

2022 04 Oct, 4:19 pm

TOWN CLERK  
LEXINGTON MA

**Sustainable Lexington Committee  
Minutes of Meeting of August 23, 2022**

A meeting of the Sustainable Lexington Committee (SLC) was held by Zoom conference. A quorum of seven was present throughout.

Members Present: Cindy Arens, Celis Brisbin, Paul Chernick, Lin Jensen, Todd Rhodes (vice-chair), Dan Voss (Chair)

Members Absent: Rick Reibstein, Charlie Wyman

Staff Present: Maggie Peard, Mike Cronin (Dir. of Facilities)

Other Attendees: Joe Pato (Select Board), Mark Sandeen (Select Board), Ricki Pappo, Marcia Gens, Gerry Yurkevicz, Tanay Dalmia (SustainabLY), Charles Hornig, Robert Peters, Rohan Reddy (SustainabLY)

The meeting was called to order at 6:12 pm. Todd referenced the opening statement requested by the Town Clerk, and all members present responded that they could hear.

Comments from residents; emails to committee mailbox; new business.

- Ricki commented that Bill McKibben will be speaking at Cary Hall on September 11 and asked whether the Committee would be interested in being a co-sponsor of the event. The topic was not included in the meeting agenda for a vote, but the Sustainability & Resilience Office is already a co-sponsor of the event and Maggie invited the Committee to join her office as a co-sponsor. There were no objections to the Committee participating as a co-sponsor.
- Ricki also mentioned that Marcia is working on a Green Utilities effort.
- Lin commented that MEPA has released policies for Environmental Justice (EJ) communities that require heightened levels of performance (including hybrid HVAC systems) for buildings that abut EJ communities. She encouraged everyone including Planning staff to be aware of these requirements so that they are enforced, and for building owners outside the affected areas to be made aware of these requirements so that they build to the same standards in order to stay competitive.
- Todd informed the committee that the open seat on the committee has formally been recognized by the Select Board in the past week and the process to fill that vacancy would likely start soon. Dan thanked Archana for her work on the committee and said that we look forward to working with her on future projects outside the committee.

Draft High Performance Building Policy. Maggie walked through the Metrics and Targets document that she and Mike Cronin have been developing. Following the presentation, Todd provided some background that this policy was requested along with the Building Design & Construction Policy by Town Meeting several years ago. He also commented that at Financial

Summit meetings earlier this year, representatives from Appropriations, Select Board, and other groups commented that building performance against performance metrics (like those in this draft policy) provided a better indication of the state of our buildings than the replacement capital cost approach being considered in the Capital Planning Tool, which Mike presented to this committee last year.

Comments from committee members and residents included:

- The energy and water use portion of these metrics will already be reported out through the BEU-D program.
- The idea is to generate a dashboard report that can be used to assess building performance.
- Sensors that monitor both CO2 and PM are now available and the pricing is getting better. CO2 sensors provide a good indication of HVAC system performance.
- Landscaping performance could be assessed using the Sustainable Sites criteria.
- Performance with regard to resilience was discussed in some detail. The table showed that resilience level was fixed. Ricki commented that it would need to change over time as the town's need changed. Todd commented that the required resilience level is tied to the Town's Emergency Response Plan. Mike commented that many of the elements of resiliency are built into the building at design and construction (e.g., on-site generators, ability to withstand severe storms, etc.). Dan commented that resilience requirements like plug-loads need to evolve with changes to the town's needs so that the buildings can meet the demands of a shelter or cooling center. He commented that we need to more fully assess the relevant resilience scenarios and the level of performance we need to meet. Mark commented that by adding sufficient energy storage, you can achieve 80% of the performance needed, and that micro-grids should be part of the resilience assessment.
- There was some discussion of red list and how it would be addressed. Todd suggested that the red list for design and construction is already being used through the Integrated Building Design and Construction Policy and the red list for ongoing operations would be addressed through the Sustainable Procurement Policy that Maggie is currently sharing with Town staff.

Mike commented that full instrumentation of all Town buildings would be expensive. There are CO2 sensors in some buildings. Some have sensors in multiple spots, other only a few. He mentioned that Boston has a program where they are working to monitor 30% of the spaces in schools for CO2 and PM. He is looking at options and expecting to do more over the next year. Todd recommended that the approach be prioritized based on the use of the building and metrics of greatest interest/need. Not everything needs to be implemented everywhere all at once.

