

# **Town of Princeton Environmental Action Committee (EAC)**

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **August 19, 2020**

**Meeting called to order** at 7:03pm

*Committee members present (via remote):*

Corey Burnham-Howard (CBH), Claire Golding (GC), Phil Gott (PG), Chris Samoiloff (CS)

*Committee members absent:*

Phoebe Moore (PM) (on leave of absence from EAC)

**Public Comment:** None. (Helga Lyons present as Advisory Committee Liaison to EAC)

#### **Review & Approve Minutes from August 5, 2020 Meeting:**

- Members discussed meeting minutes and CS suggests adding information related to discussion on September Newsletter topic and skill sets sought for recruiting new EAC members
  - Members agree to those amendments.
- **MOTION** to accept August 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes as amended.  
Motion: CG; 2d: PG; Vote: 4-0

#### **Green Communities Designation Application**

- CBH provided update.
  - CBH has reached out to Town Administrator Sherry Patch and Sarah Adams of Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) with regard to the need to draft a Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy (FEVP) as part of the Town's Green Community designation application. CBH is awaiting answers to questions she presented to Sarah Adams. Once she gets answers, using a template provided by the Green Communities Division and CMRPC, CBH will draft FEVP and present to Selectboard at one of their upcoming meetings.
  - Municipal Energy Technical Assistance (META) fund grant application period starts 8/20 with grants issued on a rolling basis. Sherry Patch (SP) is handling application and will pursue.
    - CBH had written to Advisory Committee (AC), providing information in hopes of addressing their concerns about META funds being used for energy audits at the Thomas Prince School (TPS).
      - Helga Lyons inquired as to whether META funds used for an energy audit of TPS would have to be paid back if Wachusett Regional School District does not sign-on to Town of Princeton's Energy Reduction Plan (ERP). CBH explained they would not have to be paid back.
      - Helga Lyons inquired as to whether the energy use data gathered for TPS and to be included in the Town's ERP would be skewed given the fact that the building was vacated in March due to Coronavirus. PG and CBH noted that the historical energy use of TPS would be evaluated.
        - **ACTION:** CBH to contact Sherry Patch and Sarah Adams to note that TPS energy use from March 2020 forward would not be an accurate representation of historical use.
    - **ACTION:** CBH will verify with Sherry Patch that she has filed META grant

application.

- Municipal building energy audits (as needed for Energy Reduction Plan for Green Communities Designation Application) began on August 13, 2020.

### **Princeton Municipal Light Department (PMLD)**

- PG provided update.
  - (See attachment.)

### **Municipal Vulnerability Planning (MVP) Program**

- PG provided update.
  - No new information or updates. Next meeting is September 14, 2020, where committee will decide how to move ahead.

### **Waste/Recycling**

- CG provided update.
  - CG spoke with Selectboard Representative to Waste and Recycling Committee, Richy Bisk. Bisk planned to send an email to Board of Health- Terri Longtine to suggest committee begin meeting in September 2020.

### **Communications**

- CS provided updates.
  - Newsletters:
    - CS has not yet drafted blurb for Town News with information on how to sign up for EAC Newsletter. She provided draft language for blurb and members discussed language. Members agreed to language that newsletter provides “environmental information on Princeton and beyond.” CBH suggested a hyperlink be included in blurb that connects reader to where to subscribe to Newsletter.
    - CS discussed her vision of goals of the newsletter, including inclusion of Environmental Action Plan (EAP) information as related to newsletter topic. Members agreed that goals and EAP information inclusion made sense.
    - Members reviewed CS’s draft EAC August Newsletter.
      - **ACTION:** CG suggested edits that she would forward to CS.
      - CBH suggested all newsletters define acronyms, explain/define organizations mentioned, and limit use of “opinion” adjectives
      - PG suggested that when including EAP information and action items, newsletter should also include information on benefits, and steps and strategies of actions.
        - CBH agreed and suggested there also be a link to the EAP itself.
      - Members discussed and agreed it was a fine balance of readable/succinct text and including all desired information
    - Members thanked CS for all of her hard work on the newsletters.
    - Members agreed that given late date, draft August Newsletter should be finalized as September Newsletter.
    - October Newsletter topic is planned to be Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP)
    - PG is also drafting a newsletter article on energy efficient cars

## EAC Webpage Updates

- CS provided updates.
  - o CS reminded members to draft updates for webpages on their assigned content.
    - CS received CBH updates on Green Communities
    - CS received PG updates on reading links
    - **ACTION:** All EAC members to look at webpages related to their assigned topics and send updates to CS.

