

Location and time: DPW Champagne Room, Carby Street, 7:30 pm

Members in attendance: Stephen Harte (Chair), Julie Gervais (Vice Chair), Brian Bayer, Jennifer Atkins, Maria Costantini, Sue McGown

Others in attendance: Robert Gotti (Select Board liaison to WEAC)

Routine Business

Approval of minutes. The minutes of the May 6, 2021 meeting were approved.

Election of Officers

Officers for the next term were elected. The members elected by the board for the next term are: Julie Gervais-Chair, Jennifer Atkins-Vice Chair, Kate La Croix-secretary

Topics Discussed

- 1. Update on the CEA.** MC reported that there has been no progress on the DPU approval of the Aggregation Plan. Peter Kane is working on a script for an informational video. Once the program is launched there is interest to have information on the impact of the program (such as a percent of households that opt out or opt up). MC will ask Good Energy for the data in due time. It was decided that BB will join the CEA Working Group.
- 2. School Building Sustainability Subcommittee meeting.** BB reported that the subcommittee discussed EV charging stations and the roof photovoltaic (PV) system - the roof is PV-ready. There are additional costs for these two options and they are not currently in the budget.
- 3. Westwood Day (September 2021)**

In regards to composting, we can encourage vendors to use compostable wares at Westwood Day, as long as it is optional. We will investigate it with the vendors. If we were to do composting stations, the compost bins will be matched up with trash and recycling bins. The Rec. Dept. would like the location of the composting truck to be the same as it was last year. WEAC will explore with the vendors if they will use compostable wares and then assess if it will be worthwhile or not. WEAC or the town might be able to subsidize some of the vendors' costs. We could also explore sponsors.

Next Steps. SM will contact the compostable ware supplier in NH and ask Kate to get the list of all the vendors that have signed up for Westwood Day. The idea was that the supplier would contact the vendors directly to understand their requirements.

In regards to the WEAC booth at Westwood Day, the groups decided to have a booth to inform residents about the CEA program.

- 4. Zoning for ground mount solar panel installations**

SH referred to the letter of January 14, 2016, from the Office of the Attorney General commenting on Article 13 of the Town of Westwood, which was approved at the 2015 Town meeting. Article 13 amended the definition of “Small Scale Solar” and “Large Scale Solar” and the districts where such uses were allowed. The Attorney General’s letter stated that General Laws Chapter 40, Section 3, protects solar energy systems and provides the follow: “No zoning ordinance or by-law shall prohibit or unreasonably regulate the installation of solar energy systems or the building of structures that facilitate the collection of solar energy, except where necessary to protect the public health, safety or welfare.” SH reached out to Abigail (Abby) McCabe, Town Planner, to understand how the town had addressed this letter. Is a warrant article needed based on this letter?

BB explained that roof-mounted solar installations do not require any approval, while most ground-mounted solar installations require the approval of the Zoning Board of Appeal. Ground installations in the backyard are possible, but, so far, all applications have been denied and there has been no guidance from the Zoning Board of Appeal.

Next Steps: SH will follow up with Abby and will send the letter from the Attorney General Office to Robert Gotti.

5. Sustainability Manager

JG reported that she contacted Chris Colman (Town Manager) to discuss a possible Sustainability Manager position. Chris will present the position description to the Select Board. The position may be part time, or shared with another town.

6. Tree City

JG reported that she, SH, and MC participated in a meeting of the Conservation Commission to discuss how to better maintain and increase the number of trees in town and possibly apply to become a Tree City. JG also had a previous meeting with Brendan Ryan of DPW on the same topic. The Conservation Commission members noted that developers currently need to replace trees they cut, but often there are questions of where to plant them. The Conservation Commission is considering developing a Tree Fund in town. They thought that having a priority list and a more formal process for caring and planting trees would be helpful.

MC reported that she talked to a representative of the Town of Dedham to discuss their experience as a Tree City Town for 11 years. The representative noted that it takes some time to go through the application process and there is quite a bit of documentation to provide on a regular basis (such as specific numbers of trees and proof of payment). Being part of the program was important as a recognition of the town’s priority in investing in trees. The Town of Dedham has invested more funds in the tree program than required.

Next Steps: Gauge DPW’s perspective on the program.

Pesticide discussion was postponed until the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Next meeting will be on July 15, 2021.