



## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL • 525 WASHINGTON STREET • WELLESLEY, MA 02482-5992

Sustainable Energy Director: Marybeth Martello

[SEC@wellesleyma.gov](mailto:SEC@wellesleyma.gov)

SEC Analyst: Janet Mosley

[jmosley@wellesleyma.gov](mailto:jmosley@wellesleyma.gov)

Laura Olton, Chair

Susan Morris, Vice Chair

Cindy Mahr

Ellen Korpi

Fred Bungler

Lise Olney

Martha Collins

### SEC Monthly Meeting

Remote Zoom Meeting

March 5, 2021

#### Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by Laura Olton. Present were Sustainable Energy Committee (SEC) members: Laura Olton (SEC Chair), Sue Morris (SEC Vice Chair), Lise Olney, Fred Bungler, Ellen Korpi, Cindy Mahr, and Martha Collins. Also present were Marybeth Martello (Sustainable Energy Director), Janet Mosley (SEC Analyst), Deed McCollum (Advisory Committee Liaison), Roopa Chandrasekaran, and Mary Gard.

**Citizens' Speak** – Doctor and Town Meeting Member Regina LaRocque spoke in opposition to the planned Palmer biomass power plant in Springfield because of:

1. The negative health impacts of particulate and other pollutants emitted from wood burning;
2. The unfair burden of air pollution facing residents of Springfield, already designated as an environmental justice community by U.S. EPA; and
3. Wood combustion should not be considered renewable energy as it takes many years for new tree growth to sequester the amount of carbon dioxide released during combustion.

Regina stated that, as an MLP community, it is Wellesley's responsibility to take a stance against building and helping to finance the plant through tax dollars. For these reasons, Regina asked the SEC to sign a joint letter put forward by Sustainable Wellesley opposing the Palmer plant and proposed changes to MA Department of Energy Resources (DOER) regulations.

#### **Minutes**

Fred Bungler moved to approve the SEC's February 5 and February 17 meeting minutes. Ellen Korpi seconded the motion *and the Committee voted to approve the February 5 and February 17 meeting minutes.*

#### **SEC Report to Annual Town Meeting 2021**

Janet Mosley presented the 2020 community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory results. The SEC discussed and agreed to move forward with Janet's proposal to use a modified method to calculate vehicle emissions for 2020 since the method used for previous years is not able to capture the dramatic pandemic-related changes in vehicle emissions. SEC members also provided feedback on key points to include in the discussion of GHG inventory results in the SEC Report to Annual Town Meeting (ATM).

### **Metropolitan Area Planning Council Technical Assistance Program (MAPC TAP)**

Marybeth described two proposals she is considering submitting to the MAPC TAP, one for community outreach for the Climate Action Plan and the other to obtain expertise on sustainable zoning bylaws. Marybeth noted that MAPC may view joint applications from multiple communities in the region favorably. Natick and other communities involved in the Rocky Mountain Institute Building Electrification Accelerator might also be interested in applying jointly for assistance with sustainable zoning. Marybeth is waiting to hear from MAPC on the viability of each proposal and how they would view two applications from the same community.

### **Climate Action Plan (CAP)**

Marybeth gave an update on progress on the CAP.

- Seven responses were received from the Request for Proposals for consultant help with the CAP. The selection committee will include Marybeth, Laura, Fred, and Martha.
- Marybeth started municipal engagement with presentations to the Select Board, Natural Resources Commission, and High School Climate Action Club.
- Marybeth is working to identify community stakeholders to participate in the working groups.

SEC members discussed the need to be prepared to answer questions about the costs of climate action. The SEC also weighed whether or not to create a logo for the CAP.

### **Sustainable Zoning**

Marybeth provided an updated list of members proposed for the Sustainable Zoning working group: Fred Bunker, Ellen Watts, real estate lawyer Larry Shind, Design Review Board Chair Jose Soliva, and a Planning Department or Board member. The recent departure of Valerie Oorthuys from the Planning Department could delay the working group's progress. Laura will follow up with Catherine Johnson to see if a Board member is willing to participate until new staff is hired.

### **Palmer Biomass Plant**

Mary Gard presented a letter written by Sustainable Wellesley (SW) in opposition to the Palmer biomass plant and related proposed changes to the Renewable Portfolio Standard to be sent to the Governor and state legislature. The NRC agreed to sign the letter and SW asked that the SEC consider signing as well. The SEC discussed the SW letter as written and decided to write and sign its own letter with a similar message to be sent to the Governor and state legislature.

### **Questions Regarding Project Updates – None**

### **Additional Business**

Marybeth submitted the updated municipal joint comments on Interim 2030 Clean Energy and Climate Plan to the Select Board. The Select Board indicated that they plan to sign the letter.

Ellen Korpi moved to approve the SEC report to ATM 2021 and delegate Marybeth and Laura to incorporate SEC member edits and complete the final draft. The motion was seconded Fred Bunker and Sue Morris, *and the Committee voted to approve the report.*

### **Adjourn**

Fred Bunker motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:17 a.m., seconded by Sue Morris, *and the Committee voted to adjourn.*

**Exhibits Used:** February 5 and February 17 Meeting Minutes, Draft SEC Report to ATM 2021, MAPC TAP Draft, Wellesley Letter Opposing State Subsidies & Incentives for Biomass Plants, Project Updates