

Waltham Energy Action Committee

Thursday 7pm, March 21, 2013

Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School St.

Minutes

Members Present:

Kathy Randel, Leo Keightley, Eileen Zubrowski, Melissa Downes

Others Present:

Catherine Finneran

Riley Rodgers

Danielle Einhorn: Sustainability Class @ Brandeis

Frank Craig

agenda in [blue](#)

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

Welcome

We introduced ourselves:

- Catherine is the Clean Energy Director at the Mass Dept. of Environmental Protection, and is a Waltham resident.
- Riley is a Bentley student and is taking Rick Oches' Science of Sustainability class.

[Accept February minutes – Kathy](#)

Kathy and Eileen had corrections for the existing draft. Leo will make the corrections and post a revised draft which will be brought up for acceptance at the April meeting.

[Special Municipal Employee Vote - Kathy](#)

Kathy brought up a few details regarding members of a Waltham City committee, such as WEAC members who are not otherwise working in an official capacity for the city.

- These WEAC members need to be designated by the City Council as "Special Municipal Employees." Successful completion of Conflict of Interest training is a prerequisite for this designation.
- WEAC needs to update its bylaws to reflect the Special Municipal Employee designation requirement.
- It was agreed to put off this work on the bylaws until the April meeting.

[Northeast Elementary School Update - Amy](#)

Danielle, Amy Gortlier, and Eileen, conducted their first sustainability presentation and workshop for a forth grade class last week at the Northeast Elementary School. They will conduct 2 more of these classes next week.

- The presentation and workshop involved an introduction to the greenhouse affect and greenhouse atmospheric gases and role playing as the Earth, greenhouse gases, and heat from sun.
- Things that can be done in their lives at home were also discussed.
- Eileen said that the students liked it. She also noted that otherwise, there nothing now in the Waltham

elementary schools' curricula related to climate change is.

- Nadene Stein, Northeast Elementary School Principal, will try to get this training event into other Waltham schools.

Waltham Complete Streets Update - Eileen

Eileen reminded the Committee of the Wed., Apr. 10 date for the Complete Streets training in Waltham.

- The Health Dept. is added to the list of Departments attending (including Engineering, Planning, and CPW).

Greenwatch Update - Eileen

- Eileen reminded the Committee of the Sat., Oct. 5 date for the "Greenwatch" festival.
- Among the list of organizers and participants are The 128 Council, The Waltham West Suburban Chamber of Commerce, WEAC, The Nelsen Companies, and Bentley University. Greenwatch is working on having Brandeis University represented also.
- This is an outreach opportunity for Waltham businesses and organizations with anything to help people and businesses improve their sustainability.
- Greenwatch is considering making this an annual event.
- The main spearhead of this event is The 128 Council.
- Eileen is on a committee to increase community participation, especially schools (which will attract parents to attend the event).

Eileen met with Nadene Stein: Students could come up with inventions regarding sustainability.

Also, a book related to sustainability could be used as a source and a person could go into 30 classrooms and read selection and the students will write about.

This committee may also contact Rick Oches at Bentley regarding his Sustainability Class.

- For people wishing to get involved:
There is a monthly meeting (at The Nelson Properties) and/or
Contact Eileen with any ideas, especially ideas to attract people to Greenwatch.

Sagewell Update - Eileen

WEAC is now doing promotion (flyers). This approach is particularly good for people who have already had an audit and can see if they need more work.

Danielle may submit an article for the newspaper.

Bob pointed out that he had a very weak audit and that isn't good for the program.

- Maybe utilities could be contacted to drive for consistency in audits.
- Kathy: Communities need to find out why people aren't going for audits and upgrades before a program is launched. What are the barriers to keep people from making energy improvements?
- Leo suggested we ask WATCH at meeting at 1st Parish Church tomorrow what barriers they encounter.
- Kathy noted general WEAC interest in getting info about why residents aren't taking action.
Catherin said she'll start work on a survey to use to get info about why people don't take action.
We should look into whether or not people are motivated by audits or even de-motivated.

Solarize Mass - Kathy

Solarize Mass is a State program to increase education and awareness, reduce barriers and time to

contract for PV installation.

- A community gets people to sign up and the more who sign, the lower the cost.
- A person in Arlington worked 2 days/wk and had 15 workers. (more than WEAC capacity)
- Leo and Catherine noted that PV is an excellent green improvement that can have as much impact on the homeowner, in ownership and operation, as homeowner wants and homeowner electric bills will be reduced. It is a good community/society green program that produces results.
- Melissa will do some background research into Solarize Mass.
- Possibly we can find possible workers for this program at Greenwatch.

CIP Report – Mel

Melissa reviewed the Mayor's Capital Improvement Plan

Melissa looked for and sorted by certain types of programs and trends

- Energy Efficiency
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Computer and office equipment (opportunities for energy reduction)
- Water and Sewer is big part of the budget
- Transportation Master Plan (advocacy opportunity here)

Update on City Energy Efficiency Strategy – Kathy

Kathy noted her preference for working on a city wide master plan rather than piecemeal projects responding to input (geothermal company, Siemens LEDs, etc).

Kathy suggested inviting city people to the WEAC April meeting to brainstorm.

- Melissa suggested a plan is needed first.
- Eileen suggested the Mayor's buy in is needed first. People will need to put serious effort into a plan and won't do that for WEAC.
- There was general discussion on the ideas to this point
- The Mayor may come to the April WEAC meeting. We need her authority to get departments to develop plans of some kind.
Kathy noted that overall and department plans would have been part of GC effort if it had happened.
- As a next step, Kathy will try to get The Mayor to come to the April meeting to get her authority.

Ice Rink Update - Leo

Nick Abruzzi, Recreation Department Assistant Director, is drafting a proposal for a rink audit which is first step in an improvement program.

Waltham Connect - Kathy

No discussion

Upcoming Tabling Opportunities - Kathy

No discussion

June Picnic - Kathy

No discussion

Newsletter Update - Kathy

No discussion

Closing

Next Meeting – Thursday, April 18, 2013 7pm-9pm - Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School St.

The Committee adjourned at 9:00 PM.