

Waltham Energy Action Committee

Thursday 7pm, November 8, 2012

Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School St.

Minutes

Members Present:

Kathy Randel, Leo Keightley, Eileen Zubrowski, Melissa Downes, Tony Dover

Others Present:

Gerry Bingham (works for DOER knows Andy Green who recommended WEAC) Experience in energy and environmentalist.

Bob Ferrone

Benny Burshtin

Amy Gortler

agenda in [blue](#)

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

Welcome

- Committee members and Gerry Bingham introduced ourselves (Benny Burshtin had not yet arrived).
- Kathy reviewed a bit about Emily Starr's situation. Emily had been dealing with a health issue and due to additional complications won't be with us any more. We miss Emily and passed around a card to be delivered to her.

[Review and accept minutes from previous meeting\(s\)](#)

Both Kathy and Leo recommended stating in Sep. minutes that a todo list will no longer be associated with meeting minutes and accepting the minutes with that change. There is no mention of a todo list in the Oct. minutes so that document is set for acceptance as is.

The Committee accepted the September minutes with the mentioned change and the October minutes.

[Disband the Complete Streets Subcommittee vote - Leo](#)

- Leo (Chair of the Complete Streets Subcommittee) said that due to diverse agendas of interest to members of the subcommittee he finds that he will not be able to lead the group to focus on a set of tasks appropriate for the effort available from subcommittee members. Leo suggested either disbanding the Subcommittee or selecting a new chairperson. Leo noted that WEAC members can support existing efforts of other groups without having a WEAC Transportation group.
- Eileen mentioned an apparent loss of interest after the first Subcommittee meeting. Due to inability to meet quorum, the July meeting was canceled and August meeting was adjourned without action.
- Melissa noted that it was summer (July and August) and that probably explained the "loss of interest".
- Several transportation related agendas were brought up:
 - The Central Massachusetts Rail Trail : Kathy mentioned the Mayor had referred to it at the previous meeting. Leo said there were several related initiatives.
 - Bob mentioned the 128 Business Council appears to have a bicycle initiative.
 - Bob also mentioned there is a number of diverse initiatives and groups, related to transportation

(outside of WEAC) and these groups should get together.

- Melissa liked the prescriptive aspect of projects such as the Rail Trail and Hubway. She suggested conducting outreach meetings with the groups to get ideas on what to work on. WEAC's role could be more "cheerleader" than project manager. She mentioned the Waltham Bicycle Committee which seems dormant, but the cyclists themselves are active.
- Kathy said she gathers from the discussion that Committee should table Leo's suggestions to disband the Subcommittee or select a new chairperson and look into pulling together different groups without our taking project responsibility.
- Eileen would like to take on a small project like re-striping roads or promoting the Rail Trail. If we make a dent in promoting cycling maybe we can expand the scope of our effort.
- Tony asked about getting city officials to Complete Streets training. Kathy said there is no more CS training planned for now.
- Melissa added that we should consolidate related information we have collected. Melissa said she could do a summary.
- Kathy thinks Transportation is not a priority and WEAC doesn't have the bandwidth to take it on.
- Gerry liked the idea of people working on existing efforts.
- Tony proposed we table the suggestions to disband the Subcommittee or select a new chairperson. This was accepted. Melissa will do an executive summary, and put together an entry for the web site.

Forum – vote to hold it - Kathy

- Kathy reviewed last January's Forum and said based on time we can't do it: asking if anyone disagrees. There was nodisagreement. She asked if we should we try to do a forum in 2013.
- Melissa worried about another forum without having done much with previous ideas, noting that the "eco-fest" (possibly to be called "Green Watch") being organized by the 128 Business Council is a good "forum."
- Kathy suggested creating a quarterly brochure or newsletter for spreading word about accomplishments such as the City's PV system.
- Bob liked the Forum, and wished speakers had more time for more depth.
- Kathy suggested voting on doing a Forum for every 2 years. Tony thinks 2 years is too long and momentum will be lost: the idea of groups helping each other out is important and needs more frequent follow up.
 - Kathy proposed having a simpler meeting and asked for recommended time between Forums.
 - Tony suggested April '13.
- The Committee agreed to go forward with Tony's suggestion to add to next meeting's agenda to brainstorm what the next Forum should be.

Cadmus – vote to contact – Kathy

Andy suggested WEAC contact The Cadmus Group, Inc., because the Mayor has such a good relationship with them, to talk about our effectivity.

After discussion, Leo motioned we not contact Cadmus and this was accepted.

Outreach to new members suggested by Andy - Kathy

Kathy will circulate the email for those who may no longer have it and people can bring up and objections to having these people at the next meeting.

