

The Watertown Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee met remotely via Zoom at 7:00 pm on Monday, December 16, 2024.

The following members and staff were present:

Ellen Menounos (Co-Chair), Jeanne Trubek (Co-Chair), Laurel Schwab (Sustainability Manager), Lauri Murphy, Brian Hebeisen, Bruce Gellerman, Silas Fyler, Pat Rathbone

Absent: Marcia Ciro

Others present: Ernesta Krackiewicz, Hannah Goldberg, Susan LaDue, Pam Phillips, Wally Cole, Steve Steadman, Matt Bacon

The meeting started with a quorum at 7:00 pm with Jeanne Trubek presiding.

1. Announcements

- The next meeting of WE3C will be 1/27/25 at 7 pm on Zoom.
- Laurel and Silas should both be Zoom hosts for WE3C meetings.
- **Matt Bacon, the new Recycling Program Manager in DPW, will be our guest at the next meeting.**
- Drew Rollert has received an award for his electric boat design.
(*Watertown's Wada Hoppah Shuttle Wins Award for Electric Boat Design*, Watertown MA News, by Charlie Breitrose on 12/11/24)
- Councilor Nicole Gardner wrote to co-chairs about a 'Skip the Stuff' ordinance that will come before City Council Rules & Ordinances sub-committee on 1/27/25.
- State environmental officials have approved a 700-MW lithium battery storage facility, for energy from offshore wind farms, in Everett.

2. Vote: Minutes from November were approved unanimously (Motion – Lauri, Second, Bruce)

3. Energy Manager Report (Silas Fyler)

Silas shared the statistics he gathered for the City Manager's end of the year report. We have seen a 20% increase in electricity use in the City since Aug of 2022. As we move away from oil and gas towards electrification, our electricity use will go up, as expected. This is why it is so important that the source/content of our electricity get cleaner over time.

Question, do we have data on gas usage for the same time period?

4. Sustainability Manager Report (Laurel Schwab)

- a. On 12/7/24 there was a heat pump workshop at the library. The event began with an overview of at-home heat pump systems from Steve Breit, co-founder HeatSmart Alliance. A panel of residents ("heat pump ambassadors") from the community shared their personal experiences installing a heat pump. The recording is available on WCA-TV.

"Heat Pumps 101 - December 7, 2024" <http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/show/3412?site=1>

- b. Watertown Sustainability staff attended the inaugural Green Communities Summit on 11/22/24. Watertown was recognized for reducing municipal greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20%.

c. Some Sustainability highlights from 2024 (from the Resilient Watertown newsletter):

- Formed new Sustainability Team within the Department of Community Development and Planning, adding two new sustainability-focused staff members
- Adopted Municipal Decarbonization Roadmap and Zero Emission Vehicle First Policy
- Won a nearly \$1 Million MVP Action Grant for Phase 2 of the Community Greening Program
- Planted Watertown's first Miyawaki Forest with over 200 volunteers
- Expanded our municipal electric vehicle fleet and public EV charging options
- Adopted the Watertown Square Area Plan and Zoning, setting the stage for transit-friendly mixed use development with strong sustainable design requirements
- Launched a Climate and Health Vulnerability Study (anticipated completion Spring 2025)
- Won a competitive ARPA grant for a multimodal transit mobility study (anticipated launch early 2025)

5. Discussion: Ordinances

Laurel shared a list of Ordinances relevant to WE3C interests. This list is for committee review; it is a working document, not for official use.

The following Ordinances were listed:

- BERDO
- Tree Protection Ordinance
- Sustainable Procurement Policy
- Recycling Ordinance
- Solar Ordinance Update
- Transportation Demand Management Ordinance Update
- Gas Powered Equipment Ban
- Zoning Ordinance Overhaul

A current status was given for each--some have been proposed, some are in place but need to be updated, some are needed but have not been started, etc.

Now that we have more Sustainability staff, staff will be taking a bigger role in developing and advancing Ordinances relevant to WE3C interests.

A discussion of the Ordinance development process followed. At the next WE3C meeting, we will take a close look at the standard process for developing a new Ordinance.

With so many Ordinances being worked on simultaneously, WE3C will need to advise or recommend to City Council/City Manager which ones to prioritize.

6. Vote: Motion to adjourn at 8:30 approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Menounos