

**Advisory Committee
Meeting #19
Saturday, January 23, 2010**

Peter Cory, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Those present included Virginia Ferko, Jack Haley, Kathy Macdonald, Barbara McMahon, Maura Murphy, Rich Page, Caren Parker, Derek Redgate (9:15 am), Steve Simons, Steve Sykes, and Marc Taylor. Absent: Judi Donnelly, Rick Hill, and Jason Whittet

Citizens Speak. No one was present.

Green Ribbon Study Committee. The Committee was joined by Green Ribbon Study Committee Chair Katy Gibson, and members Molly Fairchild and Chris Chan to discuss the motions the Committee hopes to present to the 2010 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Gibson noted there are three recommendations: to request approval of a Sustainable Energy Plan, create a Sustainable Energy Committee and the creation of a part time staff position. She reviewed initiatives currently underway including meeting the voluntary renewable energy purchase program goal, which was 5 percent participation in 2009 and 10 percent participation in 2010. The 2009 participation rate has been met, primarily by residential customers. Commercial customers may be more reluctant to join this initiative due to the significant increase in their utility costs.

Ms. Gibson reviewed the components of the Sustainable Energy Plan which includes increased energy efficiency, transportation efficiency, renewable energy options and community outreach. The plan includes a mix of these different types of actions that would be needed to reduce the Town's municipal energy use, as well as households and businesses.

Ms. Gibson discussed the responsibilities of the proposed 7-member Sustainable Energy Committee including implementation of the Sustainable Energy Plan; development and implementation of annual initiatives in cooperation with municipal departments and community organizations; preparation of an annual Town emissions inventory; report to Town Meeting on actions, future plans and progress toward goal; and development of new goals and plans for 2014 and beyond. It is proposed that the members of the committee would include a representative from the Selectmen, Schools, and the MLP, and the Moderator would appoint four residents with expertise or involvement in sustainable issues, all with 3 year renewable terms.

The group discussed the proposed position of a Sustainable Energy Coordinator who would work with the day to day implementation of the action plan, support the Sustainable Energy Committee and prepare grant requests. Ms. Gibson indicated the Committee is requesting a salary of \$38,000 for this part time, non-benefitted position. Final salary will be set once the position is reviewed and rated by the Human Resources Department.

Ms. Gibson indicated the total budget request for FY11 is \$39,000 which includes the Coordinator's salary and ICLEI dues, which is the organization that provides the software to do the emissions inventory. The Municipal Light Plant is requesting \$90,000 for energy initiatives, and they have agreed to fund a portion of the Coordinator's salary. The other half would be included in the Selectmen's budget for the Sustainable Energy Committee. A question was asked concerning how other costs would be addressed including community outreach, marketing, and office use. Ms. Gibson indicated that these funds are not included in the budget request, however, there are other sources for these types of expenditures,

including the MLP, which will be doing community outreach through its energy initiatives. Questions were raised concerning the qualifications of the individual who would fill the position, the salary of the position, and whether it is necessary to conduct the emissions audit annually, and whether conducting the inventory less frequently would reduce the number of hours for the individual.

Planning Board FY11 Operating Budget Request and Warrant Articles. The Committee was joined by Planning Board Chair Don McCauley, Director Meghan Jop, and Assistant Director Michael Zehner. Mr. McCauley reviewed the Planning Department's FY11 Operating budget request totaling \$251,040 which is a 1.36% increase over FY10, noting that this is the net increase when taking into account the centralization of photocopying and office supply purchasing in the Selectmen's budget, and the transfer of the Selectmen's portion of the Metrowest membership fee to the Planning Department's budget. He also noted that the Planning Board does not have any capital requests this year, because they are now including consulting costs in its operating budget. He reviewed revenues over past several years indicating Large House Review fee revenue is less than expected primarily due to the economic downturn. PSI fees have been waived for Town projects such as the high school and the proposed Senior Center. Anticipated new revenue is expected from the recently adopted retaining wall review. Mr. McCauley reviewed current projects being undertaken by the Planning Department including the Zoning Bylaw Recodification, St. James Alternative Land Use Study, Fee Update Study. He reviewed possible uses of consultant services in FY11 including the rebuilding of the Taylor Block, Tailby Lot, pedestrian studies. Questions were raised concerning use of consultants, and the part time benefitted administrative assistant.

Mr. McCauley presented the articles that will be submitted to the 2010 Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Zehner reviewed in detail the proposed amendment to the Sign Bylaw noting it is being rewritten to add clarity, codify regulations, aid in the efficiency of enforcement, and to strengthen the legal basis of the sign regulations. The goal is to make sign regulations and approval more straightforward for those requesting a sign permit. This bylaw does not address trailer and vehicle signs.

Ms. Jop addressed the proposed amendment to the Zoning Bylaws section that addresses the heights of buildings or structures. The proposal would alter the current methodology of calculating the height of a new building or structure from the 'average finished' grade to the average original grade or natural grade of the lot before the development begins.

Ms. Jop reviewed the proposed amendments to the Zoning Bylaws for Large House Reviews. The amendment will include the addition of unfinished attic space in the review process. In addition, revisions and amendments to an approved Large House Review Plan will be simplified and streamlined.

FY11 Budget. Mr. Cory reported that the outlook for State aid funding may be more optimistic than previously feared, based on the Governor's State of the Commonwealth address and information he received while attending the MMA conference on Friday, January 22nd. State revenue projections currently are for a 1% increase for FY10 and up 3% for FY11, in contrast to a 12.5% decrease in FY09. With regard to Chapter 70 funding, there is an increase of \$1 million over FY10 identified for Wellesley for FY11, to foundation budget levels. The SPED Circuit Breaker funding was not mentioned. Lottery aid will be level from FY10. The Governor's budget is expected next week; the Legislatures' budgets are expected

in March and May; and final information on local aid will be available in June. There is not a high degree of confidence among Advisory that funds will be available at the levels identified above.

Healthcare. There was discussion that premium cost-sharing differences exist across neighboring communities, with different cost sharing for part-time employees in some instances (e.g., Wayland). Some communities allow for employees to a sign waiver that they will not enroll in the municipal healthcare plan (use spouses healthcare benefit). These employees are rewarded with a stipend. Some towns are allocating the resulting savings through its departments.

Capital Budgets. There were questions concerning specific School technology items, and a renewed request to schedule a SmartBoard demonstration for members so they understand the technology and teaching application.

Wellesley Middle School Project. The School Building Committee will likely bring a motion relating to WMS classrooms under the existing Warrant article.

Adjournment. Upon a motion made by Ms. Parker and seconded by Ms. Macdonald, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adeline G. Doherty
Administrative Assistant