## Other Business

- CS is interested in reaching out to the Town—Sherry Patch/Selectboard to provide information regarding opportunity for municipalities to opt out of mosquito spraying if they have their own alternative mosquito management plan approved by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, and the opportunity to obtain information/guidance/draft plans from the Northeast Organic Farming Association and/or Beyond Pesticides.
  - o EAC members discussed the routes of CS pursuing this information sharing—either as an individual citizen, with a group of concerned citizens, or as a member of the EAC. CS explained her opinion that it was within EAC mission to provide such information to the Town. CG and PG suggested CS might have most impact if she coordinates with other concerned citizens on this issue. CBH opined that she thought that if EAC was to make such an outreach, it should be done more formally with a written memorandum and presentation at Selectboard meeting as opposed to an email from an individual EAC member, but supported CS reaching out as an individual citizen. PG and CG agreed with CBH. All members agreed to put Alternative Mosquito Management Plan/Integrated Pest Management Plan Development on next EAC agenda.
- WPI Professor Dominic Golding has inquired whether EAC might suggest project ideas for WPI juniors working on their Interactive Qualifying Projects. Projects must include both social and technical components. An EAC member or members would act as a sponsor, working with a small group of students (3 to 4) for 14 weeks to help guide their research and obtain the desired outcomes of the project. Projects would begin in January 2021.
  - o Members discussed possible project ideas—including research and actions that could result in Town noise bylaw, or analysis of scenarios that could increase PMLD revenue from wind power, drafting Integrated Pest Management Plan, designing an open space/community garden, drafting a landscape management plan, drafting an outdoor lighting ordinance.
  - o CBH suggested opportunities for projects might exist with other Town Committees as well, and expressed some concern about EAC member bandwidth to take on mentoring project.
  - o PG suggested Dominic provide summary of the project scope to EAC.
    - **ACTION:** CG to obtain and provide project summary to EAC members.
  - o CS inquired as to the timeline for the projects, and CG informed members that project descriptions would be due by early December with projects running from January through March.
  - o CBH suggested Dominic look at EAP and identify possible project opportunities for EAC discussion.
  - o EAC members agreed to continue discussion on project topic ideas at next EAC agenda.
- PG proposed, starting in September 2020, that EAC meeting schedule change to once per month rather than current twice per month. EAC members discussed. Helga Lyons offered that Advisory Committee meets as needed.

- **MOTION:** EAC to meet one time per month with a full agenda on a Wednesday, and one time per month on a specific topic as needed on another Wednesday.
  - **MOTION:** CG; 2d: PG. **VOTE:** 4-0.
- Members agreed that with the newly-agreed-to EAC meeting schedule, the EAC would meet regularly on the third Wednesday of the month, and that if a member needed a meeting on a specific topic that meeting would be held the first Wednesday of the month, provided the member must alert CG, as Chair, at least 72 hours in advance of the first Wednesday of the month.
- Selectboard Member Richy Bisk is seeking a list of Town of Princeton committees that each committee member serves/served on past or present. Members stated the committees they have served on/do serve on.
  - **ACTION:** EAC members to provide to CG by end of week a list of Town of Princeton committees that they have served on or do currently serve on.
- Selectboard seeking "Mission Statement" from each committee. CG offered to draft mission statement, and EAC members agreed to authorize her to do so and to submit mission statement to Selectboard.
  - **ACTION:** CBH to provide to CG draft mission statement that she prepared

**Agenda Items for Next Meeting (September 16, 2020 at 7p via online forum)**

- Public Comment
- Review and Approve Minutes of August 19, 2020
- Green Communities Designation Application Updates
- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness
- PMLD Updates
- Waste and Recycling Updates
- Communications Updates
- EAC Town Webpage Updates
- Alternative Mosquito Control Plan/Integrated Pest Management Plan Development
- Agenda items for Next Meeting

**Meeting adjourned** at 8:59 p.m.

**MOTION** to adjourn.

Motion: PG; 2d: CS; Vote: 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Corey Burnham-Howard