

# **Sustainable Energy Committee Minutes – June 29, 2012**

**Conference Room G** - Town Hall

## **Committee Members Present:**

Barbara Searle, Acting Chair

Suzy Littlefield

Robert Cooper

Beth DeSombre

Molly Fairchild, Sustainable Energy Coordinator

**Absent:** Richard Joyce, Ellen Korpi, Scott Bender

**Guests:** Roy Cornelius and Steve Tolley (Babson College)

Jessica Langerman (Sustainable Wellesley)

**Citizens' Speak:** no one spoke

**Minutes:** minutes from April 27, 2012 postponed to next meeting.

## **Membership Changes**

Ms. Searle introduced herself as the new Committee Member from the Board of Selectmen, taking over for Chris Ketchen who has resigned from his position as Senior Deputy Director to become the Finance Director for the Town of Holliston. Barbara will be the acting Chair for this meeting, and we will defer selection of a new Chair for the next meeting when more members are present. Scott Bender was reappointed to the SEC by the Board of Selectman.

Robert Cooper will be stepping due to the current demands of his work, after the committee has found a replacement. Beth DeSombre has completed her term, as representative from the colleges. Ms. Searle welcomed Roy Cornelius, Director of Operations from Babson College and Steve Tolley, Assistant Director Ground, Building Services and Sustainability at Babson College who will be the new SEC Member in FY13, representing the colleges.

## **Appreciation of Beth DeSombre's contribution to the Committee**

Ms. Searle thanked Ms. DeSombre, Professor of Sustainability at Wellesley College, for her 2-year term on the Committee. Ms. Fairchild shared that Beth has contributed to the SEC's vision by giving us a better understanding of the research on what helps people behave more sustainability: 1) the research shows that messages that come from many directions, reinforcing each-other and creating a sense of belonging to something bigger, while also simple enough to feel doable and significant on a personal level, are most effective, and 2) We learn to feel green by doing something green (the action brings a change in the way think).

Beth has also helped us with using technology for communication, and more specifically with how to communicate more effectively with the College and students. Beth offered to continue to be a resource for the committee.

## **Sustainability at Babson**

Mr. Cornelius described the story of Sustainability at Babson, as starting day one when Steve Tolley arrived at Babson 12 years ago, with specific programs beginning about eight years ago.

As a member of the American Colleges and Universities Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), Babson had to commit to a Carbon Neutral Year, which they set as 2050. This triggered their partnership with Greener U, and the development of a Carbon Action Plan. Babson has a 4-million dollar contract with GreenerU, to educate the college on sustainability. Dallase Scott now works for GreenerU. When the contract with Greeneru is complete, the college will be looking to transition to in-house staff, who could eventually be on this committee.

The College has achieved a 25% decrease in electric use over the past 25 years. The recent 2-3 years decrease in the cost of natural gas, has allowed Babson to start purchasing 5% renewable power through the MLP. A renewable purchase had been part of the plan for 10-15 years out; but the lower cost of Natural gas allowed the College to do this sooner. Babson is also committed to achieving LEED Silver for new buildings – which requires some renewable power, so this will also help them college meet the LEED Silver Standard. Some other energy improvements include converting the Ice rink from fuel oil to Natural Gas and retrofits on lighting.

**Review of SEC accomplishments in FY12**, and what we have gained in our understanding of “what works”. Ms. Fairchild opened the discussion of the summary of the major projects of FY12. **Solar Projects:** Last summer, the Chase Solar offer to provide 18 KW solar installations for municipal or non-profits, was a learning process, although the project didn't fly in the end (related to the bankruptcy of Solyndra) through the process we developed a great network of support and communication about Sustainability among the inter-faith groups, and improved our understanding of the “how to” for small solar projects including roof inspections, costs and payback. The 50-kW WHS Solar installation is successfully installed and running.

The **Sustainable Energy Expo and Tour** (second annual) was a success and led to the pilot installation of the Energy-mizer technology in the Warren building. Mr. Cooper and Mr. Cornelius indicated that the technology would be most effective in larger buildings and less so for residential use.

