

The Watertown Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee met remotely via Zoom at 7:00 PM on Monday, December 18, 2023.

The following members and staff were present:

Jeanne Trubek (Co-Chair), Ellen Menounos (Co-Chair), Silas Fyler (Energy Manager), Laurel Schwab (Environmental Planner), Brian Hebeisen, Pat Rathbone, Lauri Murphy

Absent: Carina Wallack, Shin Nagpal

Others present: Zeke Mermell (Transportation Planner), Mike Albano (DPW), Pam Phillips, Steve Steadman, Mary Rose, Jacqui Gross, Susan Ladue, Lise Paul, Linda Relson, Ernesta Krackiewicz, Ellen Rothman

The meeting started with a quorum at 7:00 with Ellen Menounos presiding.

1. Announcements

- The next meeting of WE3C will be Monday, January 22 at 7 pm. It will be a hybrid meeting.

2. Vote: Minutes from 11/20/23 were approved unanimously.

3. Energy Manager Report (Silas Fyler)

- Watertown has reduced emissions by 29% from 2010 baseline.
- Green Communities 3.0 will be called Climate Leader Communities. Silas will share more about that in the new year. [Climate Leader Communities | Mass.gov](#)

4. Environmental Planner Report (Laurel Schwab)

- The staff will be presenting an update on the implementation of the Climate and Energy Plan to the City Council Climate and Energy subcommittee on January 18 at 6:30 pm
- We have been talking with the school department about locating micro-forests on school property. We are narrowing down sites for initial micro-forest project. Lowell School is a promising site.
- We are also talking with people about removing invasive plant species.
- We are narrowing down the scope of work for EV chargers. We are doing a study concerning where to locate fast chargers.

5. Discussion with Zeke Mermell, Watertown's new Senior Transportation Planner

Zeke's contact information:

- zmermell@watertown-ma.gov
- <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/233/Transportation-Planning>
- Feel free to reach out to me at the email above. Also, I included the link to the City's Transportation Planning webpage. This page will be updated throughout next year for our latest initiatives.
- For current information about the changes in watertown Square, see <https://watertownsquareimprovements.com>
- Save the date: Feb 29 will be the next public meeting concerning the changes in Watertown Square. There will be another in April.
- We are issuing an RFP to do a study of transportation in Watertown. We need to get best practices submitted to the city and also get financially sustainable micro-transit.

6. The NET ZERO working group gave an initial presentation on “What is a BERDO? “

BERDO stands for Building Emissions Reduction Disclosure Ordinance. It will apply to both existing and new large buildings. This immediately raises two questions:

- 1) What is “large”?
- 2) How do you measure a building?

Boston, Cambridge, Newton, and Lexington all have BERDOs required for buildings with gross floor area greater than 20,000 square feet. They use the EPA Portfolio Manager for the reporting.

This will not apply to houses or other residential spaces.

We discussed the need for a BERDO and reasons for including only large buildings in the requirement. Large buildings contribute a major component of the emissions, but the numbers of buildings in that category are small so we get a significant reduction in emissions with a reasonable amount of paperwork.

7. Working groups will present updates at the next meeting.

Vote: Motion to adjourn at 8:45 approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Jeanne Trubek