



Watertown City Council

**Committee on Climate and Energy Meeting
Monday, September 18, 2023 at 5:30 PM
149 Main Street, Watertown, Massachusetts
Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber**

Agenda

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, the meeting and public hearing will be conducted with remote opportunities for participation. Remote participation and access methods include:

ACCESS INFORMATION:

- A. This meeting will be held on September 18, 2023 at 5:30 PM. Location: Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber
- B. The meeting will be televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television): <http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=3>
- C. The Public may join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/85182314586>
- D. Public may join the virtual meeting audio only by phone: (877) 853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID: 851 8231 4586
- E. Public may comment through email: jairasian@watertown-ma.gov
- F. Please Visit the Committee on Climate and Energy Webpage here: https://watertownma.portal.civicclerk.com/?category_id=95

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1. Call to Order
 2. Discuss Implementation of the City's Climate and Energy Plan
 - A. Resilient Watertown Climate and Energy Plan - Action Status as of August 2023
 3. Adjournment

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Anthony Palomba,
Chair

Caroline Bays,
Vice Chair

John M. Airasian,
Secretary

RESILIENT WATERTOWN CLIMATE AND ENERGY PLAN- ACTION STATUS AS OF AUGUST 2023
YEAR 1 ACTIONS

Timeframe Key
short: less than 1 year to complete
medium: 1-3 years
long: 3-5 years

	Action	Plan Element	Timeframe	Status as of August 2023
CC 1	Strategy CC1: Add staff capacity and resources to the Energy Manager's Office, the DPW Forestry Division, and the Department of Community Development and Planning	n/a	ongoing	New position of Environmental Planner added, hired Katie Swan November 2022; Energy Manager position made full time, hired Silas Fyler; funded part-time Energy Advocate position through a Mass Save Community First Partnership grant- hiring in progress.
CC 2	Strategy CC2: Create an overarching Resilient Watertown Outreach & Education Campaign	n/a	ongoing	consultants providing monthly social media content; WE3C launched an Outreach Working Group to oversee and augment all engagement activities; Resilient Watertown Newsletter launching Sept 2023; WE3C working group working on a revamp of the Resilient Watertown website
CC 3	Strategy CC3: Develop assistance mechanisms and resources for renters and landlords (regarding energy efficiency, EV charging, etc.)	n/a	ongoing	working with KLA to add to Resilient Housing Resource Center webpage; Mass Save Community First Partnership grant will fund Energy Advocate position's efforts to inform renters and landlords of programs available to them and assist them in the process
CC 4	Strategy CC4: Collaborate regionally with other communities and entities	n/a	ongoing	participating in Resilient Mystic Collaborative and Charles River Climate Compact; joined MAPC Metro Mayors Coalition and attending climate-related meetings; participating in Multi-town gas leaks working group; participating in statewide Building Electrification Accelerator
CC 5	Strategy CC5: Explore establishing a Transportation Infrastructure Fund with funding from developers and the City to implement recommendations of this Plan	n/a	ongoing	Waiting for full time transportation planner to be hired
CC 6	Strategy CC6: Encourage and require sustainable, climate-resilient development patterns	n/a	ongoing	Comprehensive Plan update references this need; Goal 1 is to "be a leader on municipal sustainability and managing climate impacts."
BE 1.1	Expand and strengthen the existing solar ordinance	Buildings & Energy	medium	WE3C has decided to prioritize BEUDO legislation for now (see BE 4.1)
BE 1.3	Outreach campaign for WEC and rooftop solar	Buildings & Energy	short	Multiple social media and paper copy drops on Watertown Electricity Choice and programs that provide heating / heating system repair (i.e. LIHEAP Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) along with Mass Save rebate and weatherization information. Continue with social media drops along with Farmer's Market & Faire On the Square tabling, WEC marketing. The Energy Advocate will also contribute time to this effort.
BE 2.1	Adopt the state stretch code	Buildings & Energy	medium	City Council unanimously approved the Specialized Opt-In stretch code on 10 Jan 2023 City Council meeting. Watertown is one of the first two adopters of the Specialized Stretch Code in the State with this becoming effective July 10th, 2023. Building Department to undergo training.
BE 2.4	Work with municipalities to eliminate fossil fuels (home rules etc)	Buildings & Energy	long	Multi-town gas leaks initiative is tracking legislation
BE 3.2	outreach campaign for heat pumps in residential homes	Buildings & Energy	short	Energy Advocate will launch/manage

