

Minutes: Town of Watertown Environment & Energy Efficiency Committee (WE3C)
September 21, 2020, 7 p.m., via ZOOM Meeting

Minutes

The meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m., chaired by Meredith Fields. Attending members and citizens: Edward Lewis (Town Energy Manager), Laurel Schwab (Town Environmental Planner), Lauri Murphy, Steve Steadman, Brian Hebeisen, Pat Rathbone, Ernesta Krackiewicz, Emma Clement, Ken Mirvis, and Jeanne Trubek.

1. Introductions were made. The minutes of 6/15/20 meeting were approved.

2. Announcements

Andy Ariesian will not be able to attend Monday evening meetings until January at earliest due to graduate courses.

The School Building Committee will meet Wednesday, September 30.
The next meeting of WE3C will be October 19

3. Energy Manager Report

There will be no Faire in the Square this year due to Covid.

Schools: The application for LEED certification for the Hosmer and Cuniff schools is being submitted. It covers policies on purchasing and construction purchases and practices, pest control, and waste disposal. Both schools are well on the way to LEED Gold. The solar array interconnect permits were submitted to Eversource, these detail the estimated production of the arrays so Eversource can integrate them into the grid. Due to a change in the incentive program the Hosmer school will need to have onsite battery backup of 25% of solar capacity. This will require modest changes to the construction plans, but it is a requirement to get the \$2.2 million in payments over the incentive period. The cost of including it is approximately \$0.5 million. Due to array size the Cuniff does not need battery backup.

Response to Covid pandemic: The town has been doing a great deal of work to make all town and school buildings safer. Many tape and sticker markings were installed to ensure social distancing along with extended furniture spacing and installation of counter guards. A rigorous disinfecting policy has been implemented. For improved air quality more outside air is being introduced into the buildings and the HVAC units are operating much longer. Our energy usage will increase to maintain this. In-school teaching is being opened gradually, with high-needs students first, then younger students, then high school.

The Town has been awarded a grant for Eversource to provide the infrastructure for two dual-headed level 2 EV charging stations in the library parking lot and one in the DPW parking lot. We are hopeful the digging will start in October. Charging pricing will be revenue-neutral to the town.

4. Environmental Planner Report

Laurel Schwab reported that the town was not awarded a grant proposal for Accelerating Climate Resiliency. This is a very competitive process. They are still deciding what to do next: re-apply (a year's delay), look for other sources of funds, see what can be done with the existing funds.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is offering grants through its Accelerated Climate Resiliency program. Laurel submitted a grant proposal to MAPC so the Charles River Watershed Association can work with schools on green infrastructure and environmental education. This will focus on curriculum development. We will be able to apply for extensions in future years.

4. WE3C membership and chairmanship

There are vacancies on the committee which must be filled with active members. Ed will write a blurb about membership and will send it out. We need to advertise the openings to interested people.

Meredith said that she needs to step back from chairing WE3C. Temporarily we will have a rotating chair with Emma chairing the October meeting and others stepping up to the plate after that.

5. Working group reports

Working groups have not been meeting.

Net Zero: Ernesta reported on actions from the Belmont, Cambridge, Arlington, Newton group that is working to get zero emissions. These towns have committed to The Rocky Mountain Institute program: Transitioning from Fossil Fuels to Electrification. Ernesta was permitted to audit the August and September workshops. To be part of the program requires a major commitment from the town.

Next meeting October 19, 2020.

8:30 Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Trubek