Maggie and Mike thanked the committee for their feedback and said that they would continue their work on the policy. The topic will stay on the meeting agenda going forward to monitor status and get updates as appropriate.

Facility Project Updates. Mike provided the committee with updates on several projects:

- Capital Planning Tool/Electrical System Transition: A follow-up meeting from the earlier Financial Summit meetings to discuss electrical system transition is being planned, but over the summer the focus has been on school building projects. Jim Malloy is working on setting up that meeting. Potentially in late September.
- Pool House Water Heater Project: The engineer is looking at five options and they are reassessing expected water demand (assuming that 50% of guests take long showers may be overstating the likely demand). Cindy recommended that they also consider solar assisted heat pumps.
- Police Station Solar Canopies: Mike is working informally with HDC on several concepts that include solar on the roof and canopies that would achieve net-zero (or near-net zero) performance for the building (not including EV charging). The HDC is meeting on September 1 and the options will be presented then. He plans to include solar options with the design being presented to Town Meeting this fall.
- School Solar Canopies: Six of the seven school solar systems should be live in early September. All will have energy storage except for LCP and Diamond. Diamond is not targeted to go live until January 1, 2023 due to delays associated with replacing an undersized generator.
- Fire Station Solar: The installation is progressing well. Mark commented that for work completed this year, the Town should be able to recoup 30% of the cost from the Federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

Updates to the Integrated Building Design and Construction Policy (IBDCP): Celis walked the committee through the updates that he made to the IBDCP based on the discussion held by the committee at its June 2022 meeting. The proposed updates included:

- Adding “Cooling Center” as a resilience classification – taking the list from 4 to 5 levels of resilience. The group discussed which buildings would currently meet that level of performance and the difference between a Cooling Center and a Shelter (i.e., the ability to provide food and sleeping areas).
- Maximizing onsite energy generation.
- EV charging stations – based on the recent Town bylaw.
- Landscaping – site development
- Heat island reduction. The group discussed shading from solar canopies versus shading from trees.
- Promoting micro-grids and considering connections of grouped buildings like the Town Office Building, Police Station, and Cary Hall.
- Enhanced commissioning.
- Optimize energy performance.
- Renewable energy production.
- Promote the integration of sustainable attributes from the inception of the project.
- Consider building attributes that support zero-waste operations.
- Assess the embodied carbon in the construction of the building.
- Include quality views for health and wellbeing of inhabitants

- Reduce toxics per the BOH memo.

The committee thanked Celis for the work to get the ideas from the previous meeting documented to support further discussion. Mike commented that many of these elements come with a significant cost and will need to be discussed in more detail. The group discussed next steps and agreed that the next step would be to discuss the proposed ideas with Mike and PBC before other groups.

Sustainability & Resilience Officer Update: Maggie provided updates on several projects that she is overseeing:

- Zero Waste Project: The Task Force is meeting on Friday to review the results of the Zero-Waste survey was sent out to residents. Town staff has also met with Black Earth to discuss options for managing food waste in Town. The options are 1) Collection only – no processing at Hartwell, 2) Collection and small scale processing at Hartwell – enough to handle Lexington’s food waste generation, 3) Collection and large scale processing at Hartwell – enough to handle Lexington’s food waste generation and food waste collected from other nearby communities. The third option could result in collection being low- or zero-cost to Lexington residents. Black Earth is updating their proposal for the three options.
- BEU-D: Maggie is working with NEEP and ClearlyEnergy to implement the BEAM software to collect building data through EPA Portfolio Manager and manage the data. The process is moving forward with a plan to send letters out to building owners in September to apprise them of the new bylaw and to collect contact information.
- Climate Action Plan: The Town has signed a contract with KLA for the consultant to support the Town’s effort to develop a new Climate Action Plan. Maggie expects the project to kickoff in early September.
- Heat Pump Program with Abode: The Town has signed a contract with Abode to support a program to help residents transition to heat pumps. The Town will be looking for 6 to 8 volunteers to be trained by Abode to serve as coaches for residents looking to transition to heat pumps. Maggie identified that the Town will be setting up a website to provide residents with information about the program. Todd offered to send Maggie a list that was developed a year or two ago of residences in town that are fueled by oil – since they are likely targets for this program. Cindy recommended that propane users would be a good target too, and that the program should also focus on Affordable Housing sites. Ricki commented that there is a need to educate people about access to IRA and state funding for these projects, particularly for EJ communities.

