

Minutes: Town of Watertown Environment & Energy Efficiency Committee,
September 17, 2018, 7 p.m., 3rd Floor Conference Room, Town Hall

Minutes

The meeting was opened by chair Meredith Fields at 7:03 p.m. Introductions were made. Attending members and citizens: Ed Lewis (Town Energy Manager), Meredith Fields, Lauri Murphy, Jeanne Trubek, Brian Hebeisen, Emma Clement, Helen Soussou, Lissa Gifford and Stephen Steadman.

7:03 Announcements and approval of minutes

- The Town has rehired Chris Hayward to be the Tree Warden and Forestry Supervisor.
- The Town has opened a position and is interviewing for a Senior Environmental Planner who would become the Town's Conservation Agent and coordinate Watertown's conservation activities.
- Wednesday 9/26 6 P.M. is the next School Building Committee meeting in Council Chambers
- Monday 10/15 7:00 P.M. is the next WE3C meeting in the third floor conference room.
- Minutes from the 7/16/18 meeting were approved.

7:10 Status / Energy Manager reports and discussion:

1) Watertown Electricity Choice

We had our DPU Public Hearing – it was uneventful, no one spoke in opposition of our aggregation. We did get a few pages of follow-up questions – a response was generated and submitted by the Energy Manager and Peregrine, our aggregation consultant. A positive ruling from the DPU is anticipated around the end of the year, allowing launch of Watertown Electricity Choice early in the new year.

2) Green Communities grants for LED lighting, plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and charging stations

Received the contract paperwork and we got the final paperwork executed and have requested the initial funds.

Total Grant and incentive funding exceeds \$336,000 – this is the largest Energy Grant Watertown has received.

First project is targeted to be lighting over the ice at the rink. This has been a problem area – the current lighting is troublesome and has been expensive and challenging to maintain. The new fixtures will be all LED with controls so the lighting can be customized and reduced. Estimated \$9K-\$10K per year in electricity and maintenance savings along with better lighting.

Several other LED projects (parking lots and outdoor building lighting) were funded.

Charging stations were partially funded - we are working with Eversource to provide the cabling and trenching - they are launching a program - this is the largest cost driver of the system. If we get accepted into the program (multiple steps - paper evaluations, contractors onsite review, etc.) Eversource will trench and run the cabling to the charger location and they will stub it up and pour a pad. They also provide for expansion to add more chargers in the future. We are in the “ask for it” stage. They need to approve on paper, basically decide where to get the power from, they tour onsite, then if approved they will pull the permits and go forward with the project – we have requested this be done before the end of the year.

3) Proposed zoning ordinances for solar, LEED

Two ordinances have been proposed, the first is to require LEED Silver certifiability for commercial developments in all areas of Town. Currently LEED Silver certifiability is required only in the RMUD zones, the rest of the zones require LEED certifiability. This ordinance would hold all areas of the Town to the same, more stringent, Sustainability standards.

The second proposed ordinance would require deployment of solar energy systems on new development of large commercial buildings. Currently Watertown requires a solar assessment of these buildings along with the updated State building code which requires a solar zone be engineered into the building design. This ordinance is a logical extension of these requirements.

Both of these proposals have gone to the Town Council for a first reading - they have been directed to the Planning Board for comment and to hold a public hearing on October 10th 7:00pm in the Council Chambers. The WE3C requests support at this meeting. The Planning Board will provide an opinion to the Town Council to accept,

reject, study or modify these ordinance. Town Council will also hold a Public Hearing on these ordinances. The Town Council are the only ones who can alter or enact a zoning change.

4) Upcoming School Building Committee meeting on renewable energy and environment

A requested was made to the School Building Committee Chair Sideris to have a meeting focused on environmental and energy considerations where sustainability ideas could be discussed in more depth. This meeting is expected to be scheduled in the future.

5) Climate Change and Energy Master Plan proposal

Two Town Council subcommittees (Economic Development and Planning and the Public Works subcommittee) are scheduling a combined meeting to discuss going forward with work on a Climate Change and Energy Master Plan. Tentatively scheduled for October 22nd at the Town Hall. Meredith provided an updated copy of the overall proposal. Due to the scope of the Climate Action Plan the WE3C looks forward to working with the Conservation & Storm Water Committees on it.

7:40 WE3C working groups: current and new projects for 2018-19

Transportation working group (TWG) – Jeanne reported the TWG has drafted a one page survey to solicit resident’s opinion of the current bus routes in Town and suggest where they think additional routes and/or busses are needed.

7:50 Letter of support for the Church of the Good Shepherd: discussion and vote.

Stephen Steadman, representing Watertown’s Church of the Good Shepherd, discussed a proposal to deploy PV solar on the Church. They have some concerns about the approval from the Historical Commission because the Church is located in a Historic district and some of the array would be viewable from the street. He asked for WE3C support for the array. He reviewed the proposal and the mock-up’s and the committee did not find the array intrusive and voted to write a letter of support for array deployment.

8:15 Faire on the Square – planning and staffing for the WE3C table

Watertown's Faire on the Square will be held on Saturday the 22nd from 11:00-4:00pm around the Town Hall. The WE3C / Energy Manager have a booth for public outreach to provide information on Sustainability activities in Town and specifics on Watertown Electricity Choice, MassSave energy audits and rebates, and the Solar and LEED ordinances. Also the transportation survey will be available.

Lauri and Meredith volunteered to help at the booth from 11-1
Jeanne volunteered from 1-3
Ed will be there 11-4

8:30 Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Ed Lewis