BE 3.3	Incentivize transition to heat pumps	Buildings & Energy	short	Silas met with BlockPower twice - a company focusing on helping Municipalities electrify. They target underserved populations and communities. Significant increase in incentives in MassSave rebates, Air Source Heat Pumps up to \$10,000 rebate, Ground Source up to \$15,000, additional \$10,000 for ground source if you meet income eligibility guidelines, Heat Pump water heater \$750 instant rebate. Also investigating the HEATSMART Alliance, a consortium of Cities and Towns that have put together bulk purchasing programs for Heat Pumps along with the support for residents undertaking these conversions.
BE 4.1	Enact a BEUDO/BERDO	Buildings & Energy	medium	WE3C Net Zero working group is working on a draft ordinance.
BE 4.2	Provide technical assistance for clean energy, energy efficiency, and financing activities	Buildings & Energy	medium	Energy Advocate position will assist/facilitate
BE 4.3	Upgrade major municipal facilities to net zero	Buildings & Energy	long	study of city hall, library, and parker building is underway, to be completed this summer. May also include main fire station.
TM 1.1	install bike and ped-only infrastructure for protected and off-street connections	Transportation & Mobility	medium	bike path connection thru Arsenal Park being constructed as part of Phase B renovations; Taylor Street segment of community path being constructed this year; Charles River path connection behind 580 Pleasant and rink completed; Mount Auburn St complete streets redesign starting construction this winter.
TM 1.2	collaborate regionally to increase and improve pathways for bikes and peds	Transportation & Mobility	medium	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway open/further extensions ongoing such as on Arsenal St
TM 1.3	increase use of transit, bike and ped travel through outreach, incentives, policy changes	Transportation & Mobility	long	comprehensive plan suggests parking maximums; acquired easements along arsenal st for 6 new bus shelters; expansion of bikeshare and TMA thru new developments
TM 2.1	Create and implement EV roadmap	Transportation & Mobility	short	GIS layer of all existing EV chargers has been created; planning to put map of public chargers on city website. Fleet electrification and charging infrastructure study launching soon thanks to funds approved in budget.
TM 2.5	increase availability of charging stations on municipal property	Transportation & Mobility	medium	Hosmer & Cuniff School chargers online (7 heads), 2 new chargers installed for shuttle buses at old Police Station, Howard Street parking lot chargers in process, several locations submitted for Eversource Make-Ready grants - Spring Street (Municipal lot) Nichols Ave & the John Ryan ice rink, along with the Parker Building are being evaluated
NR 1.3	acquire more open space and create open space on private property	Natural Resources	long	Walker Pond acquisition. The Comprehensive Plan update includes "Ensure high-quality parks, recreation, and open spaces that meet the needs of residents and the environment", with multiple actions towards that goal. Open space being designed into several ongoing redevelopments, including Watertown Mall and 66 Galen St complex.
NR 2.1	establish a tree ordinance	Natural Resources	medium	Draft under review by DCDP and Tree Warden
NR 2.2	outreach program to increase awareness of urban forest's role in climate change and mitigation	Natural Resources	short	new annual bare-root tree giveaway program; city social media tie-ins planned for spring and fall. Tree warden also working on informational tags for all newly planted street trees. Senior Environmental Planner speaking at Trees for Watertown annual meeting.
NR 2.3	increase tree plantings and prioritize plantings in areas at risk for urban heat impacts	Natural Resources	medium	The City of Watertown Planted 162 trees during the Fall 2022 planting season, along with giving residents 65 'bare root' trees for planting on their property. Tree inventory has been completed, which includes all existing street trees along with areas well suited for new plantings. DCR Urban and Community Forestry Challenge grants were awarded to complete this effort. 2023 plantings are targeted at 180 each in Spring and Fall - 360 total, plus continuation of the resident tree give away program. also received a \$240K grant from rep katherine clark for stormwater tree trenches.