Annual Budgeting for the Sustainability & Resilience Office: Maggie identified that the budget cycle for FY24 will be starting soon. Budget items that she is considering are funding for the BEAM software to support the BEU-D bylaw (once the software is no longer free for our use), and funding for a consultant to support an EV transition plan. The Green Vehicles Policy is in place, but action on it has been limited and a plan would be helpful. Lin commented that Melrose is doing some creative things to implement EV charging in EJ communities and for apartment

dwellers. Conducting a tree inventory was also suggested, but Mark identified that the Tree Committee has been working on that for several years and it is close to completion.

Maggie will be working on the budget over the next month. We will include this topic on the September agenda in case other ideas are identified.

Potential Warrant Articles for Special Town Meeting: Todd identified that the Select Board has requested that committees identify whether they intend to bring any articles to Town Meeting in November. The committee had previously discussed bringing an article for Town Meeting to consider opting into the Specialize Opt-in Stretch Code. While a draft of the code has been released, the final version has not been published and may not be published before Town Meeting. The committee agreed that it would be best to plan on bringing that article to 2023 Annual Town Meeting so that there is sufficient time to present the article to Town Meeting members.

The committee agreed that an article to make technical corrections to the Fossil-Fuel Free General Bylaw passed by Town Meeting in 2021 might be needed as a result of the recently passed state legislation that calls for a demonstration project that authorizes ten communities to regulate fossil fuel in buildings if they have passed a Home Rule Petition (which Town Meeting also passed in 2021). It is thought that some technical changes might be needed to the bylaw (e.g., it needs to directly reference the state legislation and/or project), in order to be allowed (by the demonstration project) to be enforced. It was discussed that it should be Town Counsel to decide if and what changes might be needed in order to be able to legally and appropriately enforce the bylaw. It was discussed during the meeting that as any potential changes would not affect the intent of the Fossil-Fuel Free General Bylaw, that it could potentially be included in Town Meeting's consent agenda.

Todd will send a note to the Select Board making them aware of these discussions and Maggie will discuss it with Town Counsel.

High School Building Committee – Nomination of SLC Representative. Todd reported that the High School Building Committee has been established, but there is an ongoing discussion as to whether a SLC representative should be added to the committee or whether the SLC representative should be a member of a separate Stakeholder Group. The Integrated Building Design and Construction Policy identifies SLC as a member of the Stakeholder Group for Town building projects. For most projects, there is only the Stakeholder Group, but for the High School project, there is a Committee. Mark Sandeen has been tasked by the Select Board Chair to outline the roles and responsibilities of the Committee vs. a Stakeholder Group and identify how the two groups would operate as compared to a single group. Regardless of the group/committee structure, the Select Board Chair has asked the SLC to nominate a member to serve as the representative.

Todd identified that Dan is interested in being the representative (Note: Dan was not on the call at this point in the meeting). Celis identified that he will be participating as a member of PBC and recommended having additional/other voices involved in these meetings. Cindy stated that

she would support either Dan or Celis in that role, but would be available to be the representative if neither of them were available. Todd nominated Dan for the role, but since Dan was not available at this part of the meeting, the committee decided to postpone selecting a member to be the representative until the September meeting.

Implications of State Clean Energy Bill. Todd commented that the group supporting the BEU-D program has recommended that the activities continue as planned because the energy benchmarking requirement in the state bill will not take effect until 2025 at the earliest. Cindy commented that the state program will affect all buildings over 20,000 GSF – the BEU-D program is only for buildings over 25,000 GSF.

Maggie identified that she and the Town Manager have already sent a letter to the state indicating Lexington's interest in participating as one of the 10 communities in the state's fossil fuel-free demonstration project. As stated earlier, an update to the Fossil-Fuel Free General Bylaw may be needed to support Lexington's application to be part of this project and to properly enforce the bylaw.

Assessment of the Town's Solar Potential. Todd reported that he and Dan will work on the overlay of solar on Town property to provide a baseline of the maximum potential for solar on Town property. They will have the results available at the September committee meeting.

Next Meeting: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Sustainable Lexington Committee will be held at 6 pm on September 27, 2022.

The committee voted to adjourn at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Todd Rhodes