



CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE

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Sustainability Director: Marybeth Martello
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Sustainability Analyst: Janet Mosley
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Susan Morris, Chair
Laura Olton, Vice Chair
Catherine Mirick
Ellen Korpi
Martha Collins
Fred Bungler
Lise Olney

Climate Action Committee Meeting

April 7, 2023

Remote Zoom Meeting

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by Sue Morris. Present were Climate Action Committee (CAC) members: Sue Morris (CAC Chair), Laura Olton (CAC Vice Chair), Lise Olney, Martha Collins, Fred Bungler, Catherine Mirick, and Ellen Korpi. Also present were Marybeth Martello (Sustainability Director), Janet Mosley (Sustainability Analyst), Gail Sullivan (Advisory Liaison), and Mary Gard. Absent: None.

Citizen's Speak:

Judy Barr of 331 Linden St. spoke about the need to mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on all fronts, including the protection of wetlands, and to reduce lighting at nighttime to protect biodiversity.

Christie Kovacs of 20 Clifford St. shared her concern for protecting wetlands around Hunnewell fields.

Raina McManus of 2 Mulherin Ln. highlighted the importance of wetlands and the actions within Wellesley's Climate Action Plan that call for wetlands protection.

Minutes

Martha Collins moved to approve the February 3 and March 6 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Laura Olton, *and the Committee voted to approve the February 3 and March 6, 2023 meeting minutes.*

Preparations for ATM 2023 Article 36 re: Municipal Opt-in Specialized Energy Code

Marybeth described the final round of outreach and preparation she is undertaking in support of Article 36 at Annual Town Meeting 2023. Committee members raised several questions for Marybeth to prepare to answer at Town Meeting.

Follow-up on March 6 citizens speak

Martha Collins requested that the committee consider modifying the June 4, 2021 statement made by the CAC regarding the Wellesley High School stadium lighting proposal to include commentary on its

impact on wetlands impact. Catherine Mirick shared that a consultant hired by Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) found the impact of the lights on wildlife and wetlands would be minor given the limited operating time. Multiple committee members expressed the desire to protect wetlands and biodiversity but felt it was not appropriate for the CAC to weigh in on the topic at this time. Martha noted that the consultant hired by WPS is often hired by lighting project proponents, and that the CAC not taking a stand on this issue damages its relationship with its key supporters.

Martha moved to modify the June 4, 2021 statement regarding WHS stadium lighting to include the impacts on the wetlands. The motion was not seconded, so no vote was taken.

Succession planning

CAC leadership have spoken with several residents interested in becoming new CAC members since Laura Olton's position will be open at the end of June. The committee discussed the process used to select a new committee member in the past and the benefit of having a transparent, written selection process so current and prospective committee members know what to expect.

Priorities for Spring 2023

Marybeth shared a list of ongoing Climate Action projects and asked for feedback on prioritizing projects. Several members agreed that building up the Climate Action website and energy coaching program are high priorities. Martha suggested looking at Climate Action projects on a 12-month schedule, including cyclical responsibilities associated with Town Meetings, budget season, GHG inventory, and Green Communities, and aligning events like the Green Collaborative and the Building Energy Roundtable with times outreach is needed. The committee asked Marybeth to share her draft project calendar so members could provide additional feedback.

Climate Action Committee meetings moving forward

Given the ability to hold remote public meetings through March 31, 2025, the committee agreed to continue to hold meetings virtually with occasional in-person meetings.

Questions about Project Updates

- The idle-free campaign will take place the week of April 25.
- The next electric vehicle (EV) showcase will be Thursday, May 11 and will include 27 EV makes and models. Volunteers are needed.
- Ellen mentioned that National Grid recently shared unexpected gas pipe replacement plans that will delay DPWs paving plans.
- Lise and Laura will start work on the letter to encourage Wellesley's state representatives to co-sponsor H.3137, An Act Relative to Intervenors and Utility Work. The bill would give municipalities the option of intervening in proceedings at the Department of Public Utilities, and would allow municipalities to require gas companies to provide more information about the gas system.
- Marybeth has appointed a Gas Leaks Working Group: Dave Hickey (Department of Public Works), Brandon Schmitt (Natural Resources Commission), Mary Gard (Sustainable Wellesley), and Lise Olney (Select Board/CAC). The group will work on advancing goals and strategies for reducing methane emissions as outlined in the Governance pathway of the Climate Action Plan.

Additional Business

- The next CAC meeting will be May 5 at 8:30 a.m. on Zoom.

- Wellesley Wonderful Weekend (WWW) events will take place May 20 and May 21 with multiple departments showcasing their sustainability efforts. Marybeth, DPW, and the WWW committee have been planning ways to reduce waste at multiple events.
- The committee discussed the possibility of holding a CAC meeting before ATM on Tuesday, April 11.

Adjourn

Martha moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:59 a.m., seconded by Ellen, *and the Committee voted to adjourn.*

Exhibits used: Picture shared by Christie Kovacs; February and March 2023 meeting minutes; April 7 Project Updates; Climate Action Office projects through July 2023