

Town of Princeton Environmental Action Committee (EAC)

Meeting Minutes

September 30, 2020

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm

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 (HL) present as liaison from Advisory Committee.

Review & Approve Minutes from August 19, 2020 Meeting:

- **MOTION** to accept as amended with minor edits
Motion: CG; 2d: PG; Vote: 4-0

Green Communities Designation Application

- CBH provided update.
 - Municipal Energy Technical Assistance (META) fund grant application assumed submitted by Town Administrator, Sherry Patch—was due 8/20.
 - PMLD engaged MMWEC (who hired GDS Associates, Inc.) in mid-July to coordinate municipal building energy audit (part of Green Community-required Energy Reduction Plan); Audit Report expected 10/1/20.
 - **ACTION:** PG to inquire with PMLD Interim Manager Gary Harrington as to status of energy audit report. Once received, CBH will forward to EAC members.
 - After audit report received, CBH expects Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) to schedule Energy Reduction Plan (ERP) meeting with stakeholders, and then draft ERP for Selectboard approval.
 - CMRPC has provided draft ERP (thus far) to CBH and Sherry Patch.
 - **ACTION:** CBH will forward to EAC members.
 - CBH has drafted Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy (FEVP) for Selectboard approval, and Sherry Patch and CMRPC have worked to compile required Town-owned vehicle inventory.
 - **ACTION:** CBH to send FEVP to Selectboard for approval. CBH will forward to EAC members.
 - CBH explained that ERP and FEVP are last criteria Town needs to meet to apply for Green Community Designation. CBH explained that the goal is to complete Green Communities Designation application by end of October, as that is deadline for Green Community Division preliminary review if desired, and applications are now being accepted on rolling basis through December.

Municipal Vulnerability Planning (MVP) Program

- PG provided update.
 - Three virtual two-hour MVP workshops have been scheduled for 10/22, 10/29, and 11/5. An email went out on 9/30 to invitees, asking for RSVP for attendance at workshops.
 - Despite COVID-19-related delays in developing MV Plan, PG confirmed that funding is

still available for additional grants for implementation of the MV Plan.

Princeton Municipal Light Department (PMLD)

- PG provided update.
 - o PMLD has had an increase in power sales of \$135,000 (as compared to 1 year ago)
 - o Princeton Resident Dominic Golding presented a WPI research program proposal to PMLD that would involve evaluation of metering data to determine feasibility of time-of-day billing
 - o Light Commissioner Richard Chase has been looking at wind power data and the next step is analysis of the data
 - o PMLD Manager Selection Committee evaluated 13 candidates and has narrowed search down to 4, with 2 to be recommended to PMLD Commissioners on 10/1. PG estimates timeline to hire new manager is likely end of 2020.

Waste and Recycling

- CG provided update.
 - o The Waste and Recycling Committee met on 9/16. Irene Congdon, the Department of Environmental Protection's Central Massachusetts Municipal Waste Advisor, is providing a draft implementation plan for recycling/waste options. There is a virtual public meeting of the committee scheduled for 10/1 with the goal of getting residents involved and hearing options and discussions on recycling/waste options.
 - o CG estimated a rough schedule for a proposal for a Townwide Recycling/Waste option by July 2021.
 - PG asked if proposal would need a Town Meeting Vote. CG said it was "unclear", but did note that 12 years ago the Town established an "enterprise fund" which means that the Town can receive grant funds, etc.—so a Waste/Recycling proposal may not need Town vote but would then need a public awareness campaign. CG noted she expects the Waste and Recycling Committee would make a recommendation to the Selectboard.
 - o HL asked if there is an intention to tabulate responses to the Townwide Recycling/Waste survey. CG noted that the quantitative data had been tabulated, and there is a goal to also tabulate qualitative data.
 - **ACTION:** CG to reach out to PM regarding her availability to tabulate qualitative data from survey.

Communications Updates

- CS provided updates.
 - o The September issue of the EAC Newsletter: "The Green News" was published.
 - EAC Newsletter is distributed to subscribers (that subscribe via website)
 - PG asked how many subscribers. CS does not have numbers.
 - o CS has drafted October Newsletter, which will focus on MVP as topic. EAC members briefly discussed draft, and also determine Newsletter best to be released as October issue.
 - **ACTION:** PG to get MVP update to CS ASAP.
 - **ACTION:** EAC members to send suggested edits to CS
 - o EAC members discussed Newsletter topics for November and December issues, and agreed November topic will be Electric Vehicles (written by PG), and December topic will be updates on all EAC ongoing priority action items. Discussed January; may be

Available Wood initiative.

EAC Webpage Updates

- CG asked CS if EAC's new meeting schedule is on the Town website (e.g., 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7p).
 - **ACTION:** CS to update EAC meeting schedule on Town website.
- CS reminded EAC members to provide updates on various action items for EAC website. CG recently sent updates to CS on Waste and Recycling.
 - **ACTION:** All members send updates to CS on action items.

Alternative Mosquito Control Plan/Integrated Pest Management Plan Development

- CS reported that she hasn't taken action on pursuing this topic.
- EAC members agreed to table the topic for now, and to consider it for a possible Spring action.

WPI Project Ideas

- WPI Professor Dominic Golding has inquired whether EAC might suggest project ideas and/or sponsor projects for WPI Juniors working on their Interactive Qualifying Projects. Projects must include both social and technical components.
- Charlie Cary provided a proposal to EAC via email (See Charlie's emails as Attachment to these Meeting Minutes), asking EAC to sponsor his proposed project of working with WPI students to explore the feasibility of using available wood as fuel. Charlie did not expect to be available for EAC meeting so EAC members were to ask any questions individually of Charlie via email (all email inquiries and responses are attached to these Meeting Minutes). Charlie ultimately was present at meeting, and "other questions" for Charlie included:
 - CS asked if construction materials were a local source of lumber that could be included in the project, and Charlie responded "yes" and that students might analyze how much construction "waste lumber" is produced
 - CS asked if wood debris would be left for value in the ecosystem, and Charlie responded "yes"
 - PG inquired as to what EAC's role would be as sponsor of project, and Charlie responded that it would allow students the opportunity to tout that they are preparing a report for the EAC as fulfillment of an action item of the Environmental Action Plan (EAP); EAC sponsorship would not require EAC action/commitment. CG noted that EAC sponsorship would be helpful for students to have "access" to EAC/organization and not just one individual, as it will facilitate the students' ability to get information more easily
 - PG asked what next steps would involve after the available wood volume (supply) is determined by WPI student project; Charlie responded that after the supply is determined, they could look to cost-effectiveness and demand.
 - PG asked if EAC would be involved in demand-side of project as well, and Charlie said "yes"
 - CG advocated for EAC sponsorship of Charlie's proposal saying it makes sense to further an action item of the EAP.
 - **MOTION:** EAC to sponsor WPI/Charlie Cary Wood Reclamation Project.
 - Motion: PG; 2d: CS; Vote: 4-0.
- CG reported that she is considering working with WPI on another project related to a possible Town Lighting Ordinance.

Other Business:

- Charlie Cary planning to apply to Selectboard for appointment as EAC member.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting (October 21, 2020 at 7p via online forum)

- Public Comment
- Review and Approve Minutes of September 30, 2020
- Green Communities Designation Application Updates
- MVP Updates
- PMLD Updates
- Waste and Recycling Updates
- Communications Updates
- EAC Town Webpage Updates
- WPI Project Updates
- Agenda items for Next Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

MOTION to adjourn.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Corey Burnham-Howard