



Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee

Minutes of Public Meeting

Filed with Town Clerk:

DATE: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 **TIME:** 7:00 PM
PLACE: Town Offices **ADDRESS:** 50 Billerica Road **ROOM:** 200

MINUTES

Prepared by David Drayton, Vice Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Badhri Uppiliappan (Chair, in person), Bethany Ward (remote), Sean McGuigan (remote), Caeli Tegan (remote), David Drayton (Vice Chair, remote), David Sperry (remote), Bern Kosicki (remote)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brittany Doherty

OTHERS PRESENT: Kenneth Lefebvre (Select Board, in person), Melissa Joyce (Sustainability Director, remote), Evan Belansky (Community Development Director)

Meeting Minutes

There were no new meeting minutes that needed approval. Clerk Sally Johnston, who resigned from the committee earlier this week for personal reasons, plans on sending the last meeting's minutes before the next meeting.

Public Input

There was no input from the public.

MAPC Overview Presentation

David Drayton gave a presentation providing an overview of the 2025 priorities listed in the MAPC Playbooks. After showing how the playbooks were laid out and what priorities they suggested completing by 2025, David proposed the idea of the committee splitting up into teams. Each team would be dedicated to a specific playbook. Badhri and Melissa would serve in coordinating and enabling roles. No members voiced any concerns about the idea, and Bern, Bethany, and Badhri all openly supported the idea.

Follow-up item: Dave D. to send out a sign-up sheet for teams.

State Planning Grant Discussion

Evan Belansky led a discussion on the progress of the Request for Proposals to find a consultant that would help the town to come up with an action plan to address net-zero issues in town. One of his concerns was that it's going to be hard to make recommendations in the final outcome of the consultant's work if we haven't already done the carbon inventory. However, his primary concern was that the scope of the project seems to be beyond what the current \$30,000 budget provided for. He suggested limiting

the scope of the consultant's work to one playbook: the zoning playbook. He felt this was especially prudent because many of the examples in the playbook given as models were very urban cities like Somerville, which has very different in-house expertise and resources available. He doesn't think Planning Board will want to OK anything that mandates anything, so suggested limiting this project's scope to only include policy with a zoning focus.

The committee generally agreed with Evan's suggestion to limit the scope of the consultant's work to zoning recommendations, using the MAPC Zoning playbook as a guide. As a result, Evan said he would update his Request for Proposals to reflect this decision and send a new version to the committee before the next meeting.

Assessors' Database and Data Presentation

Dave Sperry gave a presentation on Chelmsford's housing data from the Assessors' office, focusing on single family residences. He noted that the data are not totally accurate since it only gets updated mostly updated when house is sold. His house in the database, for example, showed outdated information. Houses sold a long time ago are less likely to have updated data (like heating type).

Many buildings have heating systems grossly oversized due to 1918 changes in zoning to allow open windows during the due to pandemic at the time. Steam heat and forced hot water are going to be difficult to convert to heat pumps, but over a third of our homes fit into that category.

Our schools were also not designed to be energy efficient because they were built before the energy crisis, so energy was super cheap (they mostly used forced hot water). South Row is still steam, though it was updated in 2012. Center school is much more updated and efficient/insulated.

48% of homes in the database are listed as using forced hot air ducts (easy to convert to heat pumps), but others are harder (37% hot water!). Only 35 homes have heat pumps! Steam heat systems are super durable, but least efficient and hard to retrofit, so they will likely be a major obstacle for us.

March 2022 Meeting Dates

Switching from Wednesdays to Tuesdays: March 1st, 15th, 29th

Other topics:

Sally Johnston has become too busy to continue her duties on the committee, so she resigned earlier this week. Melissa Joyce says that Support Services Coordinator Christina Bruce has spoken with Town Manager Paul Cohen and they have already reached out to the original pool of candidates for the committee. If there are people who are still interested, it'll go before the Select Board on February 28th.

We will choose a new Clerk at the next meeting.

Follow-up item: Members to review playbooks to try to feel out which team(s) they want to join.

Follow-up item: David D. to reach out to Sally to see if she had already established contact with any of her assigned committees so we can figure out how to handle the transition.

Meeting adjourned by unanimous vote.