

The Watertown Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee met remotely via Zoom at 7:00 PM on Monday, March 20, 2023.

The following members and staff were present: Ellen Menounos (Co-Chair), Jeanne Trubek (Co-Chair), Silas Fyler (Energy Manager), Laurel Schwab (Environmental Planner), Brian Hebeisen, Lauri Murphy

Members absent: Shin Nagpal, Pat Rathbone, Carina Wallack

Others present: Ernesta Krackiewicz, Andres Guzman, David Bearg, Jacqui Gross, Steve Steadman

The meeting started with a quorum at 7:06 with Jeanne Trubek presiding.

1. Announcements. The next meeting of WE3C will be Monday, April 24, 2023 at 7 pm.

Saturday, 3/25, 10am-2pm – Recycling Day at 57 Stanley Ave.

Monday, 3/27, 5:30pm – Climate and Energy Plan update – hybrid meeting at City Hall and on Zoom.

Wednesday, 3/29, 7-8:30pm on Zoom – Bump-Out Garden webinar hosted by Friends of Bees.

Presentation by Melinda Dennis and Ellen Menounos. Will cover planting perennials in the spaces between sidewalk and curb, or at bump-outs (corners.) There is a 100-person capacity attendance.

2. Vote: To accept the 2/27/23 Minutes as they were drafted.

3. Energy Manager Report (Silas Fyler)

Community First through Mass Save is moving forward. BERDO is moving forward – no details yet. Silas is talking to Newton more.

Watertown Electricity Choice (WEC) did not go out to bid last week, that has been delayed to March 28.

Budget Committee will vote on Capital Plan on 3/30.

Black Earth will be offering compost at the DPW Recycling event on 3/25.

WE3C is moving residents toward electrification. The Community First Program offers training to residents on Mass Save services. Low income residents would receive other services. Silas proposed that the City seek Mass Save contractors via an RFP, for a Home Performance Contractor (HPC) with certain qualifications. HPC would be well versed in incentives and how to take advantage of them, and could help those who have already had energy audits to get more services (heat pumps, weatherization, etc.)

The State hasn't decided on whether to continue allowing remote meetings. The April WE3C may be in person, or a hybrid of in-person and remote, if permissible.

4. Environmental Planner Report (Laurel Schwab)

The Climate Plan Implementation meeting was moved to 3/27 at 5:30.

Brian suggested that the presentation be on a PowerPoint to share with others.

The Resilient Watertown website will be significantly updated soon; it will be comprehensive and interactive. Recycling information will be included.

The City of Watertown will have a Sustainability table at the farmer's market every other week, managed by Stephanie Venizelos. This Sustainability table can showcase all efforts city-wide. The table needs more staff representing Resilient Watertown, solid waste, advocacy, outreach, etc.

Earth Day Sat. April 22 – We will need to brainstorm Climate Plan outreach, including media highlights.

Jeanne mentioned there is an annual CRWA River Cleanup at the end of April.

5. Working group updates

Tree Ordinance – Ellen is following up on an email to Proakis and Magoon on their meeting a month ago. They are to draft an alternate ordinance but she has not yet heard from them.

Net Zero – Pat Rathbone is unavailable. Brian said they are planning on a meeting that's not yet scheduled.

School Outreach – no updates.

Transportation Committee – Jeanne is working with Ernesta and Deborah Peterson of the Watertown Faces Climate Change (WFCC) Transportation working group, plus Bob Shay of Watertown For All Ages who will work with the Disability Committee, on a plan to pursue American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for a transportation study/pilot program on micro-transit. They, Silas, and Laurel all attended an event with breakout sessions and learned of State/Federal money available from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to reduce greenhouse gases through grants for communities over and under 35,000 residents (Watertown is just over 35,000) for \$72,000 of non-competitive disbursements (fewer restrictions than other grants; can have sub-grants). Silas or someone else will write the grant on micro-transit. Ernesta noted that micro-transit is shared, reducing automobile traffic, and building community among City participants.

WEC – See Energy Manager Report above.

- 6. Discussion:** Comprehensive Plan Committee Feedback Letter--Brian will edit the letter to include more content on buildings, to be shared with Silas, Ed Lewis (former Energy Manager), Jeanne, Lauri, Ellen, and Ernesta for further review. He stated that Watertown Faces Climate Change (WFCC) wants to have their finished letter distributed to the Comprehension Plan Committee, City Council, Steve Magoon, George Patrakis, Gideon Schreiber, Laurel, Silas, and The Boston Globe.
- 7. New business** – Ellen noted that WE3C meetings are posted on the City website. Silas will look into whether we are required to post video recordings vs. audio and whether either is to be provided upon request.
- 8. Vote: To adjourn at 8:45.** All ayes/approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Lauri Murphy