

**Sustainable Lexington Committee
Minutes of Meeting of September 27, 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, Paul Chernick, Lin Jensen, Rick Reibstein, Todd Rhodes (vice-chair), Dan Voss (Chair), Charlie Wyman

Members Absent: Celis Brisbin

Staff Present: Maggie Peard

Other Attendees: Joe Pato (Select Board), Mark Sandeen (Select Board), Ricki Pappo (LexCAN), Tanay Dalmia (SustainabLY), Charles Hornig (Planning Board), Atreyi Basu (SustainabLY), Gerry Yurkevicz, Tina McBride, Mary Hutton (Mothers Out Front)

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm. Todd referenced the opening statement requested by the Town Clerk, and all members present responded that they could hear.

Approval of past meeting minutes. The minutes of June 28 and August 23, 2022, were approved as written.

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

- Rick noted that a campaign to alert residents to new leaf blower season was needed. Discussion was postponed to an upcoming meeting.
- Todd mentioned the emails the committee gets from Paul Catanzaro of Mass Woods. Charlie and Rick expressed interest in receiving them, and Todd will forward the latest one so that they could get on the mailing list.

Sustainability and Resilience Officer updates. Maggie provided the following updates:

- The Zero Waste Task force last met on Sept. 15. The consultant reported progress to date and summarized the impacts of each of the proposed actions. The committee discussed the consultant's findings and will start driving towards a final plan at the next meeting. They have received an updated proposal from Black Earth (including use of Hartwell), but need more information, and are looking at other ways to achieve curbside compost pick-up. Some discussion followed about the timing of the commitment to EL Harvey, including the possibility of extending the contract a single year to permit more time for the task force to

finish its work. Joe noted that many vendors said they wouldn't bid on a 1-year contract or a contract to begin next July; they need longer to ramp up. He also cautioned that the Select Board will want a lot of community engagement and discussion before changing how trash is handled.

- BEU-D: The town has sent out an initial mailing to all property owners affected just to get contact information, as a first step. They are continuing to work with the BEAM software (which will organize the data reported) and are developing a public-facing page for the benefit of property owners.
- Climate Action Plan: Maggie had a first meeting with KLA (our consultant), who will be doing a community-wide GHG emissions analysis as a first step and will be working on branding and community engagement, with task forces to start next year. The committee noted the importance of keeping the rules about calculating emissions consistent among the various projects and reports the town has done/is doing (CAP, SAP, Net Zero, etc.).
- Heat pumps: Maggie reported that the Heat Smart program is moving along; applications for coaches have been received and eight volunteer coaches chosen, with training in early November. Some discussion followed about an appropriate goal for the number of conversions/year.
- FY24 budget: Maggie is including in her request an increase in her office's budget to pay for the BEAM software and to continue covering the Heat Smart Program, and is considering requesting funding for an electric fleet analysis/transition plan.

Sustainably update: Tanay and Atreyi reported. They have had two meetings with the new, fully constituted group (9 members). They are meeting biweekly on Mondays, and have created two groups (members may be in both) for efficiency's sake. One is focused on a Sustainability Board at the library that was first discussed last spring. The other will work on engagement with younger students, with a focus on ages 3-6, using school and library events with various hands-on activities. Rick noted that one thing he's found useful to engage people is to ask: what would you want to do? Lin asked if there might be an opportunity for materials (used text books, for instance) to be traded or recycling for use by others.

Committee chair selection: Dan explained that cycling who chairs the committee is sound practice, he's been chair now for 3½ years, and in the interests of fresh leadership for the committee and in light of the time demands of his new role on the high school building committee, this would be an appropriate time for the selection of a new chair. The committee thanked Dan for his service. The committee elected Cindy as its new chair, effective immediately. The vice-chair (Todd) and clerk (Charlie) will stay the same.

Committee selection of a member to serve on High School Building Committee. The School Committee agreed to add an SLC member to the High School Building Committee. Dan has

served on the school master planning committee and is willing to take on this new role. The committee voted unanimously to appoint Dan to the High School Building Committee.

Climate Action Plan branding committee. Maggie explained the need for consistent messaging and branding about the Climate Action Plan (language, logos, icons, etc.). Sean Duggan, Kathy Santos, and Mark Sandeen have agreed to serve on the branding committee. Rick agreed to represent SLC.