Geothermal Update – Leo

Leo reviewed the Geothermal ice and hvac proposal from ThermoSource. Leo noted that he and a DCR engineer had "reverse engineered" the proposal and determined the geothermal based ice cooling is estimated to use about 1/3 the energy as the current system. Most heat requirements for hot water (domestic and zamboni), and comfort heating will come from waste heat from the ice cooling process, eliminating most of the use of natural gas for these requirements, reducing energy costs by another percent or two.

The ThermoSource sales team pushed very hard on keeping air conditioning in the design, saying it's basically already in the system adding only cost of ducting. There also seemed to be interest on the part of other members of the Waltham committee reviewing this proposal to add as many rink "improvements" to the project as possible (including the A/C).

Streetlight Update – Leo

Leo mentioned his top priorities for working with Tim Kelly right now is the PV Dashboard (see PV Update below) and the rink. He didn't want to bring in another topic.

Bentley Student Project update – Kathy

Kathy and Emily met with Bentley students and are working on WEAC visibility via two venues: Facebook and the Waltham Farmers' Market. WEAC members manned an information table at the Market on 27-Oct. Bentley students manned the table on 03-Nov and will do so on 10-Nov. also. The Bentley group will follow up report on how WEAC can expand it's outreach.

Green Communities Update - Kathy

Leo, Kathy, and Melissa Met with Councillors Stephen Rourke and Robert Logan. There was discussion, primarily between Stephen and Robert, regarding possible approaches to clear the zoning impediment to submission of the GC Application.

- The Mayor has said that once the zoning issues are cleared up then she will address the School Committee ERP approval.
- Stephen and Robert agreed to continue to work outside the meeting on crafting a solution to the zoning issues.

Kathy and Melissa have been assembling a list of companies in Waltham doing r&d on renewable energy and sustainable technologies. Tony and Gerry mentioned a few additional companies.

PV Follow up

• Forward Capacity Markets Update – Tony

Tony said Gerry is expert on this. Tony and Gerry will talk this over.

Gerry said he will check on allocation of credits (Schedule Z).

Gerry mentioned there a floor rate below which SRECs won't go.

• PV Dashboard - Leo

- Leo said Tim Kelly is checking with people at Ameresco about the dashboard.
- Gerry mentioned that, Solectria inverters have built in capacity to display PV performance on a web dashboard. Fat Spaniel (now acquired by Power-One) is another web dashboard system.

PV article/WEAC Newsletter – Kathy

Kathy asked for volunteer(s) to write a newspaper article on WEAC activities. Mel and Kathy agreed to work on it.

Strategy for building energy efficiency projects – Tony

- Tony had to leave the meeting and wasn't able to discuss this topic.
- Don Cusano should be involved in any audit activity.
- Bob mentioned checking with GETI (Green Enterprise Training Institute) noting they might now have people qualified to do professional audits on municipal buildings.
- Gerry mentioned that MASSAVE now does professional audits.

Dan Driscoll – re progress on the rail trail – volunteer to contact him?

no discussion

Other items from last month's discussion with Mayor McCarthy?

no discussion

Ecofest and Nadene Stein updates – Eileen

- **DOER Webinar on Green Ribbon Schools Award Program Update - Amy**
Amy is scheduled to meet with Nadene Stein (Principal, Northeast Elementary School) next Wednesday to find out what if there are any school programs concerning energy efficiency. If so, how can we support them? If not, can we do something such as a classroom presentation.
 - Eileen wondered why just one school is involved. If the Northeast Elementary effort is successful maybe we can expand to other schools. Climate change should be considered as a related topic.
- **TV program with Chamber Sustainability Committee, whether we want to tie it in with the Ecofest or a 1 day session about collaboration at a university - Bob**
text
- Eileen reviewed an ecofest meeting.
The tentative event date is Oct. 5 2013 with an Oct. 19 rain date.
Two potential event names are "Green Watch" suggested by Melissa and "Green Light."
Items discussed for the event:
 - Raising money
 - Entertainment and music
 - Trying to interest green companies in Waltham to attend.
 - Involvement of Schools (Waltham Public and Brandeis and Bentley Universities)
 - Mission statement.

Additional Items

- Bob mentioned arranging for universities and businesses (and WEAC) to meet, maybe in Jan-'13 to find out what everyone wants to focus on. Transportation should be part of this.
- Gerry said there is assistance for sustainable programs available without being a green community. These paths may have less associated stress.
- Kathy mentioned donorschoose.org: an organization for raising money for educational programs which may be useful for raising money for energy/environmental education.

Closing

Next Meeting – Thursday, December 13, 2012, 7pm-9pm - Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School St.

The committee adjourned at 9:12 PM.