.

There are two community meetings. The first meeting took place on Thursday, September 25 – same time and location.

***Additional Materials re: MassBay Proposal***

- [Presentation to the Select Board/Planning Board from MassBay and DCAMM](#) (September 16, 2025)

[Surplus Land Guidance information](#)

*From Mary Gard:*

**Embodied Carbon**

- September 5: New model RFP language designed to lower embodied carbon in municipal buildings was released by MCAN, [here](#)
- September 16, In a separate meeting among Newton, Needham and Wellesley climate staff and activists, Newton shared [this template](#) for the same.
- September 29: the Embodied Carbon Intergovernmental Council (ECICC) held its second public hearing on the state's upcoming embodied carbon reduction plan.

**Real Estate Energy Efficiency Data**

- UAD 3.6: Update of Real Estate Appraisal data set used by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, including a new "Energy Efficient and Green Features" section, which standardizes data on renewable energy components, building certifications, and efficiency ratings. See webinar [here](#).
- Senator Barrett also has sponsored [bill S223](#), to establish Home Energy Efficiency Ratings at the municipal level.

**Waste Reduction**

**Skip the Stuff**

Marybeth will provide a Skip the Stuff update at the CAC meeting.

**3R Working Group**

- Jamie Manzolini and Dave Cohen listed RDF updates
- Updates from the Waste Reduction Coordinators
- Discussion of communications strategy for the new Skip the Stuff bylaw
- Discussion of a plastic water bottle procurement policy for Town departments continues. Dave Cohen sent a memo about the proposed policy to Meghan Jop for review.
- The Working Group began discussing the pros and cons of Ridwell, a recycling company that aims to recycle plastics and other items that are not accepted in municipal recycling streams.

**Waste Reduction Coordinators**

The Waste Reduction Coordinators are in the Middle School three days a week to educate students and monitor waste sorting in the cafeteria. They are also reaching out to the colleges to identify interns to train and continue this work at the Middle School moving forward.

*From Lise Olney and Mary Gard:*

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

**Save the Date:** Next meeting of the Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative is tentatively scheduled for **Thursday, November 13, 2025, 11 am**. Draft topics are

- financing and ownership models for the energy transition
- municipal engagement with National Grid on gas leaks and alternatives to gas pipe replacement
- legislative update

### **Legislative Update**

The legislative session continues with hearings and advocacy.

- **Legislative hearing testimony:** The Gas Transition Allies Legislative Working Group attended the September 25, 2025, hearing on various energy efficiency bills. Mary Gard, representing herself as a volunteer Energy Coach, gave testimony on "An Act Relative to MassSave Assessments" (H3565/S2247). Mary's testimony is in the Project Updates Attachments folder in the Meeting Materials folder.
- **The Governor's Energy Affordability bill (H4144)** continues to dominate the landscape for climate-related legislation. Here is an analysis of the Governor's proposed energy affordability bill from Jess Nahigian of the Sierra Club:  
<https://www.sierraclub.org/massachusetts/blog/2025/07/governor-healey-s-energy-bill-h4144>
- **The House may issue its own bill on energy affordability.** On Sept. 18, the Gas Transitions Allies wrote to the chair of the Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy Committee from the Gas Transition Allies regarding a potential House bill on energy affordability and requesting inclusion of key provisions. In the Project Updates Attachments folder, please see the letter, which is a good summary of key goals for the gas transition in this session.
- **3-minute video:** Newton volunteers created a great new video highlighting the customer cost of pipe replacement and gas expansion, the challenges for municipalities with insufficient information about the gas system, and the need for legislation:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKfJBn-WJ60>

### **Renewable Energy**

#### **State Siting and Permitting Regulations to streamline Renewable Energy Projects**

DOER's new Division of Siting and Permitting filed [draft regulations](#) for siting and permitting of small renewable energy infrastructure. These encompass renewables < 25MW, storage < 100MWh, and transmission lines < 10 miles. There are also draft [site suitability guidance](#) and [guidance for community benefit agreements](#).

DOER will conduct four hybrid informational sessions before a public comment hearing:

- **Monday, October 6, 6:00 p.m.** at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy, 20 Tower Lane, Buzzards Bay (Maritime Conference Center), MA 02532
- **Tuesday, October 7, 6:00 p.m.** at the Essex North Shore Agricultural Technical School, 562 Maple St, Danvers (Larkin Center), MA 01923
- **Wednesday, October 8, 6:00 p.m.** at Fitchburg State University, 160 Pearl St, Fitchburg, (Ellis White Hall, Hammond Building), MA 0142
- **Thursday, October 9, 7:00 p.m.** at UMass Amherst Olver Design Building, Room 170, 551 N Pleasant Street, Amherst MA 01003

Remote attendees can [register for the informational sessions at this link](#).

There will a virtual public hearing on Zoom on **October 15<sup>th</sup> at 7pm**. Register [here](#). An in-person information session will take place at the Essex North Shore Ag Tech's Larkin Center, 562 Maple St, Danvers on **Tuesday October 7<sup>th</sup> at 6pm** - no registration required. Public comment will be accepted through October 17<sup>th</sup> to this email: [DOER.Siting.Permitting@mass.gov](mailto:DOER.Siting.Permitting@mass.gov), subj ""S&P Follow On Rulemaking Comments"

(Note that there are separate regulations for large systems and the Energy Facilities Siting Board will have a separate info session in Lynn. For more information on that, click [here](#).)

DOER website on this topic: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/energy-infrastructure-siting-and-permitting-reforms>

### **Greenhouse Gas Inventory**

Janet communicated with Wellesley College and National Grid about 2023 natural gas consumption, and ICLEI about a method for avoiding double counting of electric vehicle charging emissions. Some corrections were made in Wellesley College consumption values. However, Janet sent a few remaining questions to National Grid, especially regarding the 2023 decrease in consumption.

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

*From Chris Chan:*

- MLP is organizing a heat pump forum at the library, Oct 16
- Hardy and Hunnewell Solar: MLB and SB are working out who (FMD or WMLP) will lead different aspects of the design, bid, and build process under MGL Chapter 149. MLB approved funding the feasibility study, Owner Project Management, and design; and up to \$2.5 million for construction, which includes the expected grant funding of \$1 million and an advance on the expected federal tax credit. MLP is proceeding to commission the feasibility study and work with FMD to issue an RFQ for an OPM.
- MLB approved a [Strategic Plan](#), which includes a component on Sustainability.