Climate Action Plan Focus Areas and Guiding Principles. Maggie walked the committee through the tentative list of Focus Areas and Guiding Principles. There was considerable discussion and many suggestions for rewording of the components in the Focus Areas definitions, and some concern expressed about how broad they were, especially the Natural and Community Resilience Focus Area.

Maggie explained that it would be helpful to narrow the list of potential Guiding Principles from seven down to four. After some discussion, the committee was polled, using a point system to record individuals' preferences. The first four on the list received the most votes: Equity, Greenhouse Gas Reduction, Regional Collaboration, and Community Resilience.

Updates on Facility Projects:

- Electric hot water heater at the pool building. The Select Board asked Mark to prepare a framework for evaluating such decisions in the future. Mark took the committee through his analysis, focusing on life cycle costs and not just upfront capital expense, including his conclusion that a variation of Option 7 would be best. He will share his conclusions with the Town Manager, and through him, with Mike Cronin. Cindy will connect him with the consultant.
- Solar canopies at police station. Todd explained that it was the intent to bring this to the fall Town Meeting, but delays in the project schedule have allowed the Select Board to move this to the spring, which gives the architect more time to explore additional design options. Joe reported that the architect brought a new set of designs to the PBC, which responded very positively.
- School solar canopies. Maggie reported that making the Diamond MS array operational is tied to a generator project and there is a supply chain issue with the generator, so it is unlikely the array will be turned on before the end of the year. There are other supply chain issues with the other arrays, and now that school has started, the outages needed to finish the work need to be staggered, producing further delays.

Update on the High Performance Building Policy. Maggie reported that she has had a couple of meetings with key stakeholders to flesh out ideas further, and is moving towards a meeting with Mike Cronin.

Integrated Building Design and Construction Policy update. Todd explained that at its last meeting Celis led the committee through a number proposed redline edits. Dan, Mark, Todd, and Celis have since met and worked through about 2/3 of them, and will try to finish their work and bring a clean version back to the committee next month.

Update on Special Town Meeting warrant article - Technical updates to the Fossil-Fuel Free General Bylaw. Maggie explained that town counsel has helped to identify changes needed for the by-law to be consistent with the new state law authorizing pilot projects that was enacted this summer. She walked the committee through the changes which will be presented to the Fall Town Meeting. It's not clear that formal action by the committee is needed, but to be safe, the committee voted to request that the Select Board include the technical changes to the Fossil Fuels Free Bylaw in the Fall Town Meeting warrant.

EV school bus feasibility update. Todd reviewed the provisions in the new bus contract that provide for 1 or more new electric buses each year, beginning in 2024. Many questions remain: where the charging stations will go, whether to lease or buy, and what additional funding opportunities might be available (in addition to the \$350K in ARPA funds already secured, there are additional incentives in the federal Inflation Reduction Act and other programs). If we are to have at least one EV bus by September 2024, RFPs will need to be issued soon. The ball is in the Lexington Schools staff's court. Lin asked why we are limited to 10 electric buses over the course of the four-year contract. Mark replied that there are several reasons: availability issues, concern over the transition, and the desire to do it slowly to avoid mistakes.

Assessment of the Town's solar potential and discussion of approaches to promote solar development without impacting trees and natural areas. Todd explained that we will come back to the assessment next month. Rick had a few related comments to offer now. He reviewed his students' project last winter and noted a number of ideas they highlighted, including Melrose's work with small businesses, highway solar, and utility rights of way. Some discussion followed about how to advance any of these, including the likely difficulty of getting Eversource to allow any dual use of transmission line rights of way. Mark noted that there is growing interest in the field of agrovoltaics, or growing shade-loving crops under solar panels.

MEPA analysis for new, large construction projects in Lexington. Cindy explained that several life sciences development projects in Lexington are falling under MEPA (Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act) review, which includes DOER review. DOER has been recommending that these buildings include hybrid HVAC systems with high efficiency electric systems (heat pumps) as the primary heating system sized to at least 25% of peak heat load. Mark used 420 Bedford St. (Boston Properties) to illustrate this trend. The committee agreed this was very encouraging. A challenge remains in making sure the system gets built as presented;

Rick suggested the step of commissioning as a possibility. Lin recommended that the committee follow up with staff to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the MEPA recommendations.

Discovery Day (October 8) planning. Todd led a brief discussion about what might be included at the booth and is looking for volunteers.

Next Meeting: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Sustainable Lexington Committee will be held at 6 pm on October 25, 2022.

The committee voted to adjourn at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlie Wyman