NR 3.1	outreach and education on regenerative landscaping	Natural Resources	medium	City Manager signed Mayor's Monarch Pledge to promote pollinator species; DCDP doing associated comms/outreach and coordination with groups such as Watertown Community Gardens, who have formed a coalition called Watertown Pollinator Pathways. Volunteer-supported pollinator garden installations on public property occur each spring and fall, led by DPW. DCDP in process of creating a publicly accessible pollinator garden GIS layer.
NR 3.3	update regs to require native plants/de-emphasize lawn species	Natural Resources	short	DCDP staff are reviewing potential changes and will likely fold into a larger code reform effort (tied to outcomes of comprehensive plan update)
IW 1.2	outreach campaign on reducing consumption across all categories	Infrastructure & Waste	medium	social media efforts in coordination with Solid Waste Advisory Committee. "Fix-It" Clinic planned for Fall 2023 in coordination with Hatch Makerspace.
IW 1.3	Create an organics recycling program	Infrastructure & Waste	short	Watertown has enrolled 2,500 residents (initial budget was for 1500), has incorporated composting into the schools, plus drop off bins at the recycle center for organic waste composting. Roughly 56 tons of food scraps are collected per month and diverted from the waste stream.
IW 1.5	Investigate opportunities to pursue a circular economy in Watertown or within the Metro Boston region	Infrastructure & Waste	medium	Textile recycling implimented, approximatly 1,900 pounds per month are being divereted from the trash stream, almost 95% of that is reused or recycled. Added fees for large burnable items this has reduced this trash stream. Overall Watertown trash had been reduced by 931 tons 2021 vs. 2022. (almost 10%). Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee restarted per order of the City Council.
IW 2.1	require all major new and upgraded infrastructure to incorporate resilient design guidelines	Infrastructure & Waste	medium	has not launched
IW 2.3	Advocate for removal of Watertown Dam	Infrastructure & Waste	long	City Council voted to send a letter of support for removal of the dam to the DCR; Charles River Watershed Association accepted an invitation to table at Faire on the Square 2023 to do additional advocacy on the topic.
IW 2.4	investigate back up power/microgrid/battery options for public bldgs	Infrastructure & Waste	medium	Energy Manager coordinating battery storage at Hosmer, evaluating options, reviewing companies to manage the battery for most effective usage including peak shaving, back-up and maximum benefits and incentives to the City
PH 1.1	outreach campaign about climate preparedness	Public Health & Preparedness	short	Health Department continues to inform and educate the public on issues such as COVID, Flu Shots, tick and mosquito born infectious diseases along with emergency preparedness prior to and during climate related weather emergencies.
PH 2.1	complete a climate change and health vulnerability assessment	Public Health & Preparedness	medium	has not launched
PH 2.2	mitigate existing and prevent new urban heat islands	Public Health & Preparedness	medium	Forestry and DCDP working to focus new tree plantings in heat island areas for 2023. Contemplating installation of "micro-forests" in areas of need (see micro-forest planted in Danehy Park in Cambridge)
PH 2.3	Continue to enhance access to local food by expanding resources and support for food pantries and community fridge programs, community gardens, and the Farmers' Market for those who are food insecure	Public Health & Preparedness	medium	working to ID additional opportunities for community gardens on public property
PH 3.3	launch a "sign up" campaign to ensure equitable access to communication resources	Public Health & Preparedness	short	advertising WatertownAlert system at farmer's market and Faire on the Square
PH 3.4	Enhance emergency info on city website	Public Health & Preparedness	short	IT has contually updated the City Website to enhance the user experience and to streamline information retrieval.
PH 4.2	Enhance the Live Well Watertown coalition and its programs	Public Health & Preparedness	medium	Health Dept working with Riverside group to pilot new concepts; held stormwater walk in April 2023