**The Renewal Energy Campaign** has been a great success that has benefited from the greater recognition of the EPA Green Power Communities Designation, and has helped to develop a more effective **network of communication** and outreach that has really been improved through the campaign. Ms. Searle praised the many volunteers who participated in making the campaign a success. Ms DeSombre emphasized that to reach what we have called the “latent green interest” requires chipping away, by making contact individually with a **one-on-one push**. Ms. Littlefield praised the work of Ellen Korpi, as a “force” that she never hesitated to go meet someone and reach out with the campaign. Ms. DeSombre encouraged the SEC to use the one-on-one outreach to continue the message around 10% goal, indicating that even she has not yet had a home energy audit, “but if someone came to my door... I would sign up for an audit on the spot.”

Ms. Searle updated the committee about the work to create an event around the official announcement of the Green Power Community designation sometime in the next few months.

Ms. Fairchild added that the **visibility** of sustainability (with the message from many different directions) has really grown in FY12, starting with the Sustainable Wellesley Logo and Summer Cooling flyer and banner, and more recently the Renewable Energy bumper magnet and store window decal ... and we hope to see more of the commercial customers displaying the decals and EPA Green Power Partners designation.

The Committee discussed updating and repeating the **Summer Cooling** message this summer, and giving another push for the **Kilowatt meters** at the Library, including a demonstrate at the EXPO and the Farmers Market , and the Branch libraries where the staff at the counter can help promote and explain.

Ms Fairchild shared a summary of the Town-Wide 10% Emissions Reduction Goal ( 44,550 tons e-CO<sub>2</sub>) based on the 2010 Sustainable Energy Plan, with an estimated 30,000 tons e-CO<sub>2</sub> reduction so far based on emissions reduction initiatives such as the Stretch Code adoption, Streetlight Replacement, Renewable Energy , and continuing trends in conversion to Natural gas and improved fuel efficiency. This is consistent with the measured reduction in energy use Town-wide of 8%, or about 36,000 tons e-CO<sub>2</sub>.

The Committee discussed how **Transportation** continues to be the huge challenge. Ms. Fairchild reported that the Transportation Advisory Group is working with the MetroWest Transit Authority (MWRTA) on considering a fixed-route bus service for Wellesley, and there is now more precise data available (WEAVE) based on annual inspection data odometer readings and the make and model of registered vehicles. Ms Littlefield expressed concern about getting people to use public transportation. Ms. DeSombre emphasized that we need the **personal push**— remind us the same sorts of messages – I need maybe free for the first month – people need to try – one of those push steps. Ms. DeSombre emphasized that we need the personal push – as we did with the renewable energy campaign; the committee discussed a free pilot period – to get people to try the bus ... and feel green.

Mr. Tolley and Mr. Cornelius shared their success at Babson with Residence Halls competition, where competition can be fierce, acknowledging that it is harder to motivate change in the academic and administrative buildings. The challenge is *sustaining the improvements after the competition*.

**Municipal 20% Goal** Ms Littlefield praised the value of the monthly energy reports as a way for her to be able to acknowledge progress that is being made in the schools to reduce energy use. Ms Fairchild encouraged feedback and questions from the departments.

### **Summer schedule for SEC meetings**

It was agreed that Friday morning 7:45 -9:00 continues to be a good time for the committee to meet. Molly will use email to confirm a Friday in July and a Friday in August for our summer meetings, and in the September we can resume meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays of each month as needed. Ms. Searle requested that a copy of the FY12 goals and accomplishments be sent to the committee in preparation for our next meeting

### **Other Business:**

Ms. Fairchild reported that the SEC and Sustainable Wellesley have been invited to have a booth at the Babson Sustainability Fair 2012 on Friday, Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> (12-3pm). Mr. Tolley added that this year the focus is on Social Responsibility and Social Justice. Many different vendors came from Wellesley and Needham, with 500-600 attendees last year.

Next Meeting: TBD

Meeting Adjourned 9:00 am