

Waltham Energy Action Committee

Thursday 7pm, December 12, 2013

Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School St.

Minutes

Members Present:

Kathy Randel, Leo Keightley, Eileen Zubrowski, Melissa Downes

Others Present:

Amy Gortler

Jacob Miller

Diane Carr (Co-chair: Bishops Forest Green Committee)

Carolyn Dann (Mass DEP Municipal Assistance Coordinator)

agenda in [blue](#)

Ms. Randel called the meeting to order at 7PM.

Welcome

Eileen introduced Carolyn Dan, who will discuss, with the Committee, strategies for collection of waste that may increase recycling.

Review and accept minutes from previous meeting(s)

Correct Oct. minutes: Melissa was not at that meeting.

[Carolyn Dann, MassDEP Municipal Assistance Coordinator to talk about trash/recycling collection strategies to increase recycling and reduce trash](#)

note: See Eileen's review of this subject: "SW Cllxn Strategies 2014.pdf" in this subdirectory.

- Eileen mentioned, as a preface to Carolyn's comments, that the Waltham contract with Capital Waste is up for renewal in Fall of 2014 and the discussion involves possible options for the Mayor to consider for the next contract.
- Committee members and guests introduced themselves.
- Carolyn began by noting that she has been participating on waste committees in 38 Massachusetts communities and has worked with Eileen on the SWAC Solid Waste Advisory Committee on increasing recycling and waste reduction. A couple of concepts under consideration are cost neutral pay as you throw and automated collection.
- Regarding amount of waste / household (measured in tons / household):
1500lb or less / yr is considered "green." 2000lb or more is "red."
Carolyn noted that Waltham is "very red."
- Some ideas on how to reduce waste:
Implement pay as you throw using "standard" plastic bags.
 - The bags are available at a variety of locations: grocery, hardware, and drug stores, for example.
 - Bags cost \$2 each.
 - People are motivated, by the cost, to put as much in as possible in a single bag and find ways to reduce waste.

- Amy suggested different size containers.

- Stickers on generic trash bags were discussed, but there are too many problems,

A major block to Waltham implementation is that program payment, through bag sales, is seen as an additional “tax.”

- Ways were discussed to reimburse people for their related expense.

Reimbursement is complicated in Waltham by the high tenant/single-family-homeowner ratio.

About 1/3 of MA towns and cities (several nearby) have implemented pay as you throw.

- For Waltham:

There is an approach for bag payment that is “cost neutral.”

- For example, in water/sewer bills, there could be a refuse credit (\$100 for example). This would pay for 50 \$2 bags (possibly 30 gallon bags) per year (1500 gal/yr). Over time, as statistics become available, the system gets tweaked.

- For rentals, landlords would get the reimbursements and would have to reimburse their tenants. To be sure the tenants actually receive reimbursement, the distribution might have to be modified. There was considerable discussion of how to handle rentals.

In Waltham, properties with 5 or more dwelling units are not eligible for municipal waste collection and have to arrange for private refuse disposal.

- Automation was another topic discussed. Safety and cost reduction are two primary reasons that hauling companies are going that way. Trash collection is one of the most dangerous jobs. Automation reduces workers injuries and workers compensation costs. There is also some reduction in personnel, but there is some re-deployment of workers.

- 64 gal containers will bring the average refuse down to about 1 ton / household.

- 48 gal brings the average down to about 0.8 tons.

- Lowell example:

Containers are provided only for eligible customers. The 64 gal containers were smaller than what had been average Lowell weekly refuse volume so there was some immediate reduction. Eventually there was a 25% reduction in total volume.

- Actions:

- Mel & Eileen will look at databases of 1 to 4 family living units for properties that are owner occupied and those that are condos.
- WEAC will try to have a representative from WasteZero Inc. as a guest at the next meeting.
- For next meeting members are asked to think of possible options for landlord/tenant cost neutral pay-as-you-throw payment/reimbursement arrangements.

Next Step Living's Solar Campaign Update - Eileen

Eileen passed around a letter from John Massie, Regional Outreach Manager at NSL. Following are statistics from that letter.

- Since the Waltham Solar Challenge started at the end of Oct. '13, NSL has:
Completed 86 energy assessments
Weatherized 23 homes (with an additional 12 scheduled for Dec. '13)
Signed 4 solar contracts
- Waltham residents who have weatherized their homes are averaging just under \$700/yr annual utility bill savings and roughly 3 metric tons of carbon emission reduction.
- Since NSL began doing work in Waltham in 2011, NSL has (including numbers above for the

Waltham Solar Challenge):

Completed 465 energy assessments

Weatherized 118 homes

The Waltham Solar Challenge program is going to be extended 2 additional months.

Outreach to Multifamilies about Energy Efficiency - Eileen and Amy

- Eileen and Amy are looking for how to inform owners of property with 5 or more dwelling units know of the Mass Save program which exists for them.
- WEAC may send out fliers. Eileen passed around a sample flier.
- Eileen has a list of properties with 4 or more dwelling units. Unfortunately, the number of units/building is not indicated.

There is a “Landlord Association” but it is for properties with 1 to 4 units.

WEAC’s Twitter Account – Kathy from Grace

We do have an account and Grace Babula is putting things up.

Green Communities – Kathy

No Action

Stretch Code Meeting – Mel

Mel is trying to connect with (will call tomorrow) Tom LeBlank for ideas on improvement to the survey. Tom works in the building trade and knows contractors.

Kathy wants to proceed with the survey as it is, if a meeting doesn't occur soon.

City Hall Energy Efficiency – Kathy

Leo & Kathy will meet this month with Don Cusano to discuss HVAC and sealing feasibility studies for City Hall and Government Center. Jacob will not be able to attend due to a schedule conflict.

Earth Hour – Mel

Mel told Councillor Logan that WEAC doesn't have the bandwidth to implement Waltham activities for Earth Hour. It was suggested that the people who brought it up could spearhead something.

Bag It documentary - Eileen

Eileen informed meeting attendees of a movie called “Bag It.” The movie is about plastic bags and is at the Waltham Library.

Closing

Next Meeting

– Thursday, January 9, 2014, 7pm-9pm - Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School St.

The committee adjourned at 9:10 PM.