Town of Princeton

Environmental Action Committee (EAC)

Meeting Minutes – August 14th, 2023

* Meeting called to order at 7:05pm
* **Attendance** -
  + *Members present*: Corey Burnham-Howard (CBH), Gerry Pellegrini (GP), Kaitlin Kohberger (KK), Richard Bisk (RB) (arrived at 7:17 pm), Forrest Iwanik (FI) (arrived at 7:21 pm)
  + *Members absent*: Claire Golding (CG)
  + Public: Advisory committee liaison Josh Tanenbaum (joined via remote access at 7:06 pm)
  + No other public present
* **Review of July Meeting Minutes**: GP moved to accept as written; KK seconded; unanimous approval (CBH abstained because of absence from July meeting)
* **Updates on action items and liaison positions**:
  + See attached.
  + CBH provided an update on the MVP meeting, which was rescheduled to 8/15. CBH no longer able to attend. Sherry Patch does not need someone from EAC to attend; said she’d share CBH’s comments. Comments from the EAC emphasize the need for different process for small municipalities with administrative assistance to manage the implementation process.
  + GP provided an update on CMRPC (Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission) Regional Emissions Reduction Planning Meeting. GP attended the kick-off meeting via zoom. CMRPC has one million dollars that will be spread across 80 different communities. CMRPC is calling for volunteers to contribute to the planning from different areas, with an emphasis on willingness, not expertise in any specific field. Meetings are monthly, via zoom. EAC discussed GP’s on-going participation and discussed the need for him to be aware if speaking on behalf of EAC as opposed to resident.
  + CBH provided an update from CG (who was absent from meeting) with regard to Waste & Recycling Committee. Sherry Patch met with administrators from Hubbardston and Rutland to discuss regional transfer station, and such discussions are continuing.
* **Old and New Business**
  + Member Recruitment
    - Trying to fill EAC vacancy, no new leads. EAC discussed advertising vacant position, or having the town clerk send an email out.
  + FY 24 outreach.
    - Theme: “Considering our Community”
      * Members refined the structure and schedule of topics and volunteered to work on topic groups. Draft publication for the year’s campaign outline to be written shortly after September meeting. Topic groups to decide amongst themselves subtopics and Green News Brief subject.
      * EAC discussed and appointed volunteers from EAC to serve as members/liaisons to other committees.
      * List of topic group members, liaisons, etc. to be compiled and distributed.
  + Ecotourism:
    - GP reached out to Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) ecotourism lead about meeting with EAC to discuss our priorities. CBH to reach out to Sherry Patch for clarification and permission to meet with CMRPC on this subject.
* FI motion to adjourn, RB second, unanimous approval at 8:58pm.

Documents reviewed:

* “June” Brainstorm Summary of Repeat Priority mentions
* 2024 Actions Spreadsheet
* New Public Safety Building Committee Charge
* Princeton Ecotourism Plan Handout
* TPS Outdoor Spaces Summer 2023 Meeting
* Rick Rys PV Advice for Princeton MA
* Rick Rys Email re: PV Advice for Princeton MA
* Draft EAC Meeting Minutes 7/10/23
* EAC Compiled Updates (see attached)

Respectfully submitted,

Kaitlin Kohberger and Forrest Iwanik

**EAC Working Group Updates for Review and Discussion at EAC August Meeting:**

**Green Communities Initiative Update (CBH)**

Ian McElwee of CMRPC was working to get Princeton’s Energy Reduction Plan (ERP) on the WRSD School Committee agenda. Adoption of the ERP by the WRSD will allow for TPS to be included in the ERP and for funding for energy upgrades to be utilized at TPS. The ERP was on the July 10 WRSD Agenda, but Ian has cancelled and asked to be rescheduled to WRSD’s August schedule. No further updates.

**Snow & Ice Policy (CBH)**

*No new updates.*

**MVP**

Sherry Patch asked CBH to attend a Zoom meeting on 8/10 hosted by the MVP Coalition (a partnership of regional non-profits the goal of which is to increase the funding available for MVP grants to $100M/year). This meeting is with Representative Ferguson with the intent of the MVP Coalition to ask for an increase to MVP funding. Princeton was invited by the MVP Coalition since it’s received planning grants but no action grants.

**PFAS Information Sharing (FI)**

*No new updates.*

**Communications/Newsletter/Website (CBH)**

Still need to make website corrections/updates. CBH reached out to the Town Clerk again in early August to ask for a time to be trained so that CBH can make changes to the EAC page.

**EAC Liaison Updates:**

**Public Safety Building Committee (CBH)**

The Selectboard has created a new Public Safety Committee. The charge of the new committee can be found here: [Public Safety Building Committee | Princeton, MA](https://www.town.princeton.ma.us/public-safety-building-committee)

The Committee will consist of 7 members, one of which is “a representative from the Environmental Action Committee.”

Prior to creating the charge, Selectboard Chair Karen Cruise asked for input from some individuals including CBH and RB. Both CBH and RB expressed an appreciation that the EAC would be explicitly named as an entity to provide input and that EAC had already voted to have an EAC liaison sit on the (prior) public safety building committee, but also noted that whether an EAC member would be willing to sit on this new committee as a full member could not be determined until EAC’s 8/14 meeting.

**Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) update** **(CG)**

*No new updates.*

**Waste and Recycling Committee Update (CG)**

*No new updates*.

**Princeton Solar Farm Working Group (CBH)**

- The Solar Farm Warrant Article passed at Town Meeting. The SFWG met on June 13 to discuss next steps and agreed to best next steps were to seek guidance from the Selectboard on how the SFWG could best support them going forward. SFWG was on the Selectboard’s agenda on July 26. CBH was unable to attend but learned from draft SFWG meeting minutes that the Selectboard has chosen to transition the SFWG to a Princeton Solar Farm Committee. Selectboard member Robert Cumming will be the liaison on the new committee. CBH does not have information as to number of committee members. The SFWG meets on 8/10 to discuss a draft charge for the new committee, as well as to discuss whether SFWG members will want to stay on as Committee members or liaisons.

- Rick Rys has shared his advice and thoughts on residential and community solar. Rick welcomes feedback from EAC.

**Open Space Committee (FI) (CBH)**

On 7/11, CBH reported to OSC Chair Rick Gardner reports that EAC is happy to lend efforts where we can with future Nature Walk programming. CBH asked Rick to let us know how EAC can lend support, and suggesting actions such as “advertise info about the hikes and possibly help in the organization or management of the hikes and/or something else). CBH noted that she and FI would be the contacts on this, and for Rick to let us know OSC would like to proceed.

**PMLD (GP)**

GP attended the 8/2 PMLD Commissioner’s meeting. Much of the meeting discussed the July power outage caused by the lightning strike—with some without power for nearly 12 hours. The windmills are running again!