

Location and Time: via Zoom, 8:00 pm

Members in Attendance: Julie Gervais (Chair), Jennifer Atkins (Vice Chair), Brian Bayer, Claire Galkowski, Tom Philbin (ex-Officio), Maria Costantini, Stephen Harte.

Others in Attendance: Robert Gotti (Select Board liaison to WEAC), Ellen Rollings (Planning Board liaison to WEAC), David Atkins.

Routine Business

No quorum, July meeting minutes not reviewed/approved.

Topics Discussed

1. Update on Solar Projects in Westwood and Discussion of EV High Speed Charging Stations - Tom Philbin

Solar

Virtual solar participation is up and running - Westwood gets credits from Eversource from a large solar project in Woburn. This generates \$70K year for the schools to offset their electric bills - agreement is in effect for 20 yrs. Town receives “credit” in form of cash payments from Eversource.

Meditech property solar canopies - Currently approval is under consideration by Meditech’s Board of Directors. Agreement will permit Westwood to install canopies at the Meditech Lowder Brook property. Estimated production will be 2.1 megawatts. Timing on this project - possible approval at end of August board meeting; applications submitted to Eversource; interconnection permissions obtained; construction could begin in a few months post approval/completion expected to be quick. Great example of municipal/private entity cooperation.

Other solar - extension of solar panels on roof of Thurston Middle School, solar garage behind the police station that will extend behind the town hall, solar canopy over COA parking lot (this canopy is est. to produce enough energy to cover 40% of the town electricity consumption but has been opposed in the past due to aesthetics). All of these projects combined are estimated to produce enough energy to offset 90% of the town energy consumption which has been Tom’s goal.

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Discussion of whether ground mount/accessory structure solar installation by-law changes might improve the approval process for installation of a COA and other parking area canopies. Rob Gotti will discuss with town counsel.

Other solar and green energy items discussed - the new Hanlon school building will be solar ready, its geothermal field construction looks promising, generally optimistic for a very efficient building. The School Building Committee continues to consult with Tom about value engineering - e.g. geothermal field is more expensive to install but will result in significant energy cost savings over time.

EV Charging Update

EV charging stations are planned for 5 locations, police station, library, COA, WHS, and Islington. A new transformer will be placed at the police station to support 3 rapid (level-3) chargers. Due to location/distance from the transformer, the library will have level-2 station(s). The WHS faculty parking lot will have 6 level-2 chargers for faculty/afterschool event attendees. Continue to plan for stations at COA and in Islington

Discussion was had regarding how planned solar and 90% coverage of consumption will be affected by town's increased energy use due to reduction of other forms of energy in favor of clean electric (e.g., reducing natural gas consumption and switching over to electric at Town Hall) - will we still be covering 90%?

Discussion was had regarding other projects that will increase efficiency including: Heating system needs an overhaul at the Sheehan school; Ceiling insulation and new windows at COA; replace library air conditioning system; repair/replace heating system at new police station (due to a problem with aluminum heating plates and highly mineralized municipal water); new control system that will manage heat/cooling at all municipal buildings from one location (Carby Street); looking into system that can read water meters through the street light/adding street lights.

2. Presentation on EV Trip Planning, Need for Charging Stations - Dave Atkins

EV charging considerations include the reality of vehicle ranges (due to temperature, terrain, etc), availability of charging stations (number available at one location, compatibility of plug to different EV models, time to charge). Encouraged convenient rapid EV charging stations as a way to increase consumer visits to businesses where they have a

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place to charge their vehicle while shopping, dining, exploring. Discussion: offering EV charging has a “welcoming” effect.

3. Westwood Day - Julie Gervais

Julie shared an email update from Kate La Croix and Sue McGown: the vendor village booth is confirmed, they are looking into where to obtain a tent. Email sent to food vendors about using compostable wares but no response yet. Composting at Westwood Day is contingent on food vendors using compostable wares. Kate is asking for WEAC volunteers to work at the booth, she will organize and create a schedule.

Discussion was had on the focus of the booth: CEA- Maria will talk to Good Energy contacts to obtain small “solar homes” for hands on display; Maria/Tom will collaborate on solar/Green Community initiatives poster; Maria/Juliana will collaborate for CEA poster/PR materials; Claire has recycling signs from last year; suggestion made to make or bring a Black Earth sign and make a QR code link to Black Earth and sign up; Jen will provide a sample Black Earth compost bin.

4. CEA Update - Maria Costantini

No additional information about DPU approval. Good Energy meeting planned where they will discuss informational/ promotional materials for residents.

5. Producer Responsibility - Claire Galkowski

Julie/Claire have an 8/24 meeting Chris Coleman and other stakeholders to discuss the issue of producers having financial responsibility for disposal of their packaging waste; DPW is supportive. Concern is that if we continue to produce this much waste, in the near future, there will be nowhere to put it.

6. Updates on Other Key Initiatives

Pesticides - Maria Constantini

Maria attended a pollinator network discussing proposed legislation regulating pesticides (5 or 6 in the queue). The most likely to succeed is the School Children Pesticides Protection Act -, hoping for a hearing in the fall. The legislation proposes restriction to only “minimum risk” pesticides near schools and child care centers. This bill and others bring this issue to the forefront/increases awareness. Maria would like WEAC to review and

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endorse this bill - get information about it out to the community. Maria will check if Rep. McMurtry/Sen. Rush are cosponsors so we can call to encourage them to sponsor or thank them for their support. Maria will share the overview/list of bills under consideration. WEAC members to review and we can speak at the next meeting. There is a form to complete for endorsement.

Neponset River Watershed Association Report Card - Dave Atkins

Two brooks running through Westwood, Purgatory Brook and Germany Brook, were rated "D-" due to large quantities of bacteria in the water. These brooks run through other towns, uncertain where the contamination comes in. Dave has forwarded this information to the Town Planner and DPW. Suggestion that WEAC consider following up with the conservation commission and other stakeholders to look into this concerning report.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

Next meeting will be September 16, 2021 @7:30pm

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